

Canned Goods

By: Eva McCurty-Bowman

Thunder shook my bedroom window waking me up. I started to feel around my bed for my husband. He must still be at work. Another thunderclap came pounding through the night. My window was open, and you could smell the rain in the air; it hadn't even started yet. The sweet scent was there. Stark, my Alaskan Malamute, perked his ears up and got down from the bed leaving the room.

"Hey, Stark! Where you off too?" I propped myself up.

Stark made a low growling noise down by the front door then started to scratch out it, and he was making a whining sound as if he had to go out.

I got out of bed threw on a tattered hoodie heading slowly down the stairs while I rubbed the sleep from my eyes. I could still hear my poor pooch whining and grumbling at the door. "Hold on; I'll be down in a second Stark."

As I got down the stairs, I heard another clap of thunder and could see a flash of lightning outside the window on the front door. As the light flashed, I could see a figure leave my porch. *Who could be coming around here at this time of night?* I thought.

Stark had started to bark. It was almost as if he could tell someone had been there since he was upstairs. He jumped at the door yipping at it.

I walked up to the door and moved Stark out of the way. I slowly opened the door to see who had been there and no one was there. I started to walk out and kicked a small brown box.

Another flash of lightning struck close by with a crash of thunder following close behind it. I jumped at the noise, and there was silence for a few moments before I could hear a small ticking noise. It had seemed to be coming from the box. *Why would the box be ticking?* I stepped back slowly. My heart raced so quickly it was pounding in my ears.

Stark started to growl at the box. I could feel his big head press up against my leg as he made a low gurgling noise from his throat.

Okay, I live on a military base. Random boxes are not supposed to just randomly appear on doorsteps. I backed away slowly. Breathing heavily, I reached for the phone on the table by the wall. I dialed the number for the emergency line for the base.

"911, what's your emergency?" A voice came on the phone.

"Hi, uh, I found a box on my front porch," I said shakily "Someone just, left it there."

"Ma'am what is your address, I will have the bomb squad there promptly" She sounded so calm.

"Yeah, uh, it is 8790 Pine Rd."

"Ma'am please stay on the line until they get there. Don't panic we will get this figured out."

"But, it's ticking!"

"Ma'am, please stay calm. Keep talking to me. They are on their way."

I was starting to go into hysterics. My breath caught in my chest like a fish in a net.

This conversation seemed like it went on for an eternity. I could see the red and blue flashing lights coming up the road. Along with a big black box truck. They all came to a screeching halt and like in unison; all ran up to the door.

"Ma'am come with me." A tall tan man escorted me out of my house and down towards the truck.

Stark followed close behind me.

The men and woman surrounded the box on my porch. I didn't know what in the hell was going on. I was terrified. I was cold; I hadn't put any shoes on. The ground felt as if I was standing on sharp rocks.

After what seemed like hours a woman in Airman's uniform strolled up to me with a smirk on her face. "Ma'am, it isn't a bomb. There is no threat."

"What is it then." I was wide-eyed and in shock. "Why would someone just leave a box on my porch!?"

"Ma'am, it was a box of canned goods. With a note stating it was for the food drive next week."

"Oh, well then, what about the ticking?" I said shaking my head confused.

"It was your clock by the front door" She giggled and walked away. "Thank you, though; this is the biggest laugh we had all week."