

Caught up in the Rapture

By Lily White

I heard it on the radio. The DJ said that on May 21st, the WORLD WILL END. It was that station WJCN. That's the only one that comes in strong around here without getting scratchy when I drive over the mountain to Schoharie County. Sometimes I wish they would play more country music like that Shania Twain or that black girl Violet likes. But, they got music and preaching, so it's not so bad.

The man said that *this* year, there will be an earthquake so big that the earth will "rent in twain." Just to clarify, "rent" means, "split open" in this case, so that the graves of anyone who's ever been buried will be exposed to the air. Imagine the stink of all them dead people from way back when. In May, they will rise up and in October, the world will explode. All of them who are good Christians will go to heaven and be with Jesus and the rest will be stuck here for five long months running around like chickens with their heads cut off. I don't know what happens if you was cremated.

It seems like I been waitin' for this thing my whole life. Don't get me wrong, I ain't guaranteed a place in heaven. It ain't sure I'll be raptured at all. I'm pretty sure Mom and aunt Betty will go because they're always doing church stuff. They're on the potluck committee and they raise money for the 'children in need' at Christmastime. I usually make a Jel-lo salad for the potluck supper, but ever since the saw blade factory closed, things have been tight for me and Violet. When her dad run off, I stopped going to church for a while, but now I'm back. I don't know why, but this end of the world thing just seems right to me, like it's supposed to happen. That earthquake in Japan? It was just the beginning.

Violet just laughs at me. She's 19 now and thinks that she knows better than me. I tell her: *there's nothing wrong with being prepared*, but she just rolls her eyes. I know she's book smart, cuz she was fixin on going to college after graduation, but about matters of faith, she has none. She says that those people on the radio are cracked, but she's been in a foul mood ever since the end of high school when she started working at the Wal-Mart. If she thought about it for two seconds, she would understand that all them people who've been studying the bible can't be wrong.

That's why I signed our Banjo up for "Eternal Earth-bound Pets." I want to make sure he'll be all right after it happens. If Violet and me get taken up to heaven, that dog'll need someone to look after him. I don't want him to starve to death between May and October. The man at the place wanted \$135, which ain't a lot when you think of the price of dog food these days. He says they planned ahead and bought in bulk—you know, cuz most of the stores will be closed due to the Rapture.

Meanwhile, I'm out here trying to spread the word. I come out to the parking lot here at the Wal-Mart with my lawn chair and umbrella. I'm passing out fliers about the gospel and trying to do my part to help save people. I saw Violet when she was on her way to work this morning in her blue uniform. She hunkered down in her seat pretending she didn't know me but I yelled to her anyway and waved. I'm not mad at her though. I know she'll come back around after May 21st. They all will.