

Warp
By Diego Tobin

That's us up there, as I point up above, cigarette between fingers, another half-empty glass, behind me, the lights pulsating, the music knocking its knuckles into the floor to ceiling windows. To where I pointed, was a mural of assurance, that maybe we just all won't die, the noble ones. A billboard, one just erected, a monument of technological advancement read: *WARP* and those lovely tired eyes stare back, trumpeting vast exploration that can be found in your local corner store. Those eyes belonging to a good friend, who is on "tempus" leave. She promised to bring me back something pretty in Rome after Caesar's blood spills on the stone floor.

The sliding glass door opens, she approached with the normal *Honey* and *are you coming to bed?* There we were, two stars looking over our world, beneath our feet, the cars rushing to get somewhere. Appearing to disappear. The 45th floor of the building, and still we stared in awe at the window anointed cliffs around us, and damn we needed to know what was up there.

"Your agent called again, he said to make sure you keep taking your medication, you are desperately needed on the set, time is tight right now," She says, dramatically, as if she's still on the job and hasn't quite figured out to leave yet.

"And who said you could answer? If it's a call meant for me, I need to answer it" I quickly reply, she grimaces and retorts:

"Oh so I'm going to let you forget, and you're going to pull a little stunt again you pill po--"

"Get the fuck out of my house," and she picks up the animal skins and child labored silks from the floor. My savior, my guardian angel. I hear a few sour stomps of feet without the pointed heels, the music abruptly stops on a low note, the door shuts with a slam, and I move back inside. I stretch and yawn, the television by now emits static, and fills the room with the satisfying *bzzzz!* The lights are all on, but nobody else is home. As if the world is still, frozen, and I can only envision that it's still spinning.

This is only a temporary safe haven for inspiration and to keep the never-ending stock of muse's satisfied. On the kitchen counter *WARP* pamphlets decorate the granite countertops, *Experience the real world*, they say. *This is the future!* They say. Them, *asking me?* The one who really has seen and done it all, there is nothing more left, just different people, that's all you can ever see that is unusual anymore, past this point. Even they start to look the same. Even they start to resemble flesh and bone that is painfully familiar. The tree's all creak and crack the way they did centuries ago, the hills and valleys only erode, the tides will always come back. I take a few of the designated pills, just in case the sleeping pills look too nice.

The Phone rings, and I pick it up, smeared makeup rests on the face of it, the beauty mark of a icon, I listen and I hear the forever energetic *hullo? Seymour! My God! I thought you were dead there for a second, you weren't picking up!* That foolish bastard must have forgotten that I had answered him last week, I'm still here. My agent who helped shoot me into the golden valley of West America with the silver screens and poolside bikinis, he calls often, setting up projects, interviews, finalizing contracts, attending *WARP* conventions, and the usual, *Come back to the face of the planet sometime, the studio misses you.* When I really never left.

"I know you hate me asking, but the head department of *WARP* wants you to be the face of the company, Emma hasn't come back yet, and we're starting to see wrinkles on the signs, she's out,

and I think you can help boost some sales for the company,” He drones on the phone, I wonder if he is this excited with his wife.

“Then why the hell would they make such an expensive product for the public? No wonder only celebs can afford this,” I say back to him.

To understand the new trend in the holy industry, you could look it up online, search *WARP* and see the current articles, concerning stars and their obsession with the new wonder drug. Leonardo DiCaprio used it during the filming of *The Revenant*, to get a feel of how Hugh Glass really was like, and how the climate was back then. That clever fucker was the first one to use it. After news broke out, and not local news, this was all in the circle of actors, Gosling, Pitt, Franco, Johansson, Clooney, Wilde, Theron, all of them, even my dear friend Emma Levitz, the one on the billboards (although she is the first to disappear) tried it, and they were instantly hooked, back and forth, newfound knowledge to prepare for roles, even to vacation where the average person could not.

“You have to look at it this way, Seymour, with your face on the package, in stores, everyone will shell out those extra bucks for a chance of a lifetime. “Seymour Smith uses *WARP* for character development”, or some shit, I don’t know, but they will eat you up,”

“But all the A-Listers are just disappearing now, more chance for roles, more money, you always say you like that don’t you?”

