

The Windy, Rainy, Stormy, Terrible Night



Written by Norma Kimrey Colwell and Margaret Jennings
Illustrated by Cameron Reeves and Peggie Reeves

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Revised Edition, September 2005

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Jody Publications
2830 Wheat Street
Columbia, SC 29205

***This book is an expression of love and concern
for the children who experienced the trauma
and aftermath of Hurricane Hugo.***

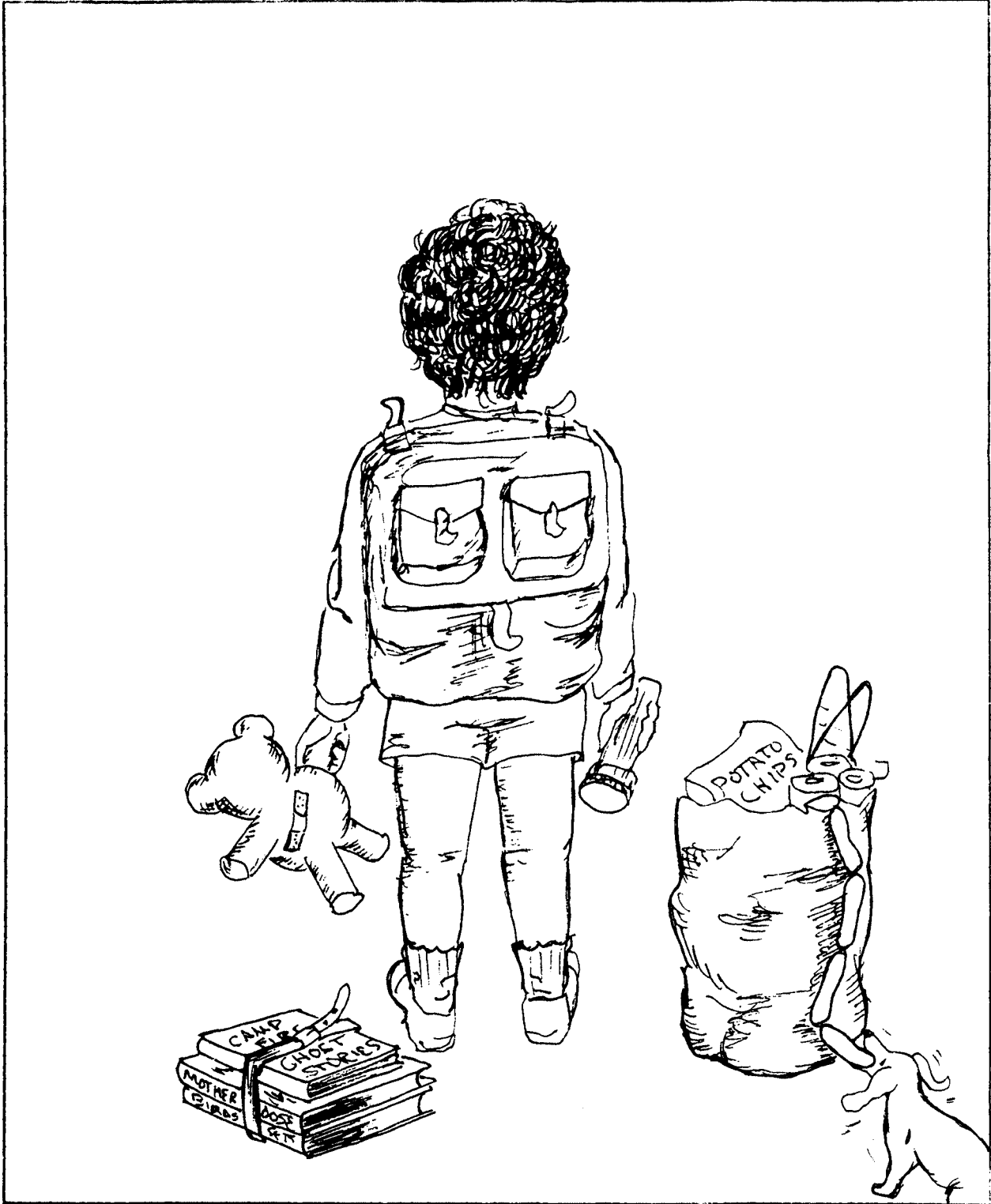
**My name is Jody, and I'm going
to tell you a story about a night
I will never forget. That night
we had a storm called a hurricane.**



I heard the storm was coming to our town while I was watching TV. At first I wasn't afraid, but when Mama said, "Get your things together, Jody. We're going to spend the night at the school," I was puzzled. But she told me that it would be like a camping trip, so we took sleeping bags, pillows, towels, and clothes. We each had our very own flashlight. I thought it would be fun.

