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Untitled

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College of DuPage

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JUST THE QUIET, AND THE WIND
it took me awhile to figure it out. There
was a flash of light and there I was,
looking for food. The last thing I
remembered was hearing a voice that told
me to look away. I still felt the flash of
light; I felt it through my skin, and then I
was flopping on the wind. But I don’t
remember landing.

But I had to find food.

It didn’t look like it was going to be
easy. But it was amazing how much of
that town hadn’t burned down. If I could
find where the grocery store used to be,
maybe I could trace the rubble and find
some food. It might have been
contaminated, but if it was, then so was I,
so what difference did it make? I started
walking down the street.

The blast wave did a good job in that
town. Most of the buildings looked more
like piles of rubble, though once in a while
I came across one that was still partially
standing. The wind whistled around them
like a ghost, the quiet was unsettling.

Once that piece was crowded with
people, the complications of everyday life,
cars honking, people talking. Then a flash
of light and the world changed. The
people disappeared. But the past didn’t
matter anymore. Only survival mattered.

Dusk was coming on, and it would be
cold, even though I didn’t feel any colder.
I went in search of a blanket.

I spotted something that looked like
cloth near some rocks that looked like
concrete—it was hard to tell. Part of the
cloth was flapping in the wind. It was
colored. I started to run toward it
when I saw her.

She was climbing a pile of debris, for
what reason I couldn’t hazard a guess.

There was another person alive! Someone
to talk to—to help with the world! I ran
after her; I yelled, “Hey! Hey! You! Here I
am!” But when she saw me a look of
horror filled her eyes that stopped me in
my tracks. She screamed “Not I’m not
ready!” I ran after her, crying, “Wait! I
can help you! We can help each other!”
But I tripped on a brick and fell on her
face. My nose started to bleed. When my
vision cleared, she was gone. “Damn!
brood, anyway,” I mumbled as I walked
back to the cloth. She would probably
run and cry and use up my food supply.

My food supply! I ran to where I found the
cloth. It looked like a Persian rug, or
something. I dug it back as fast as I
could to the shelter. If she had taken my
food supply, I would have killed her! But I
found my food supply safe at home. They
were eating a little sluggish—but maybe
they were dying.

By then blood was running down into
my mouth and down my chin. I wiped it
off with the back of my hand, and after
starting at my bloody hand for a few
seconds, I licked it clean. No use wasting
perfectly good protein.

The next morning, I hid my food and
my blanket behind a pile of bricks in case
that crazy brood was to find them, and
went out to explore. If there was me, and
there was her, maybe there might be
others that I could talk some sense into.
And I’d probably need a better shelter,
and a water supply, and these grass-
hoppers wasn’t going to last much
longer. I suddenly recognized my
surroundings.

It was quite bizarre, because there
wasn’t much surroundings to recognize.
But I knew where I was. On my own
street. And that looked like—yes! Where
those two elm trees once stood next to
each other! That meant my own house
was right down that street. Part of it was
still standing! It all struck me as quite funny. So I
walked home.

Home.

And in my own home I realized what
had happened. Not just to me, but to the
world, hopes and dreams and the love for
freedom. I found it in the charred remains
of a human body. Mine.

“Something told me that maybe you
didn’t know,” a voice from behind me
said. I turned around to face her. She
said, “I’m sorry.” I said to her, “I’m not
ready, either.”

What will happen to her?

“Don’t worry,” the man smiled. “She’ll
take care of.”

by Tammy Mykulska

TENNESSEE FOUGT

I wish I could
forget the clock
love each minute
free from worry;
but there’s no time.
And now I’m late for class.
by Sally D. Freels