“But, do you like that?” And I become quiet. I look around, at the many locks on the front door. The mismatched couch cushions. The empty wine bottles. The corks. The empty glasses. The crooked photo on the wall signed by everyone's hero. A bulb burnt out, with the lamp shade on the coffee table, along with papers littered with pretty pictures and beautiful words. His words turn faint, small, as I hear the faint crackle of static.

“Are you still there?” He questions me.

“Yes, what were you saying again?”

“Look, we go to the west headquarters tomorrow, you talk to all the executives and what not, sign some things, that I’ve already looked over, and everything seems to be perfect already, so you have nothing to worry about, and it looks like you can either be really busy, or a tad bit busy the next five years. That’s how long the partnership will last, by the way. You also get a lifetime supply of *WARP*, unless you know, you piss off the company for some reason or violate the contract. But, I’m hoping you won’t do either, and I know that you won’t jeopardize a job like this.”

“Tomorrow? I thought I had to go back on set tomorrow?”

“I made that up Seymour, I needed some way for you to pick up, but one of your girls picked it up”

“Do I have to take it, the *WARP*?” I ask, afraid and regretful for selling my soul to a couple of reasonable men.

“... I mean... you kind of have too bud, that’s the whole point for them wanting you to promote it, but for wherever you decide to go, all of that won’t even matter! All that matters is you come back, so don’t be hanging around with Attila or anything. If you’re on tempus leave it only lasts a few seconds to them. Technically you’re only gone for a moment. What do you say? You want to have a go at it? Whatever you feel comfortable with, I know you just fought a battle a few weeks ago, I know you have gone through a lot.”

“I’m fine, just send for a ride in the morning,”

“It’s coming at 9:00, make sure you wake up, this is very important, you cannot be late,”

“I will, I will, don’t worry. Thank you”

“No problem, that’s what I’m here for-” I hang up and toss the phone to the table. I lock the sliding glass door for some reason. I take a seat in my bedroom on my desk chair, I sit in the dark and contemplate to where I should go, or where I should’ve gone. It gets lonely often times, when we sit back this high, although I don’t feel empathy for those below, who vanish at one point, and appear in another. Nobody watches them. Nobody knows they exist, the normal people. Almost as if they were forgotten. Almost as if they never were real. This thought had appeared in thin air, as I thought back to previous, failed endeavors, weeks ago.

I greet the black SUV wearily, and sit in the back seat, as the driver takes me throughout the jungle of smog and animals strolling the side of the street hoping to get noticed. The early morning boulevard is very much alive. I smoke a cigarette and wave to a few fans, because they are the reason I am here. After an hour or so we reach the facility, a small office building that starts at the 4th floor, where I am greeted by smiling faces, the CEO holding a briefcase, we all shake hands and introduce ourselves, except they already know me.

In the meeting room, the generic long table, the stereotypical slideshow, charts, graphs, demographics, and alas, the signing, and they hand me their latest product, in a portable container that is now waterproof: *WARP X*. I criticize the idiotic name, but they ask me to not judge it so quickly with a small laugh, because we can make anyone laugh.

“*WARP X* is the latest innovation in time traveling technology. *WARP X* is the future. The past. The present. Here the consumers can truly get a peek at any place in time. With the original *WARP* users had only a 10 minute time limit, of appearing in each use, but with *WARP X* the time limit has stretched to almost 2 weeks, in which you can really enjoy, let's say, a swim in the Mediterranean sea in Ancient Greece, or you can see the Beatles in the Cavern Club, the possibilities are limitless” The CEO says, as he hands out one to everyone. I stare at the label, sleek, futuristic, the type of stuff those retro science fiction books are made of.

“What if people want to stay somewhere forever and can go back whenever they please?” I say, because that’s what everyone would want.

“It’s being tested, but by law we are not allowed to give it to the public. It would be too expensive anyway to sell to just any regular person.” The CEO replies.

“How much are we talking?”

“In the billions Mr. Smith, only a few people will be able to afford it, but they refuse to take it.” He laughs, but I don’t see what he thinks is so goddamn funny. I hate businessmen the most. Small talk only made for them to reel you in and ultimately get you financially fucked by whatever scheming energy drink I need to promote for the next ten years.

