

Never Underestimate the Power of the Still Small Voice

by Amber Barnes



We interrupt our regular programming to bring you this news bulletin eyewitness report

from Cave Springs Home.

On the night of January 29, 2013, we went to bed with strong wind warnings. The wind outside our window sounded pretty loud but it's not like we've never had that before. About 2:15 am the wind was loud enough to wake me up. I sat up for a while looking on my phone at news stations and weather websites. I found that we were under a tornado watch but we get those practically anytime a few people sneeze at the same time. News channels around here like to scare people and if you ran for cover every time they freaked out, you would just live in your hallway or "safe spot". However, we were not under a tornado watch when we went to bed.

A little after 2:30 am I decided I was tired and that I would try to go back to sleep. I asked God to watch over us and keep everyone on campus safe. I then laid down and as I did that, my husband, Walter, woke up. We spoke for a moment about how loud the wind was. As we were talking the wind got even louder. We agreed that maybe we should leave the room because we were on the second floor. We got up and started getting ready to leave. In just a few moments we started hearing pine cones hit our bedroom windows with great force. After a minute or so we were just about ready and Walter headed for the door while I picked up my cat.

My cat, Spooks, is a big baby, he's afraid of everything. When the weather gets a little loud he hides and can not be found. Oddly enough he had been sleeping on my feet and when we got up he went just under the step of our bed, no farther. So I was able to grab him and put him in my left arm where he likes to be. I then decided to take the three steps to the head of my bed to pick up my flashlight since the lights were flickering. Meanwhile Walter got about 2-3 steps away from our bedroom door (still inside the room).

I was about a foot and a half from from a window. Just after I put my hand on my flashlight, the window exploded into the room. The rest of the time that I was in the room I was in a daze and details are fuzzy. Just after the double-paned window exploded I turned my back to the window and screamed. The wind at that point was so loud that even to me my own scream was barely audible. Amazingly, despite the explosion, despite screaming, despite the wind roaring into the room, Spooks was staying still in my arms. If he is scared and someone makes a slightly loud noise or moves too quickly he will jump and run.

About the time the window exploded the power went off and stayed off for the next 15+ hours. I could not see a thing and I knew that despite the fact that glass must be everywhere I had to get to the door at the opposite corner of the room. I figured I'd deal with the cuts and glass in my feet later and beelined to where I knew the door must be. When I got to the door I somehow knew it was closed and I would have to get it open. But before I could even reach for the doorknob, the door opened and Walter was there.

At the time the window exploded, Walter was a few feet from the door, inside the room. Yet, somehow he found himself outside the bedroom door and when he began to step toward me, the door that had been up against the wall, suddenly slammed in his face. He was pushing as hard as he could trying to open the door to get in to me but was unable to get it to budge at all until just when I got to the other side.

I hurried out of the room and we shut the door behind us to contain the wreckage and keep our cats away from everything. We moved to the top of the stairs where Walter looked at me and saw I was bleeding. I hurried down the stairs for the downstairs bathroom that is also our most safe room. Halfway down the stairs Spooks finally moved again and jumped over my shoulder and took off.

When I arrived at the downstairs bathroom, I felt my head and found a wound that was bleeding profusely. I started using my hand to wash the wound. But the blood kept coming so very heavily I asked Walter to get his mother who lives next door and is a nurse. After a while of washing the wound I finally stopped, sat down, and, using paper towels, pushed as hard as I could on the wound. Finally the bleeding stopped.

Walter's parents came and helped clean and bandage the 1½-inch gash on top of my head and pull our bed away from the window that was now open to the rain. I lost enough blood that while Walter's mom was working on the cut I started feeling like I sometimes do after giving blood, except stronger than usual. I got a cold sweat, a bit nauseated and felt weak. I sat there thinking of what they give you after giving blood and had Walter get me something to drink and a granola bar to try to quickly get things replenishing again.

After I was bandaged and no longer bleeding everywhere I went upstairs and sat in the living room to just relax a bit. Walter and his parents tried to see what had happened outside but it was only 4 something in the morning so they gave up and went back inside. They looked in our bedroom and found glass everywhere, across the whole length of the room. I do not know how I crossed the room without ever feeling any glass under my feet. There were also large pieces of glass on our bed where we had been lying less than 5 minutes before the window exploded. They also found a branch that was likely what hit me in the head. Walter and I sat on the couch and tried to get some more sleep but we both were too excited to sleep. At one point I reached in my robe pocket and found a piece of glass!

When it started to get light we looked outside and saw a bit of the wreckage. I grabbed my camera and covered my bandage with a water resistant hat (for it was still raining) and we went out to start taking pictures. What we found was amazing. Across our campus there are uncountable number of trees down, some broken, some ripped up by the roots. Every path out of campus was blocked by trees. So, had the bleeding not stopped or the wound been deeper

so as to need stitches, we could not have made the trip to the emergency room without assistance and delay.

