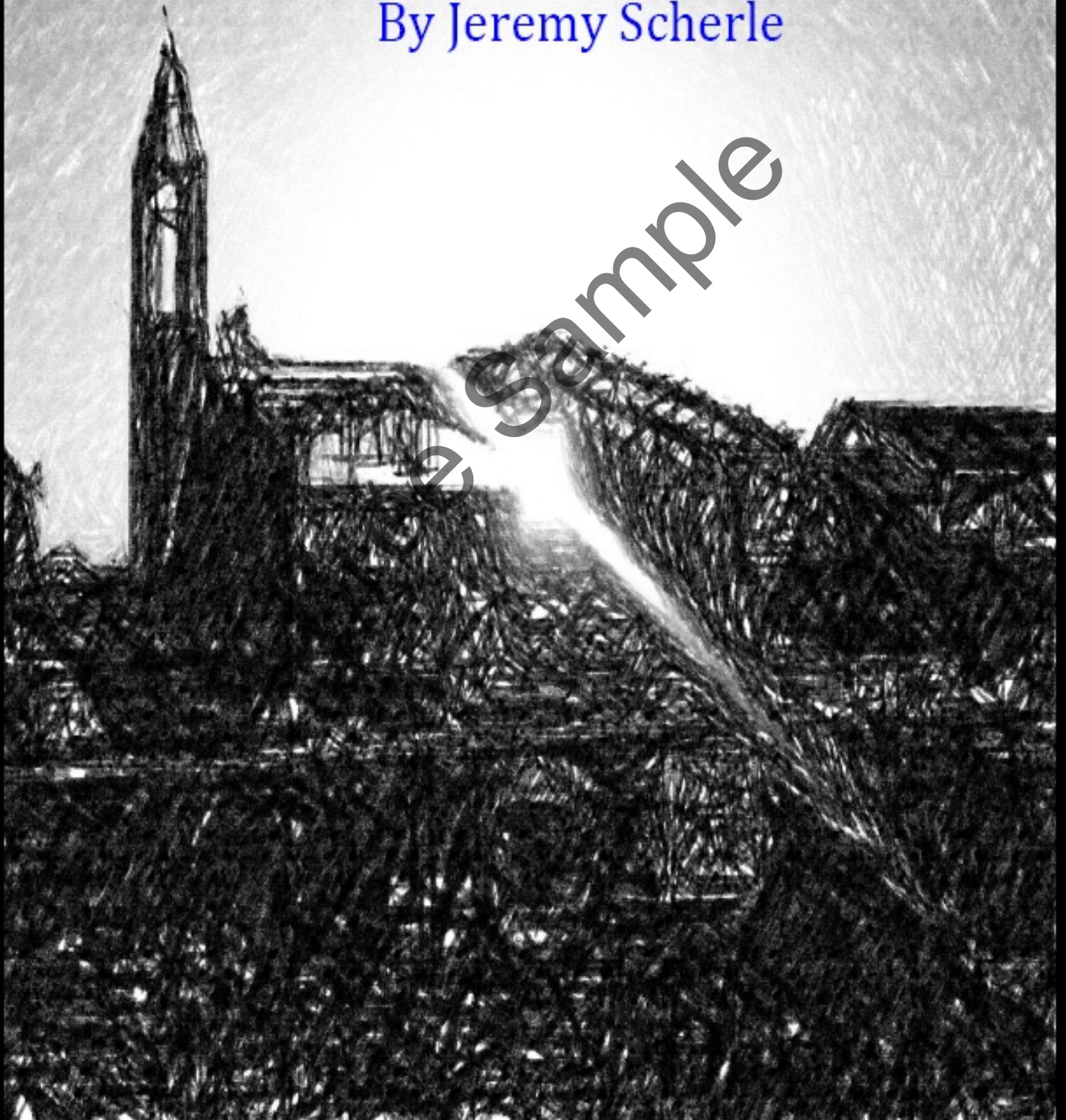


Joplin, Missouri:

