

Time Lapse: The Corrupting Power of Foreknowledge



“I know the rule of time and causality is that one should not attempt to change the future. But under these circumstances, it seems to be a risk worth taking.”

Synopsis (*many spoilers ahead!*)

In *Time Lapse*, three roommates stumble upon a neighbor’s camera pointed at their window that captures images from 24 hours into the future. Excited by the potential to benefit from glimpses into the next day, they make choices that ultimately cause their demise. Similar to the ["A Most Unusual Camera"](#) episode from *The Twilight Zone*, the film explores the theme of corruption from the power of knowing the future.

The Corrupting Influence of Power

Through its non-linear structure, this film explores the concept of corruption from knowing a piece of the future and thus believing in having agency over that future. Initially, each character feels empowered or more in control of their destiny through these glimpses. However, these future photos aren't moldable potential outcomes but rather the inevitable consequences of their actions motivated by knowing the future.

Finn, grappling with creative blockage, finds inspiration in the camera's photos of his future paintings. He has the most analytical approach to the situation, working to uncover how the process works and ultimately wanting to leave.

Callie wants a fulfilling relationship with Finn, resorting to manipulating events through the camera to strengthen their bond. While it works for a time, her belief in possessing the ability to not just see but control the future leads her down a destructive path, culminating in her tragically killing her love.

Jasper, driven by greed, exploits the camera's predictions to win at gambling, but his obsession ultimately leads to the murder of anyone who he perceives as a threat to his continuing to receive winning information.

The ability to glimpse the future combined with several errant assumptions about the functionality of the camera caused all three of them to make choices that led to either their death or arrest in the final scene.

Audience Engagement

I found *Time Lapse* intellectually engaging, constantly trying to anticipate its twists. Unlike other narratives where there are few hints about the twists, *Time Lapse* offers clear clues that are unfortunately disregarded by its characters, challenging the audience's perception of what is true in that world.

It also offers a deeply emotional experience. The dark and gritty tone, punctuated by moments of violence, drew me into the stakes of the characters' actions. I found myself emotionally invested in Finn's and Callie's storylines as they appeared to be the most powerless against their circumstances. However, in the twist reveal of Callie's manipulation and unexpected agency, I sympathized with Finn and also felt betrayed. It was very emotionally effective writing.

Rating

5 out of 5 Stars

This is a memorable and engaging film. I am emotionally impacted every time I watch it, wishing to have the ability to warn the characters about what will happen if they continue along their destructive paths.