

To Find A Life

by Jim Hamlett

A rumbling cannonade of thunder reached through Moses Mackenzie's open window and snatched him from his dream. With a jerk, Moe awoke. His mind danced between this world and the other as he fixed himself in space and time. At a loud snap, Moe propped himself on an elbow and tuned his ear to the darkness. But he heard nothing beyond the ruckus rustling through the window he'd opened before retiring.

Moe glanced at his bedside clock and read 4:07 in pale green digits. He slipped from bed and waddled on his dwarf legs to the window. As he closed it, lightning flickered like a dying bulb and bathed the world in blue-white brightness. Another robust round of South Carolina thunder rattled his window. Rain swept through the trees in a sizzling crescendo. Lightning flashed again, and Moe saw the treetops wave wildly in a wind that moaned against the glass. A few leaves let loose and shot into the night like kites snapped from their strings.

For several minutes, Moe watched the outside world roil. Few people understood how soothing a storm could be. He recalled the many nights he and his best friend, Winston MacReynolds, sat on their beds as children, safe behind the stone walls of the Scottish orphanage. They reveled in a Highland tempest. "Marvelous," Winston often muttered. When it was over, they'd sleep like newborns.

He plodded back to bed, yet stopped shy. He felt hungry. But if he ate at this hour, he'd be in double jeopardy. Not only would he lose sleep, he'd gain weight—his constant nemesis. He stood still and hoped the demons of the midnight snack would leave him be. But it was too late. He sighed and chuckled at his formidable foe. Moe walked toward his doorway determined to do nothing more than drown the demons in a drink of water while he waited for the storm to pass. Then he'd return, open his window again, and trust the singing of the wind through the trees to lull him into peaceful sleep.