How did you get ready for the storm?

Did you stay at home during the storm or go somewhere else?



**The traffic to the school was very busy.
It took a long time to get there.
There were so many people!
I felt confused. This wasn't like a
camping trip after all. Everybody
looked worried. I said, "I want to go
back home," but nobody heard me.**

How did you feel before the storm?



I stayed awake for a long time that night. The floor was hard, and I missed my bed. The wind and the heavy rain scared me. Some people were crying. I was crying, too.

What did you hear and see during the storm?

What kinds of feelings did you have about the storm?



**Suddenly, there was a loud noise.
I ran to Mama. She held me very tight
and said, "Don't worry, honey."
Her hug made me feel good. Still,
I wondered, "Could this storm be
my fault?"**

How did the storm make you feel?

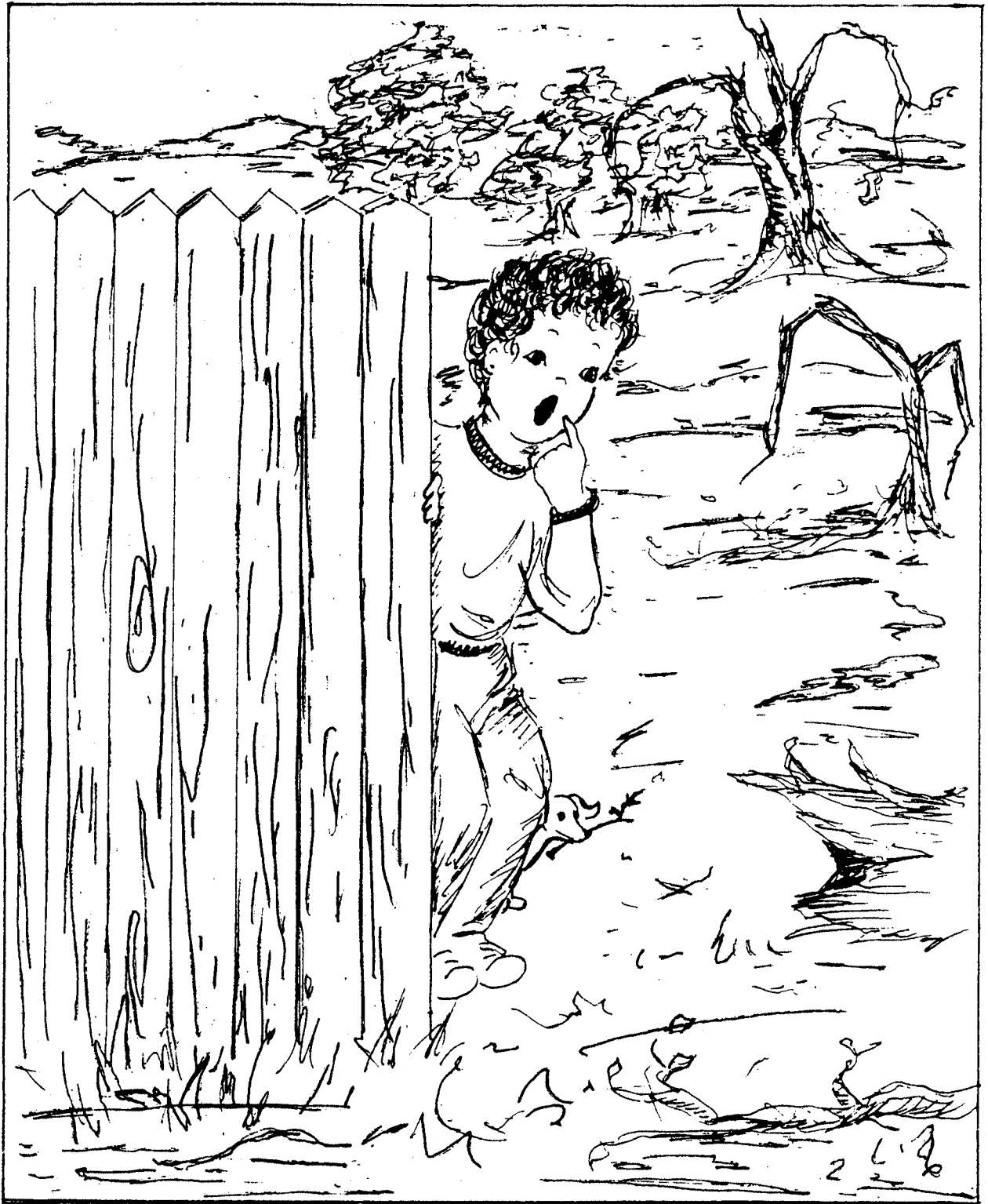
**Did you ever wonder if you had done
something to cause the storm?**



After a few days, the man at the shelter told us we could go back to our home. Was I ever afraid! Somebody said that trees had crashed into Jamil's home and that Brandon's roof had a hole in it. What would our home look like?