“You see, this is the regulated version, approved by all the health departments. You can go to any bathroom, your car, a bathtub- which is the most popular place-take whatever amount you need to go to a particular time, based on however many milliliters you need to take, and just like that” he snaps his fingers “you’re watching the Eiffel Tower being made.”

“Why in the bathtub?”

“Well. You see, you reduce to the decayed “ash” as we call it, but it’s really a combination of different bodily materials that may come off, dead skin and what not, from the decaying period.

Also, let me remind you that that the decaying period is almost instant compared to the regular *WARP* which lasted up to 20 minutes sometimes. You appear from the “ash” back into your regular form after the experience.”

“How come we don’t notice any changes in history? Shouldn’t there be some disturbances or however the hell it all works?”

“In the process of *WARP*, no “on hand” items make it through the travel, meaning you can’t bring anything to or back from where you went. We haven’t seen any problem yet, that’s why the government isn’t on our ass yet. They’re still investigating the TELEKI Company for any faulty permits and production licenses. Our company has all the qualifications, so there is no need to worry.”

For the rest of the time being, I watch the seconds pass by as they explain over and over again the advantages of *WARP*. Sometimes, it started to sound as if he was just repeating himself, which he was, that dumbass. Finally, we shake hands and I’m back in the car looking out the window on the ride home, keeping my eyes away from those passing by.

The phone is repeatedly ringing, but I don’t bother answering. It’s most definitely my agent, afraid I have gone off the side of the balcony. Beside me is a glass of brandy, and I lay in the bathtub, with no clothes on. I open the cylinder container and find a plastic vial, with a dropper end, containing instructions, drug facts, the usual.

1 Milliliter = 1-5 years forward

2 Milliliter = 5-10 years forward

3 Milliliter = 10-15 years forward

4 Milliliter = 15-20 years forward

5 Milliliter = 25-50 years forward

Talk to your doctor if your heart is healthy enough for WARP

Talk to your doctor for higher doses

Side effects may include: Suicidal thoughts and minor migraines.

1 Milliliter + 1 Milliliter of Water = 1-5 years back

2 Milliliters + 2 Milliliters of Water = 5-10 years back

3 Milliliters + 3 Milliliter of Water = 10-15 years back

4 Milliliters + 4 Milliliters of Water = 15-20 years back

5 Milliliters + 5 Milliliter of Water = 25-30 years back

And so on, containing breathing techniques, estimating methods on lower amounts or higher amounts that were not listed on the label, meditating techniques to take you to a preferred place. Warnings upon warnings to not give to children and to not take with alcohol. Fuck. I pour out my drink into the sink and put two fingers in my mouth and brought myself to a familiar situation. I vomit into the toilet, after a while water comes out and then the dry heaves. I sit back in the tub with a sore head and watery eyes. None of this makes any sense anyway. I won’t go too far back, I promise myself. I take a small cough medicine cup from the bathroom cabinet and estimate to the best of my abilities to the smallest quarter of a milliliter, and from that, I put the spoon to my lips and take a quick sip, and pour the rest back into the vial.

The taste is sour, and I try my best to collect it all from my mouth and I swallow, and I wait. Nothing happens. I breathe and think clear thoughts, my apartment, I want to come back to

my apartment. I want to return to my apartment, but at a different time. I want to return to my apartment. I wait.

I might have taken too little. The door knocks. Shit. I grab a towel, and step into the hallway, over the mess of clothes from after parties and after-after parties that I can't recall. I walk over to the peephole and look through, it's her, from last night. For some odd reason I couldn't remember her name, or if it even was the same girl. I quietly step back, and make my way into the kitchen, I go to the cabinet for a cup and fill it with water from the sink, I drink it all in one gulp. The door knocks again and I hear a *Seymour! Open up! I can hear you right now!* And my eyes start to water. Who the hell is Seymour?

I call out "Who are you?" Because I don't know who any of us are. *Are you fucking with me right now?* I no longer know what she's trying to get at. I look for where I put my cup but I set it down somewhere while the stranger at the door yelled at me. I go to the cabinet for another glass, I was incredibly thirsty and didn't know why. I open a cabinet, but all I see are tall white bottles, some are blue, they are all almost empty. Inside the liquid was clear, I reach for an opaque colored bottle and as I grab for it, my hand crumbles, my body crumbles, the bottle falls to the floor with a crash and I am gone for good.

