

PALO ALTO ODYSSEY

Christi's dilemma — money or love?

MIRANDA continued her walk downtown. She was meeting her niece Christi at Coupa Cafe coffee shop on Ramona Street.

Christi was her deceased brother's daughter. She had just turned 25. She was five years old when her father, Miranda's brother, had died from a life of drug and alcohol use. At the time, Miranda had stepped in and served as a surrogate parent of sorts.

Christi was a recent MBA grad from Stanford; and had sent Miranda a long email a month earlier saying she was thinking of getting married; but couldn't quite make up her mind. The two women had talked about it on the phone several times.

The problem for Christi was that, although she wasn't quite sure this man was the perfect life partner

This is part 4 of a 24-part fictionalized serial appearing in the Daily Post, written by John Angell Grant with illustrations by Steve Curl.

for her, he was a very successful co-founder of one of Palo Alto's most successful start-ups; and had become a billionaire while still in his 20s.

"How can I pass this up?" Christi had asked Miranda in a phone call.

"Give it some time," advised Miranda. "Think about it. You don't want to make the wrong decision. If he's not somebody you love, then don't do it."

"I have to think about the money," said Christi. "It's too good a chance to pass up."

Miranda was upset by Christi's cavalier attitude, to her a non-feminist attitude. "What is the world coming to?" Miranda thought to herself, "When young women marry for money."

As Miranda walked up Ramona toward her meeting with her niece, she thought about her own money. She had come back to Palo Alto partly to get her parents' old family house in order, and to sell it. It was a California bungalow in the Southgate section of Palo Alto, which she had rented out in recent years.



CHRISTI

Miranda's brother had been living there when he died 20 years earlier; and each time she thought about selling the house, she did the financial

research, and realized that hanging on to it a few more years was probably her best financial investment.

This house that her parents had bought for \$22,000 in 1958; could now sell for \$3 million, a Palo Alto realtor had told her the day before. Now that Miranda was looking towards her retirement, she wanted to do the right thing with this precious investment.

Miranda walked onto the busy outdoor patio of the lovely downtown coffee shop.

"Aunt Miranda!" cried Christi. She jumped up from the table where she was sitting, ran over and hugged her aunt.

"I need your help desperately, Aunt Miranda," Christi said. "My love life is a mess!"

More tomorrow.