

# Time in a Bottle

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## **Time in a bottle**

*Jack Streberger*

Suppose there exists a world where time is the only medicine. Time is also only used for medicine. It is known around the world for this one purpose. Sickness and disease is spread around the world. It is normal for the people to be sick. Receiving a prescription of time is there only hope. They do not know death can be caused by old age. They only believe time has run out or did not sufficiently work to make them healthier, when someone has died. Time is looked at as the holy grail. It is made into a religion that everyone believes in and abides by.

A man, in this world, walks alone in the ill infected streets. His face covered with a frail safety mask covering his mouth. His single reason to even be outside is to travel to the medical center, where he will be diagnosed with a three week illness. As he passes abandoned shops and houses, he is nervous and focused on hearing from the doctor. His symptoms are red dots around his chest and respiratory issues. This is a common illness spread around his location. The medical center is planted deep behind the city, in an untouched forest area, but has roads connected to the main city. After the man returns home with his diagnosis and medicine, he greets his wife, one child, and Grandparents, both diagnosed with cancer. The Grandparents are given one year time from the doctors to heal.

They live all together in a small apartment downtown. The man works two jobs, both inside large buildings where everything is constantly sterilized. He sits hunched in his small office chair inside his one in a million cubicle. Every day the man debates whether his life has a purpose. He asks himself if it is worth keeping up with the ongoing illnesses that cannot be escaped from. He does have trust in time and eventually decides that sickness is a battle worth fighting.

Life does not bring others joy either. It is a constant boggle with time. Time is the only thing helping the people in this world. There is no reason to work harder than your peers. No amount of money can escape you from illnesses. Large salaries become worthless due to the fact that there is nothing to do. Everyone is in their separate homes, sterilized and distanced from the others. Thus, all around the world consists of a similar lifestyle.

Work a small stress free job, make enough money to buy food for your family and pass on these habits to your children.

Around the dinner table the man and his family talk solely about time. This conversation resembles a gloomy yet peaceful talk among the family. If life is this black and white than what keeps them going? What are each of them looking forward to in order to find a purpose in this world? The people are not scared of death. They only fear their current illness, but are unaware why. It is only evolved that illness is bad. To them, time is so sacred that disrespecting it and being mad at it for a death is unacceptable.

After dinner, the child walks alone in his sterilized house, up to his room. Filled with no color, no cartoon heroes, or no favorite sports team. While taking off his clothes for bed, he finds red dots on his small, undeveloped chest. He only thinks about his no purpose school, dying family and future similar to his father's. Sadly, this boy cannot find a purpose. He is not educated about time enough. His next action will change the course of history, in the world where time is the only medicine.