

A R o b b i e R e a d e r



## Natural Disasters

# The Fury of Hurricane Andrew, 1992

Karen Bush Gibson



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### A Robbie Reader/Natural Disasters

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**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** **Karen Bush Gibson** has written extensively for the juvenile market. Her work has appeared in such publications as *Boys' Life* and *Cobblestone*. She is also the author of twenty-four school-library books. Karen lives in Norman, Oklahoma, with her husband and three children.

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## CHAPTER ONE

# MEET HURRICANE ANDREW

How many people can fit in a bedroom closet? For the Walton family of Homestead, Florida, it was a lucky 13. They found out the hard way.

In the early morning of August 24, 1992, the Waltons sat in their living room. While the younger children slept, other family members listened to television and radio news reports. The reports said that the first hurricane (HER-uh-kane) of the season, Hurricane Andrew, was headed for the Miami area. The small town of Homestead was only 20 minutes south of Miami.

The Waltons thought they were ready for Hurricane Andrew. They had been to the

## CHAPTER ONE

supermarket. They bought food that didn't need cooking. They also bought water and other supplies. Other families had done the same.

The Waltons heard the wind and rain outside their house. Suddenly, the noise was louder. Windows in the living room broke into many pieces. The family looked for another room in the house to keep them safe. Glass from windows flew everywhere. A board hit eighth-grader Kenyahna, leaving a huge bruise on her left leg.



Hurricane Andrew packed winds between 145 and 175 miles per hour.

With no other place to go, the family rushed into a windowless bedroom closet. Twenty-year-old Tiffany saw the roof pulling away from the house as they shut the closet door. A loud noise like a train whistle hurt their ears. The Waltons waited out the storm in complete darkness. After a while, they didn't hear anything. Light was peeking under the closet door. Cautiously, they looked out.

They cried when they saw what had happened to their one-story brick home. The roof was gone. The windows were broken. Much of their furniture had been smashed. When the Waltons went outside, they saw that their neighborhood had been destroyed. Tiffany later said, "It was like someone had bombed the neighborhood."

Like many south Florida families, the Waltons were no strangers to hurricanes. They just never thought they would become directly involved. Mother Carol Walton told reporters, "We feel very fortunate to be alive."

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