The pavilion on the ball field was ruined. The wood posts and their concrete bases were ripped out of the ground and lying next to where they had stood all in formation. The rest was scattered. One of the trees behind our house was broken and toppled. The sun room on the back of Walter's parent's house was ruined. The metal roof on one of our currently unused dorms was ripped off. There were also trees down behind and on top of that building. In the woods just behind that building there is a long strip of trees all broken and on the ground in the woods. We also found multiple power lines down and two trees that were near our chapel that fell next to the building instead of on it.

We made our way down to the dorm that holds all our current clients and found it completely untouched. There was very minimal damage to trees a little way away from and behind the dorm but the dorm itself and all the clients were completely safe and untouched.

Continued inspection of the campus found a long branch stabbed into the roof of an unoccupied building and an unoccupied mobile home split in two by a large tree. Our fiber network was mostly down on the ground. The entire roof was completely ripped off our little building holding the lawn mowers. We also found that one of the power lines that came down was so hot it had bounced around burning designs in the grass everywhere it touched. The biggest cost areas are multiple broken windows, at least four roofs need to be replaced, and the sun room needs to be rebuilt.

Earlier in the morning, after my wound had been cared for, I realized that my vision was weird and noticed that the left lens on my glasses was gone. We also found a small cut out of the thick plastic of the frames. So once the immediate needs were taken care of and the television interviews were over, we went to try to get new glasses for me. The eye doctor decided not to charge me because she knew Walter's parents and was amazed at the story of what happened to my glasses yet I had no damage to my eye. Then we went to buy the glasses. Thankfully I was able to get new glasses the same day. The next day we finally found the lens from my old glasses. It was intact and lying on a shelf that was more than 10 feet behind where I was standing when I was hit.

All totaled, I have the gash on my head, a bruised forehead, a couple tiny cuts on my body and that's all the physical injuries on campus. Even Spooks was free of injury even though he had glass in his fur. Despite glass being all over our bedroom, I was barely touched by any of it, including my feet. I never got cut or even remember feeling the glass under my feet when I walked through the room. We even found glass that squeezed under the bathroom door and into our bathroom. Also a gouge in our bedroom door where a piece of glass flew across the length of the room and stabbed into the wood door before it slammed shut in Walter's face.

I know that some do not believe in a loving, caring, God, but seeing all that went on that night I find it hard *not* to believe. Had I not awoken, we would have been in bed and showered with large pieces of glass. Had Spooks acted like he normally does, I would not have been able to get him. Had I not bent down to grab my flashlight, I would have been hit in the face and neck. By going to get my flashlight I did get hit in the head with a stick but otherwise likely would have been stabbed by the glass that gouged the bedroom door. I do not remember navi-

gating around the bed or touching the floor and the glass on it, I only felt like I moved straight across the room. Walter was standing in the room and watched the window explode (as if seeing it in slow motion), yet he was untouched by any glass; and when he went to take a step toward me, instead moving, he found himself outside the bedroom and the door slammed in his face, keeping him from walking in the glass. Despite the window being double-paned and glass everywhere, I barely got touched by any of it. Something hit my glasses and sent the lens flying but nothing got in my eye; other than my forehead being slightly bruised, my eye is safe.

Of all the things flying around, there was not a lot of injury. The building holding all our clients was totally untouched. The fiber network that helps us to be able to provide Christian internet radio to the world is salvageable. Fiber is notoriously fragile; and despite it coming in contact with live wires at very high temperatures (burning grass and melting the steel support cable that was holding the fiber); despite flying wood roofs landing on it, and getting tangled up in flying metal roofing, etc.; despite the steel support cable being severed in multiple places and the strong fishing line that held the two together being broken repeatedly, the fiber was intact and still working!

On and on. We were told that our campus was the worst hit area in Cheatham County, yet multiple important things made it through untouched or much better off than one would expect.

I fully feel that God was watching over all of us on campus and I praise the Lord that my injuries were not worse and are healing very quickly.

Psalms 91:14-15

“Because he holds fast to me in love, I will deliver him; I will protect him, because he knows my name. When he calls to me, I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will rescue him and honor him.”

Psalms 91:11-12

“For He will command His angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways and will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.”

1st Kings 19:11, 12

“And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the LORD. And, behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the LORD; but the LORD was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the LORD was not in the earthquake: And after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire: and after the fire a *still small voice*.”

That fragile fiber cable carries the still small voice. You might be able to knock it down, but you cannot knock it out. It will rise again and be heard around the world.

If you would like to help with the relief effort, you may donate through the websites listed below, through the Cave Springs Home Disaster Relief Fund at the Community Bank in Cheatham County, Tennessee, or through snail mail to P. O. Box 160 Pegram, Tennessee 37143. You can learn about the care of the handicapped at www.cavespringshome.org and you can listen to the still small voice at www.cavespringsministries.org – when these web pages are finally restored to working order.