I woke up in my apartment again, on the floor of my kitchen. The sky was dark, except the faint dancing light of city lights intervening with the night. The air was familiar, and cold, I hear nobody else inside and figured that whichever celebration to be celebrated was over. Finally. I slowly stand up and peer over the counter to find a drunken me, laying on the couch sobbing. There I watch me, count my blessings and realize that I definitely could have had more. There I watch me, regret not marrying Whatserface, and cheating on blue eyes with big ass. There I watch me swallow my pride for once and start choking on it, the lump in my throat. There I watch me attempt to call any family member I have yet deserted. There I watch me wonder if a gun would just be easier. There I watch my try to decide whether my agent cares. There I watch me bite my nails and pull my hair out over whether or not I can leave this godforsaken place. There I watch me eye those *WARP* pamphlets. There I crouch and weep.

From down the hallway I can hear a shower going, it must be Lana, she was the one who saved me. I forgot that she had still been there. I creep down the hallway to avoid any of us catching each other crying. I see the bottle of sleeping pills resting on the couch. I walk down the hallway, and sit on the master bed that I would no longer miss. Staring at the desk of scripts I would no longer read. She sings in the shower as the water droplets bounce off the towel underneath her perfectly manicured nails. She sings a song that her ex sung, that made it to number 1. She sings a song that means just as much as it might mean to the crowd of writers. She sings a song that moves up and down and has simple lyrics-but meaningful. I have to admit it is a catchy song.

I imagine in the living room I am choking, my mouth is foaming, my brain hurts, and my eyes are red. Good god, what a way to go out. Two Oscar nominations all led up to this perfect moment. Cinematic, bold, theatrical, and satisfying. I'm just waiting for the role models to shed a tear, before the critics do. I quickly get dressed. Inside the bathroom the water stops falling, and I hear a small body step out, belonging to that of my sweet liberator, or one that was, but one no more. The door opens, she is surprised.

"You scared me right now Seymour"

"I forgot you were still here"

“I was going to leave right now, But, I decided to take a shower.”

“Why?” I wondered in my mind, the only thought that comes to someone who realizes why you may need to take a shower after you hooked up with someone. Why don't you use your own shower?

“Why? I asked you a question,” She looks at me in shock.

“What are you talking about? Why did I take a shower? Why the fuck would I take a shower Seymour, really, why do people take showers?”

“You're probably going home to screw someone else, you bitch,”

“Are you kidding me? Who the hell do you think you're talking to?”

“You're in my house, who the hell do you think you are telling me what to do?”

“Why do you think you can talk to people like garbage, you're not going to last this long asshole,”

“What are you talking about?” I pause, is she putting a jinx on me? Idiot.

“You're not going anywhere talking like. Treating people like shit. Fuck you Seymour. Fuck you” She dresses quickly and leaves, but I grab her waist and apologize. Please don't leave. I kiss her. I grab her. I love you. I love you so much. Without you, I would have nothing. I try to pull down her dress, but she pushes me away, and curses me, my name, my person. I grab her again, she smacks me in the face with her small hand.

“ Fuck you,” I yell, I grab an empty bottle by the bed and break it “ Keep your fucking hands off of me, you bitch” She tells me to back off, she's calling the police. That's ok. I need to burn a few bridges anyway. I need her gone. I need peace. I need to be alone in the other room. My knuckles turn white and I slam it into the wall multiple times before she leaves. And I forget, she's going to see my dying body on the couch, gasping for air. I rush out of the bedroom, but she has already left, and there is just an empty space, where there used to be a dying me.

I sit down, breathing hard, my heart pounding. And from the past events, I have switched from sobbing to anger. Back to sobbing. Rest in peace, me. I lived a good life, and died a quiet death. I sit in the place where I sat. My knight in name brand fur was gone, I pictured her stomping down the stairs. I pictured her driving home and telling her boyfriend that she wants to move. You can't leave honey. Even with the power of God, we're trapped.

