

# Storms

by Fred Osuna

## Storm I

Sirens wake me, screaming warnings in the dark. I groan, turn over in bed. The alarm clock sits silently on the bureau, glowing red: 5:32.

Under covers, I hear the wind kick up: fallen magnolia leaves scrape across the cement patio. I slide out of the bed, pad down the hallway.

As I pour water into the coffeemaker, the power goes out. The wind shrieks across the kitchen window, eleven inches from my face.

I retreat to the interior hallway, grabbing my cell phone en route. I sit down beside a pile of dirty clothes. Today was to be laundry day.

## Storm II (April 27, 2011)

The tornado drops bits of Tuscaloosa in Birmingham yards: shingles, chunks of insulation, a bank deposit slip, a woman's swimsuit.

Post-tornado, people shop for replacement storage sheds; a clerk diverts their attention from the crumpled one in the parking lot.

He's been without power for days, complaining. At work, people buy flashlights, tarps and chain saws from him. Now he feels lucky.

Electricity courses into his house, waking it after a four-day nap: the AC vent yawns, ceiling fans stretch, the refrigerator groans.

My CA cousin FB-messages my SC mother to ask how I am after the AL tornados. Mom then phones to tell me.

