

David Jackley.

A Tuesday in 2031

I wake at 5:45 without an alarm. The air is cool. My sleep and wake rhythms are healthy and firm because I have worked to make them so. I go quietly downstairs, make coffee, and read my daily guided devotional. The coffee smells wonderful and warms and wakes me. I pray and sit in silence, grateful for this day, and listen for what is calling me. I catch up on some chess moves and look at any to-dos. Sandra wakes and we soon take our morning walk. Side by side, facing forward, breathing deeply is when we have our best talks and planning. We talk about the grandkids. Jaspar, who five years ago was going on his first walk and dinner with a girl he had liked for two years, is now engaged to her. Judah just set a personal record in swimming and won a scholarship. Soraya, who once introduced her teacher to her imaginary friend Lucy, is now writing a story about her. We plan Friday's dinner with two of our favorite couples and talk about the play we are all going to see.

At ten I meet Paul for coffee to check on each other's lives and the missions we are each working at. I realize I have asked him four questions before I have shared a thing — and he is realizing, out loud, that he has been dumping his day on his wife without asking about hers. I have lunch with my son, Adam. He is enthusiastically busy on four fronts: this week's sermon, the second church expansion, Selah's applications, and two struggling families in the congregation. I am thirsty to hear all of it.

That afternoon I meet with Gregory, whom I am mentoring through Urban Impact. He has become a ministry fellow there, and he wonders whether he could contribute more by following his passion for art, sportswear design or music. I ask him: if God put you in the wilderness with room in your backpack for only one of those things, which would you choose? He lights up. He says he has been hearing, "Honor me with the highest use of the creativity I have given you."

Then yoga, where a quart of sweat rolls off me and I drink a quart back in. In the lobby I set a lunch date with Roger, ten years younger, who wants to talk about retirement.

Sandra and I have dinner together, even though our tastes are completely different and I have kept off the weight I needed to lose with the same boring discipline that fixed my sleep five years ago. She tells me about the friend she had lunch with and the plans for Joyce's birthday. It is winter, and I bring in a bundle of wood and build a fire in the stove. I read a chapter of Annie Dillard's *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*, then we catch a British murder mystery, hitting pause to argue about the plot. My call to sleep comes around ten. I write down three good things from the day and how they came about. What I am

already living is the listening — I am here for people I know and love, I have nothing to prove, and I know them better and am better known. What I am still reaching for is the two-in-the-morning friend. I have thirty years of monthly Zoom calls with the same men, and I am only now learning to ask them the second question.

What I have set down is the advice-giver — the consultant, the agent, the parent with the answer. What I can still offer anyone is a way of listening and connecting, curating an idea, adapting it and delivering it — not by force but by presence. That has always been my mission. The Monday I have avoided is the airport: the road show, driving to solve, convince and provide, while missing face to face with the people back home who went unasked. A kiss to Sandra and lights out. I drift off, excited about tomorrow.