

Press the Button
By Terrence D. McLean

My hand trembles as I reach for the button. I blink and then slowly pull it away.

The building rocked and I stumbled to retake my chair. Screams filled the hall and I reached back to close the door. Outside things were worse, people were rioting. They wanted the government to do something, but there was nothing left that the government could do.

I reach out again towards the red button, my hand only quivering slightly.

The sky glowed red from the fires that burned throughout the city. It was quiet now. The explosions had stopped and everyone who had not fled were either dead or dying. I wondered how many had survived. How many have lived through this wave? I typed a few keys on the keyboard and the screen in front of me cycled through the security cameras; I was the only one left in the building.

It would be so easy to press the button and bring things to an end. I shake my head and place my hands in my lap.

I had not noticed the room slowly filling with smoke until I started to cough. I stood, turned towards the door and opened it. Thick black smoke filled the hallway. I covered my mouth and nose with my arm and rushed down the hall to my only way out. Blinded by the smoke I struggled and several times fell trying to find the ladder at the far end of the hall.

I look down at the earth, scorched, below me. It is likely no one is alive down there and that I am the only one that survived. I take a deep breath and once again move my hand towards the button. The white letters almost shine against the red background, "Eject".