Hopefully not for long.

Hopefully I saved myself from further misery.

By now, the TV is just static, and all the noise that meets the air, is the urban music of street cars, and feet walking through the maze. I wait to disappear for good. I wait. And wait. There I am, still here. Still breathing. Still alive.

It's been two weeks, and I have developed strange bumps over my skin, in some parts it has turned purple, and inflamed, some places it has turned red. Although, they don't hurt. I no longer am hungry and thirsty, and have gone a week without consuming anything. I feel fine. I'm feeling fine. Do I look fine? Hell no.

I didn't go to the doctors, but I go to the office building of my previous, or perhaps, now fiction, *WARP* meeting. I open the doors, the receptionist, stare at me in horror, as they see the wrinkled skin of my face, dropping down low, darkness under my eyes, my cheeks sunken and thin. I am a walking ghost. I am not here. I'm supposed to be dead everyone, don't worry. I just need some time.

“Do you need anything sir?” They ask.

“I am Seymour fucking Smith, of course I need anything, where is your boss” the nerve of them. I walk over to the desk, they scoot back.

“Do you have an appoint Mr. Smith?” But, I walk past the doors, as they call for security. I walk to the elevator, and go up to the 4th floor, there I luckily find the CEO, who decided to not take the day off.

“What is happening to me?” I ask, I beg.

“What do you mean? Are you even allowed in here? Who are you?”

“I have a meeting with you a few weeks from now, I take *WARP X*. It’s been two weeks since I have originally taken this. Fix this, right now. You said there was nothing to worry about and now look what the fuck happened to me-”

“Slowdown, Slowdown, who are you again?”

“I’m Seymour Smith, the actor. You’ve been calling me advertise for the company, remember? You were even going to call me today, because I remembered when it happened, and I remembered not answering. Then a couple weeks from then, I took it and came here, but I’m not going back. The *WARP* isn’t wearing off. I’m seeing side effects that weren’t mentioned. I look like a fucking slug. I’m getting these bumps. My skin is turning different colors. Am I going to be ok? Your ass better assure me that I’m going to be ok.”

“I’m sorry Mr. Smith, you must forgive me. I didn’t recognize you. ..Oh no, shit, shit, this never happens, did you interact with yourself at all? Your past self, did you hurt him in any way, did he eat something he was allergic too? This type of situation would not have any correlation with the drug itself. It’s been tested many times. Many, many times.”

“He-he choked on something... he just disappeared. I couldn’t save him. You said, to not interact with anything, so I didn’t I let him choke, and then he was gone” I lie, and the CEO takes me into an empty office and holds his hands in his face. He sighs. He curses silently.

“Are you saying he’s dead? And tell me the truth. It will only between us two.”

“Yes-Yes I think so,”

“Jesus Christ, and you thought you should come here? We should have you tested at the lab. God damn it, now this can never be released for the market. We will lose so much money.”

“Are you fucking kidding me? You’re worried about that?”

“Please Mr. Smith, keep your voice down. Just give me a minute to think.” And he thinks. As I stand there, still in the flesh. He leaves for a moment, and I sit there, waiting. Praying, dear god, don’t be this cruel.

The door swings open, and I am quickly brought out by the CEO, who takes me down the elevator, quickly to his car, while I wear his sports jacket to cover my horrid face. He tells me to keep the coat and we sit inside, we drive away. The car speeds past all the others, going through stop signs, all of it, like a chase scene in a movie, kind of like the cop movie I was in a few year back. He looks at the rear view mirror and keeps eyeing me, he keeps worrying. He keeps whispering things to himself. He stops at a local sports store, he tells me to wait, don’t leave the car. It’s unsafe to go outside when it’s past the two week period. I sit there and wait, while some of my hair begins to fall out, and my fingernails drop to the car seat.

He returns and stores the contents in the trunk, and we drive past the city, for hours, past the beach, the cities, the factories, the farms, and we make our way to the countryside, past smaller towns. We are heading north, he says. Those are where the labs are. After driving for a while, I soon start to feel sick. And he stops the car for me to step out, and I vomit, profusely

over the grass, and see blood. My eyes began to water, and my guts start to ache. He steps out and goes into the trunk.

