

# PALO ALTO ODYSSEY

## Miranda considers selling parents' house

MIRANDA was back in Palo Alto for the first time in 15 years. She was here to sell her parents' house, the one she had grown up in during the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s.

As she walked down University Avenue, she reflected on her conversation with her niece Christi. Very concerned about money and survival, Christi had decided to marry a rich, slightly autistic tech start-up maven whom she did not love.

That uncomfortable decision of Christi's contributed to Miranda's sense of being in a surreal world. Miranda knew Palo Alto well, having lived here the first 22 years of her life, but as she walked down University Avenue, the town felt both familiar and unfamiliar.

This is part 15 of a 24-part fictionalized serial appearing in the Daily Post, written by John Angell Grant with illustrations by Steve Curl.

Again she had a sense that she was in that old "Twilight Zone" episode where the man came home at night on his commute train to a town he lived in — only to find that there were houses where that morning there had been just empty lots.

For Miranda, walking down University Avenue, more recently constructed tall and massive buildings replaced the stores from her youth. And the people in Palo Alto this afternoon looked different. They were dressed

carefully and expensively, and seemed to be searching — for what, Miranda wasn't sure.

These were not the easy-going pedestrians of Miranda's childhood, but intense people, focused by determination and purpose, and with a worried look in their eyes.



MIRANDA

She glanced at a coffeehouse to her left, filled with perfect bodies, perfect clothes and perfect faces — most of the people working on their digital devices. It was a world of drones.

Friends had been telling Miranda to hang on to her Southgate neighborhood house, that it was a great

investment. "There is no better place to keep your money right now," her friend Carl had advised, "than in your parent's old Palo Alto house."

Miranda's property taxes were low — \$2,000 a year on a home her parents had bought in 1958 for \$22,000.

If she sold it for \$3 million, as the real estate agents were advising her, the next owner would pay at least \$35,000 a year in property taxes, based on the latest sales price, whether that person tore it down and built a McMansion, or not.

"To sell or not to sell," Miranda pondered. She realized that this was a luxury problem.

**More tomorrow.**