The Rebuilding

By Jeremy Scherle



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Contents

[Introduction](#)

[Helping Hands](#)

[Mail Hassles](#)

[More Benefit Shows](#)

[Giving Back to the Fans](#)

[Restrung Joplin](#)

[Giving Back](#)

[New Place to Call Home](#)

[Kevin's Story](#)

[The Rebuilding](#)

[About the Author](#)

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Helping Hands

It has been a little over two months since the deadly EF-5 tornado that tore through Joplin, Missouri, and killed more than one-hundred and sixty people. Since then, hundreds of people have come from all around the United States to come and help out Joplin residents in their time of need. I have witnessed strength and generosity from people that I have never seen before. Forrest Park Baptist church (on the corner of 7th Street) has helped out a lot. While driving by their parking lot every day on my way to work, I see volunteers cooking food for anyone that needs it, free supplies, and a place to stay. A few celebrities have come to show that they care, like Jamie McMurray A local Joplin resident and Nascar driver. The Arkansas RazorBacks came to help out at a church, giving out food and talking to survivors. The wives of the Kansas City Royals came to the Holiday Inn with supplies. Even though the media has come and gone there are people's and celebrities wanting to help out and change people lives and help them rebuild. Houses and apartments are already starting to be rebuilt. FEMA and insurance companies have been getting the ball going by trying to get checks written to get people back on their feet. The local shopping mall and other stores have had sales on clothes to show their support. Whenever I go shopping or out to eat, most of the people around me talk about the tornado and what happened to them. The aftermath is not going to go away any time soon.

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(Signs on local businesses showing their support)

Mail Hassles

With hundreds of homes and businesses destroyed by the tornado, it has become almost impossible to get your mail. With one post office at the south end of town closed and the other post office at the north end of town handling all the mail there have been long lines. U.S Postal Inspectors have to be in the post office just to make sure everything is going OK. The average wait time just to get your mail was ranging from an hour to two hours or more in the weeks following the disaster. On some days, lines of people would be waiting out the door. PO Boxes sold out quickly with people not having mailboxes. If you were waiting for a check from FEMA, or to hear from a loved one, it was going to be several days before you got to find out anything. The other post office wouldn't be up and running for another month or longer. That put a lot of strain on individuals and families in this difficult time.



(US postal vehicle at south Joplin post office)

More Benefit Shows

June 5th, 2011 and it is Sunday afternoon just two weeks after the tornado came and went. Downstream Casino is putting on a benefit show for Joplin tornado victims today. Many musicians are coming to help out, and one hundred percent of the money raised today will go to the victims. One of my favorite acts that is attending to help out is The Liverpool Legends from Branson, Missouri. They are a great Beatles tribute band. My friend Rick Banfield played that day singing a song that he wrote about Joplin called "Say Love". He wrote it to be a song that everyone could sing along with, and the lyrics explain the way he feels. I counted only a few over seventy people that attended the show. I believe that it was too soon to have that big of a show with that many acts performing. People were still trying to rebuild their lives and not many people knew there was a concert going on. But, it is the thought that counts in my mind. The show at Downstream ended with an amazing fireworks display. I think the important thing is that the casino was able to raise money and help out whoever they could that day.



(Rick Banfield)

Say Love

By Rick Banfield

As I look among you I see love you in front of me
Just take a look around you I'm sure that's what you'll see
I know that's what you'll see
Were all here together, and we're side by side
For our brothers and sisters, on a hill they must climb
Let's all help them climb
Let me hear you say love, Let me hear you say love, let me hear you say love
Harmony has meaning, but not just in a song
It can give us reason, and help us to stay strong
Yeah, keep us oh so strong
Faith and understanding have a power you can feel
Just bring out those emotions, 'cause I know that they're real
Then you'll know that they're real
Let me hear you say love, let me hear you say love, let me hear you say love
Friendship lasts forever, let's prove that it's true
It's a blessing right now needed
Someday you might need one too
Then we'll be there for you
Let me hear you say love, let me hear you say love, let me hear you say love

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