

The background of the cover is a blue-tinted photograph of a city skyline. In the center of the sky, there is a large, textured, circular object that resembles a large, glowing orb or a massive, textured sphere. The city buildings are visible in the lower half of the image, with a prominent skyscraper on the left. The overall color palette is dominated by various shades of blue and cyan.

# Hey Mom

an essay

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The tone sounded at 7 am and Jessica told it to stop and then rolled the covers back over her head. It was only a few minutes before the bedroom door cleared and Jessica's mother was standing outside looking in.

“Jess, it's time to wake. Only so much time to wash, dress and eat before your first class.”

“Oh, mom,” she mumbled and reluctantly moved her feet from the bed to the floor.

By the time she showered and dressed for breakfast, her mother was already in the kitchen heating her favorite sandwich and pouring some juice. The news scrolled on the kitchen monitor. Jessica walked in, hair still wet, and planted herself on the stool, back to the monitor, looking toward her mother.

“Hey Mom, I have a few more weeks until break. When classes are over can we go outside?”

“We'll see, Jess. It all depends. We might need to wait for the cooler months.”

“We've been studying the effects in science class and timeline in history class. There were people who knew what would happen, but none of them were in charge. Sure, eventually the movers and

shakers had to admit there was a problem, but by then it was too late to stop the first of the undeniable effects. And even then, they bought government and still tried. They really did, and still had believers. That was when the majority finally saw them as the outliers and forced change.”

“So sorry it was left this way, Jess, but I’m grateful they did solve the problem. It will just take time to reverse it; generations they say, but it’s begun. It’s a fragile world as we all now know. That much is painfully obvious, but at least your children will inherit a better world, and even better for your grandchildren. I never knew a better one, but that thought helps.”

“Sorry for you too, Mom. But let’s try to get outside in a few weeks. Let’s walk on the beach. I promise we will wear the right gear, but I want to see it again.”

“But Jess, you really want to see the ruins again?”

“I’ve seen the photographs from the early 21<sup>st</sup> century. I’ve seen how beautiful it all was. I’ve studied how food tasted better grown in the last of the outside farms. I saw when people could live in the open easily without fear of weather. I saw the photos before so many forests burned, and mud swept away the rest. So, I see the ruins, but I see what we will begin to see again in just a few generations.”

“And in you, Jess; I see hope.”