

## **Fast Forwarding**

Max enjoyed fast forwarding—skipping through movies, books, whenever he could—looking at only the ‘good parts.’ It was the good parts he enjoyed the most. He loved spaceships, so in science fiction films he fast forwarded and only watched the spaceships. In books he skipped pages with too much dialogue—exposition. (And let’s not talk about him watching the news, which was bearable only by fast forwarding.)

Max understood watching only highlights in art diminished the build-up, the characterizations, the flavour. But this was the internet age, the age of moments, of spotlights. Fast forwarding fit so well, Max thought, why not do it in real life?

So, after finding plans online, he built a sort of time machine. It fit on his wrist and had simple buttons. He went into work and, seeing he had a morning of boring paperwork, skipped to lunch. The paperwork had been done. He went out and ate a lovely sandwich.

He skipped more paperwork in the afternoon but did attend a staff meeting. He came home to his empty apartment and a frozen dinner. No highlights there. He skipped forward to the next morning.

Over the next week Max skipped much of it. On Saturday he sat on the couch, thinking. What had he learned? That the frequent skipping demonstrated how few highlights his life held. He wanted to skip most of his life. This unexpected result was discombobulating. He realized how boring his life was. His best highlights were watching movies on TV in his living room. Or watching on his other TV, in his bedroom.

Max moved to a remote farm, where he earned a living helping as a handyman with local problems. Those were not highlights, but feeding the chickens and goats and cows were.