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Warped Time

The months, weeks, days, hours, seconds go by. I strain to carry the heavy, bulky luggage uphill for the fifty feet from the car to the line. As I lumber in the heat, beads of sweat drip down the nape of my neck and down my back. I can feel the burn of the judgmental stares from those who arrived just shortly before me. Their eyes follow me but their offers to help are nonexistent. Their silence speaks loudly enough. Determined to be next on line, I quicken my pace. Awkwardly and gracelessly, I push through to finally make it. One, two, three... Tenth on line, not bad. I catch my breath as the line starts to move. The too-tired worker takes my ticket and up the stairs I go. I stare down, careful not to trip from the dizziness I feel at the realization that I am here. The empty sea of navy blue felt chairs shouts out to me. I make my selection and the lucky winner gets to be mine for the next five hours. My busting-at-the-seams backpack is my only companion, filling up the seat beside me. Passengers fill in, but I don't see their faces, just bodies passing by. Eventually the motor roars to life, filling my ears with the all-too-familiar noise. Not soon enough we take off. Slowly at first, then picking up speed, the bus swerves in and out of lanes. I watch as the dashed white lines disappear then reappear as we pass a car going for a leisurely spin. I look out the window, noticing the white clouds that form striations like a tiger's stripes in the sky. The sun radiantly shines through the windshield, blinding passengers. Thoughts pour into my mind as time seems to slow down. The endless conversation with myself occupies me for the hours to come. Could it really have been only two weeks? I was sure it was longer than that. Months, maybe. Marveling, I wonder how time does it. It slows down when we're apart. It's as if it crawls to a sluggish pace, dragging on. Yet time flashes by when we are together. A brilliant moment. And in a burst of a flames, it's gone. What a tricky thing time is. But time goes. And that's one thing that won't change. I count down the hours, so reluctant to pass. Just three

more to go. The scenery flashes by and, as time passes, light fades. The trees form a dark barrier against the even darker sky. The moon, once dull in the background is now bright and center stage. A full moon, how fitting. Whole and strong, the crater in the sky stares back at me, resembling the togetherness I can almost feel. My small yellow iPod on shuffle blasts songs into my mind to distract me from how long I have left to travel. I doze in and out of sleep, jostled every so often by the bumps on the road. Not truly able to focus on resting with my mind racing on what's to come. My pretzel-crossed legs could use a good stretch by the fourth hour. The thought of the initial too tight I've-missed-you hug takes over and my body is shaking. My heart leaps and I await the future. The bright lights blind me as we near the destination. Groans from passengers as they awaken from slumber is heard. Every second closer I hear my heart beat louder and louder till it hurts my chest. I repeatedly check the clock even though it doesn't change. By the fifth look, I've memorized the time, but yet I look a sixth time just to make sure. The anticipation so strong that I'm about to jump out of my seat. As it is I'm stretched almost standing up, craning my neck to see the bus station. The seatbelt stretched to its limit digs into the soft skin around my navel. I'm sure there is a crazed expression apparent on my face, but I could care less. The only thing I care about is the person waiting for me on the other side of the door. After a lifetime has passed, the bus, excruciatingly slow, comes to a stop. The screeching noise leaves my ears as my eyes search the lit building. Searching, searching, face after face. Colors blur past me as my eyes scan and detect the figures. And then I see the person I have been waiting for. A wide smile bursts across my face, straining my cheeks, joy filling my heart. I see the light blue button down shirt, and dark grey dress pants. I see shiny black hair and a brilliant smile. I see him.