

Window 2050

By Jackie Manz

Waiting. I am biding time. Not something that I do well, even as an elder. I stand at the east windows of this, my Lake Oswego hilltop home, watching the clouds mass black and break to blue sky. I see Mt. Hood. Now I don't. Dressed for the day in the green moss and gray sheath that my neighbor wove, I am ready. Anticipation. A cast of red tail hawks rides on the wind. They give me pleasure, a reminder of continuity, grace, freedom and will. Blossoms blow from the heirloom orange trees that border the yard. I hand planted them as part of the Great Garden Experiment 2030, along with a hedge of white flowered Oleanders and row of rust Bougainvillea. They thrived. The Community tells me that there is a new code that requires a return to Northwest rain forest native gardens. I will comply. Eventually.

The C-sharp chord chime of a delivery arrival sounds. Finally. I exhale, turn from the window, cross the small room to retrieve what I've waited so long for. The send-cell is from Zurich, Switzerland. Nostalgic alpine images scroll across its smooth surface. I resist the urge to open it then and there. I have planned for this moment; it is monumental in its smallness, its intimacy. I sit in my window chair. I resisted the chair that talked to the window. "Just wait," said my youngest, in her calm wise way, "you will learn to love it." I did, more quickly than I let on. Now. It is time.

The window responds, filling the space with cool blue light. I slide my finger across the send-cell. It opens with that familiar hiss. Atop the package sits a pair of fine mesh gloves, which the curator said must be worn. I slip them on. I lift the paisley cloth wrapped rectangle out of the box. I unwrap that. Finally. I hold the book in my hands. Connection. The book, this journal, began fifty or 200 or many more years ago. In the days to come, I will write my journal piece. Faith. I will then send the book to a woman in a village at base of another volcano, Cotopaxi. Out the window, I see that the rain is moving in from the west. The hawks are now in hiding. I turn to the first page of the book, read the first line.

"I sincerely wish for and will work toward a better world." Ah, perpetuity.

Jackie Manz is a business and strategic management consultant, twenty-one year resident of Lake Oswego and currently sits on the Lake Oswego city council