“I have something that may help for the time being.” He says, as he pulls out a wooden baseball bat, and swings it towards my head.

I blindly stumble into my kitchen, as there is a knock at the door. I walk over to the peephole and look through, it’s her, from last night. For some odd reason I couldn’t remember her name, or if it even was the same girl. I quietly step back, and make my way into the kitchen, I go to the cabinet for a cup and fill it with water from the sink, I drink it all in one gulp. The door knocks again and I hear a *Seymour! Open up! I can hear you right now!* And my eyes start to water. Who the hell is Seymour?

I shake my head in confusion, and walk to the bathroom, and look in the mirror, all my hair was gone, and my whole body was bloated, and covered in sores. I repeat in my head, no, no, no. This can’t be happening. Why can’t I just leave? I look in the tub, and sit inside. Lana is still at the door knocking. That’s what her name was, I just remembered. Lana. *Seymour! Open up! I can hear you right now!* Is what she says in a faint, far away voice. As if the world is fading away from all of its luscious animation, it’s blowing winds, and falling leaves, amounting to silence. I leave the tub and enter my room to put clothes on. I put on multiple long sleeve shirts and pants, and a spare hat from an independent project I was in a few months back. I went to the door, unlocked the many locks, and revealed her pretty face, and long brown hair.

“God, what happened to you?” She yelps

“I’m in costume and makeup right now,”

“Why? You didn’t mention anything about a horror movie,”

“I’m sorry I don’t tell you everything, the director doesn’t want anyone knowing, a secret project, you understand.”

“I can’t say that I do.”

“What are you here for?” I change the subject. I cough and wipe the beading sweat on my forehead. As she starts explaining herself, I start wondering who she is talking to. I have no idea who she is or who this Seymour guys is, that she keeps mentioning.

“Seymour? Are you alright? Seymour?” She looks at me, her eyes wide, as I starts to shrink, my body collapsing into dust.

I wake up on the kitchen floor, with the familiar air, while Lana is in the shower, and there is a sullen Seymour sitting with an invisible gun pointed at his head, lounging on the sofa. I weakly stand up, and peer over the counter, and see an empty couch. No body, there is nothing there. Nothing but a heap of dead skin, loose hair. The ash, is all that remains. The static coming from the TV hums around me. I am far from life, and beyond death. I make my way to the bedroom, and dress. Inside the bathroom the water stops falling, and I hear a small body step out. The door opens, she is surprised.

“You scared me right now Seymour” this is before she even gets a good look at my face.

“I need help Lana, I need help” I stay back, so she can’t see me.

“Are you ok? What happened?”

“I took- I took *WARP*”

“I thought you hated it. You said it was a trend, a fad.”

“Please, this is serious, please”

“What, what happened to you?”

And I step into the spotlight, in all my god given glory. She screams, and backs up. Why does everyone back up?

“Holy shit Seymour, you look like you’re dead”

“Please, you need to take me somewhere, I know the address, just take me there,”

“It’s probably closed right now, I think I should take you to the hospital...”

“NO, I NEED TO GO TO THE FUCKING *WARP* OFFICE, LISTEN TO ME,” I scream, and I start heaving, my lungs hurt, it hurts to breath, I sit down on the bed, as my bones creak and crack.

She stares at me in silence, in frustration. I wonder why she bothers to stick around.

“I’m sorry,” I begin, “You’re going to see me like this again, in a few weeks from now, but hopefully I won’t look as bad. And, right now, I’m going to tell you something, that you can never tell anyone. I’m going to tell you something, and you have to promise me. Promise me Lana”

“I promise”

“I killed myself right now, but in a different time, I’m supposed to be out in the living room overdosing. And you were the one that saved me, but in another time I kept you from going out there. And I died. I died, but I’m still here. My consciousness or whatever the fuck you want to call it, is stuck here. And my body is dying. I can’t go back, if I die, I’ll just go back to the moment I started using *WARP*. Even the *WARP* CEO killed me, but I came back, but he’s not going to know anything happen.”

“Should I call the police then? This is horrible, this can’t happen to any other people,”

“No, don’t tell anyone, don’t tell anyone you even saw me. In a few weeks from now I’ll be on tempus leave, so they will know.”

