The Girl in the Storm
by Ben Loory

There once was a girl who was lost in a storm. She wandered this way and that, this way and that, trying to find a way home. But the sky was too dark, and the rain too fierce; all the girl did was go in circles.

Then, suddenly, there were arms around her. Strong arms-- good strong arms. And they picked the girl up and carried her away. When she woke, she was lying in bed.

It was a warm bed-- very warm-- by a roaring fire. The blankets were soft, and she was dry. She looked around the room. There were paintings on the walls.

There was a hot cup of tea on the nightstand.

Hello? called the girl. Hello? Hello?

A young man appeared in the doorway. He looked down at the girl with a kind, quiet smile.

Feel better? he said.

And she did.

The girl stayed with the man for quite a long time, until she had all her strength back.

I guess it's time for me to go home, she said, and she started to gather her clothes.

But when she got to the door, she saw the rain was still falling. If anything, it was falling even harder. So she took off her clothes again, and went back to bed, and lay in the man's arms a little longer.

This went on for a very long time, and eventually the girl grew very old.

And then one day she discovered on the wall by the door the switch that turned the rain on and off.

She stood there staring at the beautiful day outside, and then down
at the simple little switch. She listened as the birds flew by the
window, singing.
And then she turned and went back to bed.

In the night, that night, the man woke up.
Did the rain stop? he said. I dreamt it did.
And the girl put her arms around the man and held him tight.
It may have, she said. But it's all right.