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'Once upon a time', the story conventionally begins. I could start my story like this too, but such a beginning implies that the time doesn't matter, that what I am about to recount could have happened at any time. But it happened at a particular time, which is why I know it happened at all. It happened between 1974 and 1984. If it had happened outside these dates, either before or after, I wouldn't have known about it and I wouldn't be telling you about it now.

More particularly, though, it happened between the dates of April 11, 1980 and April 11, 1981. Why these dates, —well, don't ask me, because I don't know. Why not April 12 or 13? Why not May? There's something arbitrary and troubling about the exact choice of dates. I wonder whether April 11 marks the anniversary of something important but of which I'm ignorant. Possibly some event on an international scale. Perhaps out of shame at not knowing what I ought to know and what everybody else probably does know I turn my mind elsewhere and pursue other possibilities. Perhaps April 11 marks a more local anniversary, something particular to that city where what happened took, as they say, place. Or perhaps it has some private significance known only to the person responsible for what happened. Or perhaps again the reasons were entirely pragmatic, and relate only to when the idea occurred to this person, which could have been determined by something that caught his eye in the paper, or in fact by anything at all, momentous or minute. Then, once he'd had the idea, it might have all depended on when he could procure the necessary equipment, and this in turn might have depended on when he could get hold of the money to pay for it, or who he had to persuade to provide it and the vagaries of their schedule. Our speculations about these contingencies could be endless.

On the other hand, perhaps after all it doesn't matter what the particular dates were for what we make of what happened. Although now I think about it, perhaps in arriving at this conclusion I am misleading myself—and of course, you as well, assuming you have followed this far and haven't already drifted off into mellow, cocktail induced calm of dusk. Which, by the way, now happens an hour earlier in this part of the world than it did last week.

But of course I'm forgetting that you might be somewhere else entirely, and that where you are the time will also be now, but now will be different. It may be that you are entirely in the dark. And not just metaphorically. I like to imagine that you are lying in bed resting on soft pillows while the illuminated screen on your laptop draws your attention to it and, while you watch in a state a little like trance you listen to my voice which will lead you away from the time you think you are in, and into some other

time, the time of story. Which is slippery and slides backwards and forwards and loops things into a space that seems impossibly small for all the things it must contain in what is, when you think about it, such a small moment. This moment, now. And while 'now' may sometimes seem to last forever it is also, as any child knows, endlessly divisible into something smaller. To think we can pinpoint it with a clock or an arrangement of stars seems like sheer vanity from this perspective on things.

But I digress and perhaps you would rather I came to the point.

I have glanced at the date on my screen and noticed a small coincidence, which brings me back to the story. I see that it is actually April now, and that the 11th of April falls on a Tuesday, in just over a week's time. For a moment I feel doubt. Perhaps this story should have been told then and not now. Perhaps it should have marked the anniversary of the event's beginning, and its ending. It occurs to me that marking these anniversaries is also to measure the space of time between them. One year. Feel what that is, then multiply it by twenty-seven. Then subtract the feeling of eight days, since I am telling you all this today and not on the 11th of April.

There is something about the subtraction of the feeling of eight days that makes for a flaw in these calculations. Maybe you would know what it was to subtract a week. But eight days? This requires you to feel the time of a day, and then multiply by eight. But of course what a day feels like so often depends on whether it is a Sunday or a Monday. And then it also depends on whether what happens on the day in question is what always happens on that day, or something different which you couldn't possibly have foreseen but which changes everything about the feeling of that day. And maybe also changes the feeling of the days that follow, and when you come to think of it, it has also changed the feeling of the days that preceded it. And then, this capacity of a day to take you by surprise could as well apply to an hour—or, it takes a moment for the penny to drop—a year.

Mathematics has always made me want to think about something else. By next Tuesday you and I both will probably have forgotten all about this anniversary. Or perhaps we'll wake up with that strange feeling that some one has just delivered us a sharp message—only for the life of us we have no idea what it is. And then all of a sudden we'll remember that April 11th marks the anniversary of Tehching Hsieh's 'One Year Performance (Time Piece)' in New York in which he punched a time clock every hour on the hour, twenty-four hours a day, for one year.

*Adapted for performance by Barbara Campbell from a story by Anna Gibbs.*