

The Storm

In October of 2012, it is beautiful, sunny, and colorful with the

falling autumn leaves. They are sprinkled with silvery raindrops as Hurricane Sandy descends upon our East coast. Watching the news Isee the

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devastation,the danger, the death and I begin shaking as old fear and

memories return.

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It was a warm summer day in June of 1935. I was busy in the kitchen helping my mother with preparations for my brother's Bar-Mitzva, a holy event in my religion. It was a joyous occasion and we are all excitedly looked forward to attending Friday night services. All dressed in my new finery my mother had made, I was especially thrilled. But nature had a different plan and prevented my family from celebrating. A storm suddenly turned our happy day to dark clouds, heavy wind and raining. My father arrived home to find that my brother was out in the storm at the nearby river with his friends. He rushed out of the house to find him. The storm raged. He could not find him anywhere.

Alone, my father tried to return,but the storm prevented him. Barraged by violent gusts of wind and debris he fought to make progress, but the roof of a shed blew off and struck him, directly piercing his head with nails; he fell unconscious. After the storm calmed he was found and picked up by four neighborhood men. Before they rushed him to the hospital,they brought

him to the front of our house. In the street, seeing the streams of blood and

his unconscious form, my mother fainted. From the house my grandma and my aunt Helen ran to her with rubbing alcohol. I watched as they unbutton her dress and help her to begin breathing again. I was terrified and confused. Screaming and sobbing in the street I was dumbfounded.

My brother returned home to the chaos, his father in the hospital fighting for his life and his mother inconsolable. Our father passed away the next morning and funeral services were Sunday. None of our family attended services in the temple after the storm. The food and pastries that had been lovingly prepared for the celebration were given away, useless now.

Many, many years have gone by since this tragedy, but my fear of the storm has not. I shiver when the wind is strong. Iclose my eyes when I see lighting, and I cover my ears when I hear thunder.

Lydia Lebovic