

Walking in Time

It's one of my earliest memories, walking the circuit round the park with Grandma. She'd placed an acorn in my palm. "Look at this Lola, an acorn." I marvelled at how the smooth acorn resembled my young skin and the wrinkled cup matched Grandma's. I put my hand in hers as we walked. We fitted together perfectly just like the acorn and its cup.

We walked that circuit each week. I'd collect things; feathers, flowers, leaves for her to name.

Over time, the trail became longer for Grandma and shorter for me. We'd stop at a particular oak, leaning against the solid trunk. Grandma and the tree listened to my worries and advised. I'd breathe in sappy sunshine and feel better.

A winter year came when snow slushed the path. We walked no further than the oak. Wrapped in thick coats, hats and gloves. Grandma's nose was red and sniffly, "I miss Grandpa so much."

"You're still loved," I told her, trying to sound wise. I removed my glove to squeeze her wool covered hand.

Springs came and went. She moved more slowly, frequently paused for breath. Gripped my arm, her back hunched. We stood against the tree, watching buds bloom.

"Give me your hand," I said one day, guiding her hand to my stomach. "Can you feel the baby kick?"

She grabbed me in a fierce hug.

Today, I pick an acorn up and place it in my Grand-daughter's outstretched palm. Her skin so smooth and soft, mine wrinkled.