

## **The Missoula Bubble**

By Sascha Laroche

My alarm goes off, echoing through the walls of my small studio apartment. The sun shines through my window, my spider plant drinking it in. Today is June 18th, 2070. My birthday. Before the bubble enclosed my life, I loved my birthdays. Now it's just another day. Ten years ago the world went to hell. No place was safe, the world was burning. You'd think then why am I here talking about how I don't like my birthday. Well this man, Jered Smoke, he created one place on Earth that was safe, Missoula, Montana. He designed this bubble that now encloses Missoula. The bubble uses fingerprints to allow access, everyone is trackable. He wanted this haven of beauty, of nature. The sun always shines, the plants always thrive. It is the exact definition of perfection. But for me it is controlling. Don't get me wrong I like the beauty, and I certainly don't want to be outside seeing the horrible things our world is experiencing, but I feel as though there is something missing. Some parts of my life are simply unfulfilled. Anyway, back to today, my birthday. I look down at my phone, vibrating on my nightstand. It's my mom. I hit the answer button. The room fills with my mom's bubbly voice, she says, "Hi darling, happy birthday beautiful. What are your plans for today? Maybe coffee with your brother? He sure misses you Jess. That reminds me I need to call for your cake, chocolate right?" I reply, "Yes, mom, whatever you want." I definitely did not get my mom's vocals. She continues, talking about her day, and all the things she has planned. I stare out the window watching a butterfly slowly travel from one flower to the next. As my attention focuses back on the phone call I hear my mom saying, "I heard on the news that someone tried to get into Missoula with their fingerprint but were denied, poor thing must be so scared out there." I reply, "Mom, I keep trying to get you to listen to me about this place. It's a cage. Me in the bubble is like a canary in a metal cage, I can only sit here." She doesn't hear me, already busy talking about something else. When she's finally done, I decide to get some work done. With a warm cup of tea in my hand, I sit down with

my computer. It pings with an email, as I open it I see that the email is from the law school I applied to weeks and weeks ago. I only applied to see what would happen, I never thought in a million years I would be opening it to find a congratulation letter. I sit there, my mouth hanging slack. I may not know exactly what my purpose is, but I sure as hell am gonna find it. This email is the start to everything.