“How?” She softly says, and she becomes silent. “You’ll be in this circle, and to everyone else it will feel like not even a second has gone by since you’re gone.” And my heart starts to hurt, more and more. My ears start to ring.

She won’t even remember this conversation. If she even exists. In this place, in this time.

After she leaves, I sit on the balcony and smoke a cigarette, I feel tired now, but I no longer need sleep. I can no longer rest for a short time. Or a permanent time. I watch as the moon leaves, and the sun starts to rise, and through all of this, I wonder how I’m going to bring up the news to the CEO about him bashing my face in with a baseball bat. Maybe I will, maybe I won’t, and I think to myself as I scratch a bit of skin off of my neck.

After another tiring journey towards the office building again, I silently pass by the receptionists and go to the elevator to the 4th floor, where the CEO is in his office talking to a client. I burst in, and I scare the client away. That pansy twat. The CEO steps back, I explain the dilemma to him again. Also adding:

“And don’t try killing me, it won’t work, you already tried it,”

“I did? With what?” He asks, confused, shocked, that I am one step ahead of him.

“Baseball bat,” I say. And he closes the blinds of his office window, and sits. Ruminating.

As of right now, my skin is peeling off and my blood is drying up. My lungs are collapsing, my organs shrivel up. My heart is failing.

“You can donate your body to science, you’re a wonder of the world right now”

“No, just help me, please. You need to take this seriously or your whole business will be shut down and your ass will be jail. You need to take this seriously. I know if you do anything rational right now it will put the company out of billions of dollars, just help me. I don’t know what’s happening.”

He continues to think, and stares at me and the ceiling, back and forth, in question. Of how to off me. To get rid of me.

“Right now, it looks like there are two ways this can be worked out, ok? We can either give you more *WARP* to go back before you actually took the drug to stop you from taking it, or you can see what happens from here. But you won’t be able to stay here. You would have to go to our labs, they’re located down south”

“Fuck that, you’re drug is the one that made me like this. I will still be the same fucked up monster no matter what time period I’m in, there will just be two of me.” I say

“Maybe then, you can get help.”

“It will just be you, in four weeks, you won’t be able to think of a brand new solution by then, and what do I look like I want to be your fucking lab rat? If you can’t find a cure now, what’s the point?”

I heave, my breaths deeper and longer. I lean back, and let the light burn my eyes.

The CEO steps out of his office, and I sit there, again, waiting. I look through the blinds, and he’s talking to another worker, and now, two security guards, that the receptionists must have called in. I heard the muffled voice of the CEO say,

“I tried reasoning with him, but I guess we got to do the most necessary thing right now at this point. His body is in the process of dying, we can’t stop it, he can only feel death, but his consciousness, all of it is intact and still very well alive. We have to take desperate action, in four weeks we’ll go to Mr. Smith’s house, gather up the ash, and take the ash and bury it, or drop it in the fucking sea, do whatever you have to do in case he reforms, he will just reform on the bottom of the ocean or underground. Whatever we have to fucking do, we do it. Ok? Make sure that is appointed onto the schedule. This is urgent. Now as for you two, we need to take him in, he cannot leave, we’ll escort him to the lab and keep him there, make sure he doesn’t leave our-”

But I take my head away from the door, and grab a chair and smash it into the window. It’s either become an experiment, or get lost somewhere else. The office door quickly opens, and the security guards stampede in, and the CEO tells them to stay back, and Seymour, *you don’t want to do that.*

I jump out the window, headfirst and close my eyes.

I stumble in my kitchen trying to move my legs the best I could, my vision going out. Everything turning into a blur as there is a knock on the door that frightens me. I ponder whether this is real or an illusion made by my crumbling mind. A sour taste is in my mouth and I turn on the faucet and stick my head underneath and drink. Soon after, I walk over to the peephole and look through, it’s her, from last night. For some odd reason I couldn’t remember her name, or if it even was the same girl. I quietly step back, and make my way into the kitchen, I go to the cabinet for a cup and fill it with water from the sink, I drink it all in one gulp. The door knocks again and I hear a *Seymour! Open up! I can hear you right now!* And my eyes start to water. Who the hell is Seymour?

