

# Behind the Glass

By Susmita Bhat

Jane lifted herself from the walls of her capsule. She brushed off the powder that lined her suit, which turned into a wispy white cloud. To her surprise, the cloud evaporated in a matter of a few seconds.

The lady seated next to the capsule was wearing a white coat and clear glasses. Upon noticing Jane, she chirped "Oh, hi you're Jane, right? Welcome to Earth! My name is Linda and I'm a nurse practitioner. Let me just check your vitals, you know, just to make sure the liquid nitrogen didn't cause any damage. Well, everything seems normal to me. You should probably head on over to the cafeteria. It's down the hall, to the right."

Jane nodded her head and proceeded towards the dining hall.

Just then her mother called out, "Jane! I was waiting for you! Thank God you finally woke up. I were worried that something was wrong."

"It's okay Mom. I'm fine, just feeling a little dizzy right now."

"Oh, well have some food, it'll help you feel better. I heard its food that people on Earth eat. You should try some of this white stuff. I think it's called 'Mashed Po-tay-tos'. Well whatever it is, it's a lot tastier than soylent. Oh by the way, the agency said that we'll can move into to our new house soon. I know that everything seems to be happening so fast, but once school starts you'll start to like it here. Okay?"

She smiled and nodded her head. Once she reached her bunk, she drifted off to sleep due to the exhausting journey.

A few days had passed, and the day had finally come for Jane to move in to her house. Jane entered her room and immediately unpacked her bag and immediately took out a pair of black goggles and a sheet of chrome-tinted glass. The wooden table creaked under the weight of the glass panel, as she hung it vertically and began securing an apparatus to the glass. Her mother keenly observed her tinker with the device, inserting cable after cable and using a manual to make sense of the machinery. Jane placed the goggles on her face and touched the glass screen. Behind the glass was a middle-aged gray-haired man wearing a spacesuit.

"Jane. Is that you?" he inquired.

Jane glanced at the screen with tears rolling her face. She sobbed, "I really miss you Dad. I wish you could have come with us."

I know Jane. I miss you too. But the virtual reality technology makes it seem quite real. We can even have dinner together. It's almost dinner time now let's eat."

Jane and her mother grabbed their plates and chatted away, catching up with all the news they had missed for the last ten years. Even with all of the new cultures and cuisines she could explore, dinner on Earth had become her favorite time of the day.