

Boom

by Kevin Myrick

Carol pulled the minivan into the garage and watched the door slowly fall in the rear view mirror. Jackie and Melissa got out of the van as quick as they could and tracked mud into the kitchen. She looked around at the mess they left as she toted in the first few sacks of groceries. "Goodness gracious you kids."

"A little help with the groceries?" she yelled back at them, but the only answer she heard was cartoons that blared in the background. Now she had to sweep and mop. She didn't have time for this. She still had to bake her apple cobbler for Wednesday night at the church.

"Jackie! Melissa!"

Still no answer. She went back out to grab the rest of the groceries and as she sat them on the counter she heard a loud boom and then nothing. As she fell, she hit her head against the counter and blacked out cold. The girls ran into the kitchen crying, tears streamed down their face and they knealed at their mothers side and tried to wake her. They gently slapped her face and tried to open her eyes. Nothing worked.

"Is mom dead?" Jackie shouted at Melissa. Their ears were still full of bells and whistles.

"She's breathing. Her heart is beating. I don't think she's dead."

"What do we do?"

"Call 9-1-1."

Jackie went for the phone, but it was dead. Melissa looked down and

saw her mother open her eyes, finally.

"What happened? Are you guys OK?"

"We're fine."

"We need to get out of here."

They helped Carol to her feet; the three forced the front door open and what laid before them was unbelieve.

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"You know what time it is E.B.?" Jeff asked as he twisted his grinder over and over in his hand. "It's 4:18 p.m. Almost time..."

E.B. jumped up and down, danced around in excitement. The chihuahua loved weed as much as Jeff did - begged to have smoke blown in his face. Jeff didn't think himself a very competent pet owner by doing such a thing, but he wasn't all that concerned with the thought. He only had two minutes left.

With the television on mute, Jeff pushed play on the stereo and Dave Brubeck's Take Five blared out of the speakers. E.B. began his dance as 4:20 came quickly and Jeff lit the bowl and sucked for all his life on the bong. Then all the sudden, he heard a boom and the windows blew out. E.B. ran into the bathroom and jumped into the tub, where he usually went to hide during thunderstorms.

Jeff had been pushed to the floor and coughed, saw his bong had been turned over along with his freshly ground weed.

"Holy Christ that was some explosive shit."

E.B. licked his face as he rolled over and pushed himself up off the floor. He looked out his window and saw devastation all around. It

was as if a car bomb went off in Beaver Cleaverville.

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Mario hated the roar of the blower he carried on his back, hated it more than anything else. But it was part of his job, all the noise. If it wasn't the blower, it was the lawnmower or the weed eater that annoyed him. He wished he could get a job that required no noise. He'd have killed to be a janitor at the public library, but he didn't have a green card. So he was stuck working for his brother-in-law's lawn care business.

He always wore ear muffs whenever he worked, which annoyed the other guys on the job. They wanted to talk all the time: where did you come from? Where is your family? Check out the hot ass on the lady who drinks in the morning. He didn't care to jabber on. He wanted to get the job done and go home, be with his wife and children.

The blower hummed along as the rest of the world faded from his notice and he thought about how he could get a better job. He needed more education, but that would cost money. Money that he didn't have at the moment. The winds of change had swept him up and he landed no better off than where he started off from in his village in Honduras.

He was almost done with the yard when something pushed him to the ground and the blower motor quit. He pulled off ear muffs and all around car alarms and smoke detectors blared their loud, panicked cry. He staggered on his feet and grabbed his head that throbbed in pain. The house with the lovely blond housewife who sat by the pool was gone, nothing left but the stump of a chimney. He couldn't believe his eyes but it was gone, all gone.

