

## Twister

By: Aaron Jurek

Josh woke up to find himself sitting in his leather recliner, with the TV remote in hand. He loved his 20-acre farmhouse in Oklahoma. Josh looked down at his watch to find that he had slept way too long! *Great* he thought to himself. *Now I won't be tired for bed since it's already 7:42pm.* As he got up from the chair, he expected to see a nice sunset, but it had been replaced by a bunch of gray storm clouds! Josh thought to himself, *Wonderful. First I overslept, and then I lost a nice sunset! Oh well, I had better get dinner started anyway.*

Later that evening, Josh looked out the window again. The gray clouds had gotten even darker. *Hopefully they are gone by tomorrow* he thought. In bed, Josh could not sleep because of his earlier nap, so he laid awake listening to the wind through the cracked-open windows. The wind was getting stronger, but he did not think much of it.

Josh was thirsty so he got out of bed to get water, and when he went to the kitchen, he looked out the window. As he was filling his cup, what Josh saw next would change his life forever. The cup fell right out of his hand and onto the floor! His jaw dropped, and he stood in shock as a tornado that looked like it was one and a half miles wide, was speeding right at him, leaving nothing but debris behind it! No homes, no trees, no animals, no nothing. He ran to the TV to try to get intel on it, but the power was out. He ran to the nightstand that held his battery-powered radio and found that it worked. After tuning in the weather channel, he was informed that a tornado with wind speeds reaching 220 miles per

hour and moving at 65 miles per hour was leveling homes, wheat fields, and barns. This monster could not be stopped!

Josh ran to his closet, and grabbed his go bag because storms like this were common. He threw the bag over his shoulder, grabbed his radio and his jacket, and raced to the front door. Unlocking and opening the door as fast as he could, Josh ran to his storm shelter, which was about 65 feet from his house. He did not bother to close the front door because his home was about to get leveled, and the same with him if he didn't move faster. He reached the storm shelter and opened the hatch door; he chucked the go bag in and then remembered something very important. He had been in such shock after seeing the tornado, that he forgot about his dog, Decker! He ran as fast as he could back to the house, grabbed his half-asleep golden retriever, and sprinted back out the door to the shelter. He could hear the tornado's wind howling behind him. Running down the shelter stairs, Josh set a startled Decker down, then turned around to close the hatch door. As he ran back up the stairs, he saw the monster tornado about to flatten his house. He slammed the hatch door closed, locked it fast, and he and Decker were safe for now.

Two hours passed before Josh heard on his radio that the worst of the storms were over for the time being. He sat wondering what kind of damage the twister had done. Josh looked out the thick glass window on the hatch door, but he couldn't see anything because there was a bunch of debris on top of it! He unlocked the hatch, then pushed with as much force possible, moving the partial door and workbench that had flown all the way from the barn. He looked around to see nothing but rubble. The house, the barn, and fields of wheat were all gone. There were thousands of dollars in property damage everywhere he looked! Josh

and Decker climbed out of the storm shelter, and the only thing that was not fully destroyed was his pickup truck. Yes, it had some damage to it, but it should be drivable once he repaired a few things. That is, if he had any tools that weren't lost in the tornado!

Decker, his loyal companion, sat down next to Josh and licked his hand. Josh looked down at Decker, and then back at the truck. He knew that he needed to fix his truck so they could get to town. From his view, the town off in the distance looked like big pile of rubble. He hoped the people had received warning and had enough time to find shelter before it had hit!

Hours later, Josh was finally done fixing his truck. It took a few tries, but his truck started up. He was out of food and was sharing the last water bottle with Decker, so they could both have a drink. As he was driving to town, he took a last look at what used to be his land, and then at Decker. *At least they were alive!*

In town, there were lots of people running around to help trapped residents remove the debris. There was quite a mess, but plenty of help, so he kept driving. They needed food and water and it looked like there was none to be found here. They would have to go to a different town.

As they were driving, all Josh could see were plains of grass with gray clouds above them. Ten minutes later, rain drops started to come down. At first it was just a sprinkle, then heavier rain followed, and then it poured. A severe weather warning came onto the radio and the alert echoed through the truck.

"I guess we'll have another storm soon, Decker," said Josh, patting him on the head. He didn't know it would be life threatening, but thirty minutes later, another weather alert came onto the radio. A PDS tornado warning had been

issued for the area they were driving right for! This would indicate a particularly dangerous situation with an EF2 tornado or higher.

“We had better keep an eye out for the tornado,” said Josh to Decker. He hoped it would miss them.

It wasn't long before Josh could see the town in the distance. The rain was still coming down hard, but no tornado was in sight, yet. As they were driving, Josh looked to his left and saw a bunch of debris flying in a circle through the air.

“OH NO!” yelled Josh. “THAT LOOKS LIKE A RAIN WRAPPED TORNADO AND IT'S HEADING RIGHT FOR US!” As Josh recalled, a rain wrapped tornado is a tornado with a rain cloud in front of it, making a wall of rain that sometimes makes tornados look invisible. Josh's foot pressed the peddle to the floor. His speed increased from sixty-five to seventy-five to eighty miles per hour. Josh tightened his seat belt.

“We can't outrun it and we're in a death trap,” he said. The roaring tornado was still speeding right toward them, so Josh put Decker onto the floor to keep him away from the windows in case they blew out. The tornado was now only a few hundred feet from the truck. Josh slammed on the brakes.

“I know we can't out-run it, Decker, but if I stop, we will hopefully only hit the tail end of the tornado.” Josh watched as the monster, hungry for his truck, was about to hit them. He put the vehicle in park, and then ducked below the windows and waited.

It started to hail, and the hail was making dents in the windshield. Then the windshield started to crack. The passenger window was getting hit the hardest, and the truck was filled with the sound of the hail denting the metal. The vehicle was being pulled closer and closer to the tornado and was nearly getting sucked

up. The tires started to howl as the rubber was squealing on the road. The hail was hitting the passenger window and it was about to break! The window got hit with a hail ball and the ball went right through the window and almost hit Decker in the head! Josh ducked down even more so he didn't get hit by hail, and just then, Decker started to bark.

Josh looked up to see Decker getting sucked out the window! Josh bolted up and grabbed Decker by the scruff. The dog's barking turned to howling as the dog was half in the truck and half out the window getting pulled out! As Josh was clinging to Decker, trying to get him back in the vehicle, a piece of metal flew through the windshield and cut Josh's arm, making him nearly let go! The truck went from a fast spin to a slower spin, and then it screeched to a stop. Both Josh and Decker were in shock, but mainly Decker, who was still halfway out the window. Josh pulled him back into the truck and started to pet him as they both sat there in surprise.

"Well, Decker," said Josh. "I think we are going to be moving out of Oklahoma soon! I've had enough of this type of weather." They drove off in their barely-drivable-truck to get food, water, and rest. As they were heading out, a last piece of metal roofing from the tornado slammed down and went right through the roof of the truck!

Josh bolted upright in bed, with Decker asleep at his feet. *Was that all just a dream? Had a big tornado actually hit his house?* he thought. Thirsty, Josh decided to get up for a drink of water.

As he walked to the kitchen and was filling his cup, Josh glanced out the window. What did he see? A one-and-a-half-mile wide tornado heading right for

him! "That is so weird. It's just like what happened in my dream!" he said. *I don't care about my dream right now. What I care about now is being safe!*

Josh ran to the closet, grabbed his go bag, battery-powered radio, his jacket, and then he looked at his bed.

"I'm not forgetting Decker this time," he said. "And we are definitely moving!"