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EMP – The Societal Impact of the Sentient’s Electromagnetic Pulse

Scenario: The arrival of the Sentient creates an EMP that knocks-out power

Outcome: Power and communications are disrupted and will not reboot

Story implications: Our civilization requires power. No power, no civilization

Solution: Find that which is simple to reboot and has not been used yet

Electrical System – Active systems are destroyed. Replacement transformers can be put in place but to no real benefit since power generator system electronics will likely be destroyed.

Heating Fuels – Limited to supplies on hand since the transportation system will be destroyed.

Treated Water – Treatment plants offline due to destruction of pumps and electronics, or soon to be offline due to lack of chemicals or raw water. (Opportunity) Distribution systems that deliver water by gravity feed – no pumping – will be online for a period of time until the tanks are empty. Plan on 2-4 days of water in absence of hoarding.

Irrigation Water – Could be unavailable if the source involves pumping. Could be available if water is gravity fed from a stream or lake with no pumping.

Well Water – Not available if pump driven. (Opportunity) Windmill-driven well pumps work so random farms may still be able to provide water.

Toilets – Dead unless the water source is gravity fed.

Food Distribution – Food distribution network is destroyed. Canned food will be available until stocks run out.

Refrigerated Foods – Available for 24 hours due to destruction of the power grid. (Opportunity) People who jump quickly procure meat then salt or dry the meat.

Natural Gas – Systems that rely on pumping will quickly start to collapse as the gas pressure decreases. Quickly no heating (without forced air), cooking, hot water (simple heaters, no electronics).

Propane – More remote houses or farms will have propane tanks and they will retain the ability to heat the home (without forced air), cook, and produce hot water (simple heaters, no electronics).

Computers – Dead.

Home Electronics and Internet of Things – Dead.

Television – Dead.

Stereo – Dead.

Musical Instruments – Pianos, harpsichords, (non-electric) stringed instruments, wind instruments and (manual) percussion instruments survive.

Communications – Non-existent due to destruction of electronics. (Opportunity) Tube-based systems could survive.

Office Buildings – Dead. Elevators dead.

Satellites – Dead. Operational in space but no relay on earth to receive.

Internet – No Googling due to destruction of electronics.

Cell Service – Cell phones are dead and so are the cell towers. Zero bars. (Opportunity) Rotary dial phones could be available and cobbled together in a makeshift phone system.

Finance – Cash now becomes meaningless.

Automobiles – Most cars newer than about 1970 (estimate) will be inoperable due to destruction of electronics. (Opportunity) Antique car buffs will have the upper hand on transportation. (Opportunity) When auto batteries die, only the cars prior to about 1931 will be able to start.

Batteries and unused electrical equipment – That which was not operational or had not been used before the storm may start including batteries.

Horses – Many people in some parts of the world (e.g., Placer County, California) like to raise, ride and show horses. The survival of the horses depends on regular deliveries of the alfalfa and grain to the not-so-rural ranches. With transportation down, alfalfa and grain are no longer available for horses so they will begin to starve unless the horses can be ridden to the feed supply shops whose supply will begin to dwindle. Further, people may start competing for the grain. With horses and people starving, the people may turn to horses as a source of protein, the most amply source of protein in an area.

Dogs and Cats – As food supplies dwindle the available canned and dried food may become attractive to people and eventually the dogs and cats may become eyed as a source of protein.

Starbucks – Dead. No grande non-fat no-whip 3 pump vanilla half caf 5 shot lattes.