



## 4.5 GRID LOGIC

*By Muhammad Adib Surani*

is gone. Oh well, you think. At least you remember the clue. You get up from the step and wander towards Engineering Lane. You order a long black from House of Cards and sit down to drink it. You feel helpless. Jumping back and forth in time like this makes you feel like you've lost control of your own identity. You feel as if some greater force, some omnipotent cosmic narrator is deciding what you do, what you think, what you say, even what you feel. You think about how handsome Chedwards, who wrote this narrative, is. So handsome. You look at your coffee. Do you even like long blacks? Why did you order one? You sigh. At the table next to you, a philosophy undergraduate seems to be having the same internal dialogue as yourself.

"What does it all mean?" he says to his friend. "What is reality?"

"Are you jumping back and forth in time arbitrarily too?" you ask.

The undergrad looks confused, then forces a look of understanding.

"In a way," he says finally, "I guess we all are..."

"Oh," you say, "so did a brick fly through a window and collide with an expensive piece of interdisciplinary technology, thus rupturing the space-time continuum?"

The undergrad pauses.

"Is the brick... a metaphor for capitalism?" he asks.

You sigh and tell him to stay home tomorrow.

"I can't," he says, "I'm currently in a puzzle hunting competition".

He hands you a sheet of puzzles that he's been working on. It seems like a pretty meta thing for him to do. The Device starts to shake. Knowing that you're about to be sucked through time, you decide to mess with the kid.

"Hey," you ask him, "how do you know that any of this is real?"

You hand him back his sheet of puzzles and disappear.