I try to remember in my head, why, why am I here? The shriveled skin on my hands, peel back, and lay limp against the tattered, torn meat that my body only consisted of. Yes, yes, that's right, Lana is at the door, she is knocking because she is mad about something. I go into the bathroom, and grab the *WARP X* Vial and I bring it into the kitchen, I tie the towel tight around my waist, and I listen to Lana knocking on the door, screaming my name. I put some droplets on a spoon and measure how far back I could go, I look at the directions, water, damn, I drank water, which brings you forward when mixed. I go to the bathroom, and attempt to throw up, but I cannot, only dry heaving, and I look down at the towel, soaked in water, and trickle of water pouring out of the hole in my stomach I decide to take the chance, and I put the spoon to my mouth and swallowed, as my body once again crumbles down into nothing.

I wake up on the bathroom floor, I can barely stand on the cold, smooth tile. My hearing is lost. My vision slowly reducing into nothing but darkness. I grab onto the sink for something to hold me up, and the shower curtain rod, I use that as a walking stick. I move further and further. Using my hands to feel the walls around me, but I can no longer feel touch. I pass down the floor, slowly, through the silent apartment. Hoping that in some way I made it to somewhere real, somewhere safe. Somewhere I can finally escape, completely.

I move to the TV, and put my eyes close to the remote, and search for the power button. All the wheels turning, the birds chirping, has ceased. The world cannot speak anymore. I wonder, if I close my eyes, maybe, just maybe, if I can know that I closed them, I can pretend that I'm in my grave. I am in my coffin. Maybe when I can no longer see. When I can no longer hear. I can no longer speak.

At last, I could have left this world, in one way, or another. I could have had my body cremated, I could have had the real ashes scattered across the sea, like I had always wanted. I turn the news on, and see the date. By now, I'm gone, and I'm having my original meeting with the *WARP* CEO. If only I came earlier, to see me leave, when I was a human being. If only I had just arrived a few minutes earlier, this all could have been stopped. If only. This was a cage, this place, this time. There was no more reason to leave, or want out.

Even after two weeks, two months, two years, two decades, when I go back, I am just another lone object revolving in space and time. I cannot see. I cannot hear. I cannot move. I am just my ideas, my moods, my feelings, moving, for days on end, which may never stop in our lifetime, and the next, and the next. And whichever lies beyond that. I'm just like you, you're just like me. And we both exist here, and we both think we are more important than the other. And we both think the other isn't real. It's a faint thought in the back of our heads that more than one person lives here. This must be hell. Or limbo. Or oblivion. It can really drive a mind mad, if I had one. This is fate in its prime, inevitable, twisted, vicious.

And now, I'm a part of those rushing by cars, as I already was before, and I'm the speck of civilization, you can't see from the shuttles. From the treetops. From the rooftops. I am unsure where I really am. If I faded away, or if I'm rotting. Decaying. My hopes and dreams are here, my passions. Sometimes, I will imagine, if I did have a body, if I did work on that movie, and all the press interviews I would see. And they wouldn't miss me, because the second I left, that second I'd be back. And there would be nothing wrong. We can all continue on living, and act as if this was all a dream. A made-up memory. A story.

No matter how many times I decay from ash, and rise from it. No matter how many times, I greet the same weeks, over and over again. No matter how many times the cycle won't give up. No matter if I can never truly die. It seems like I'm only sleeping from here.

No matter how good or bad you are, such things happen. They have always happened, and will furthermore continue to happen. We will disappear from the face of the earth, and may never be able to come back. No matter how much we beg. Many of us have vanished, stuck in the time warp, the flow of time, filled with cracks made by the heroes of the western world. I love to picture myself being one of them again, I would love to see myself on the silver screens again, and to be loved by everyone and everything. To be at the top of the world, and all alone. All by myself. I can pretend to walk through the labyrinth walls of the corporate towers, and the neon buzz of the nightclub sounds, the police sirens, the horns honking, the hounds barking, the homely TV static, to inhale that same hot air, filled with cigarette smoke and car exhaust. To dream and reach our hands as far as our ambitions, to never worry again, to drive fast cars with something to brag about in the passenger seat and think:

That's us up there.