My neighborhood was so scary! Trees and power lines were all over the place. Trash was everywhere. My heart was beating fast and my hands were sweaty. Things were so different.

What was your neighborhood like after the storm?



Hurray! My home was still there. Tree branches were all over the yard, and some windows were broken, but mostly, everything was O.K. I ran to my room. What a mess! My bed was wet, and my toys and stuffed animals were yucky. Was I ever glad I had taken Teddy with me!

Was your room messed up during the storm?

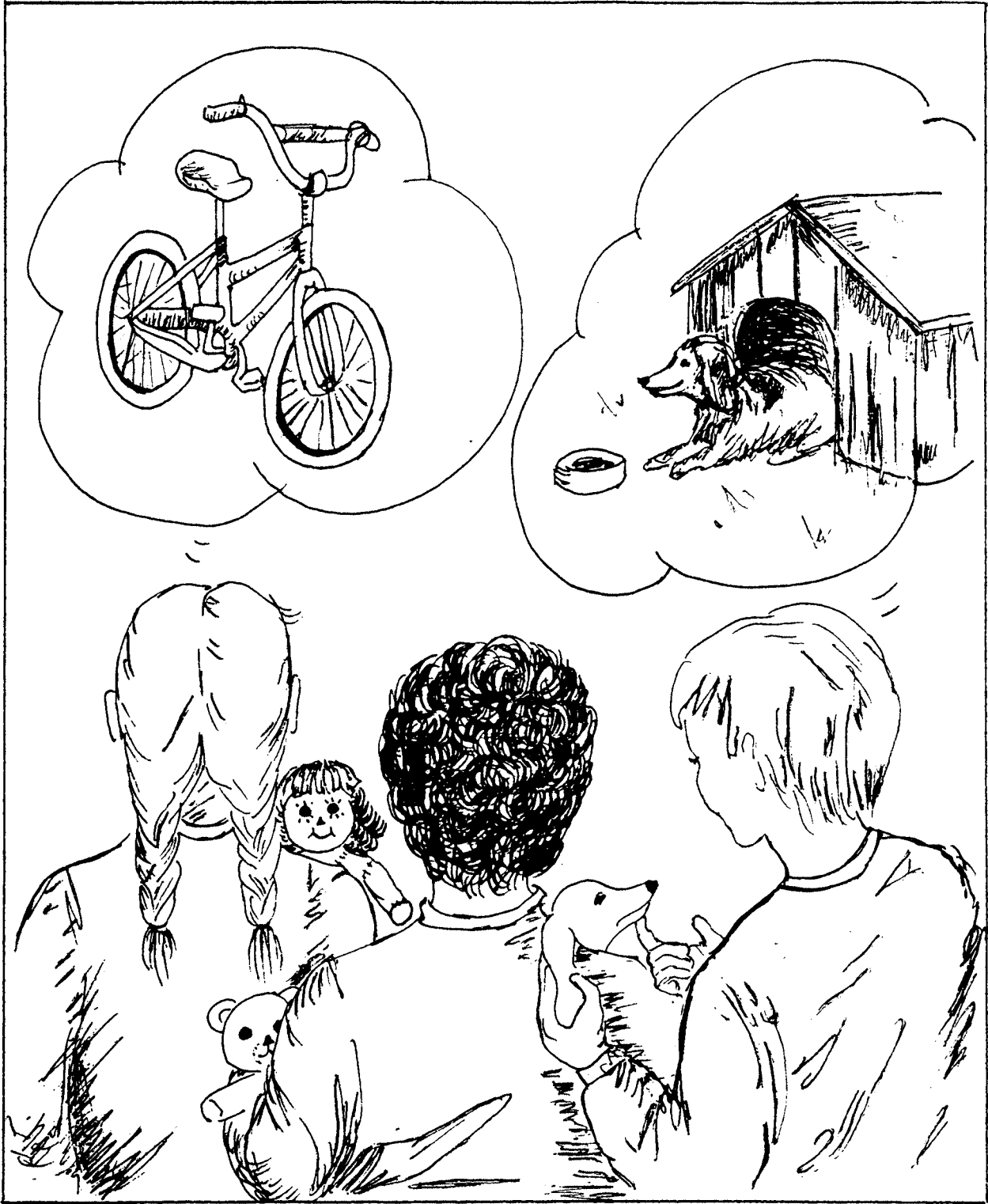
How did you feel when you saw your room after the storm?



I held Teddy tight and felt glad that he was with me. My friend, Jimmy, couldn't find his dog. Twila's bicycle was missing.

Did you lose anything in the storm?

What were some of the things you lost?



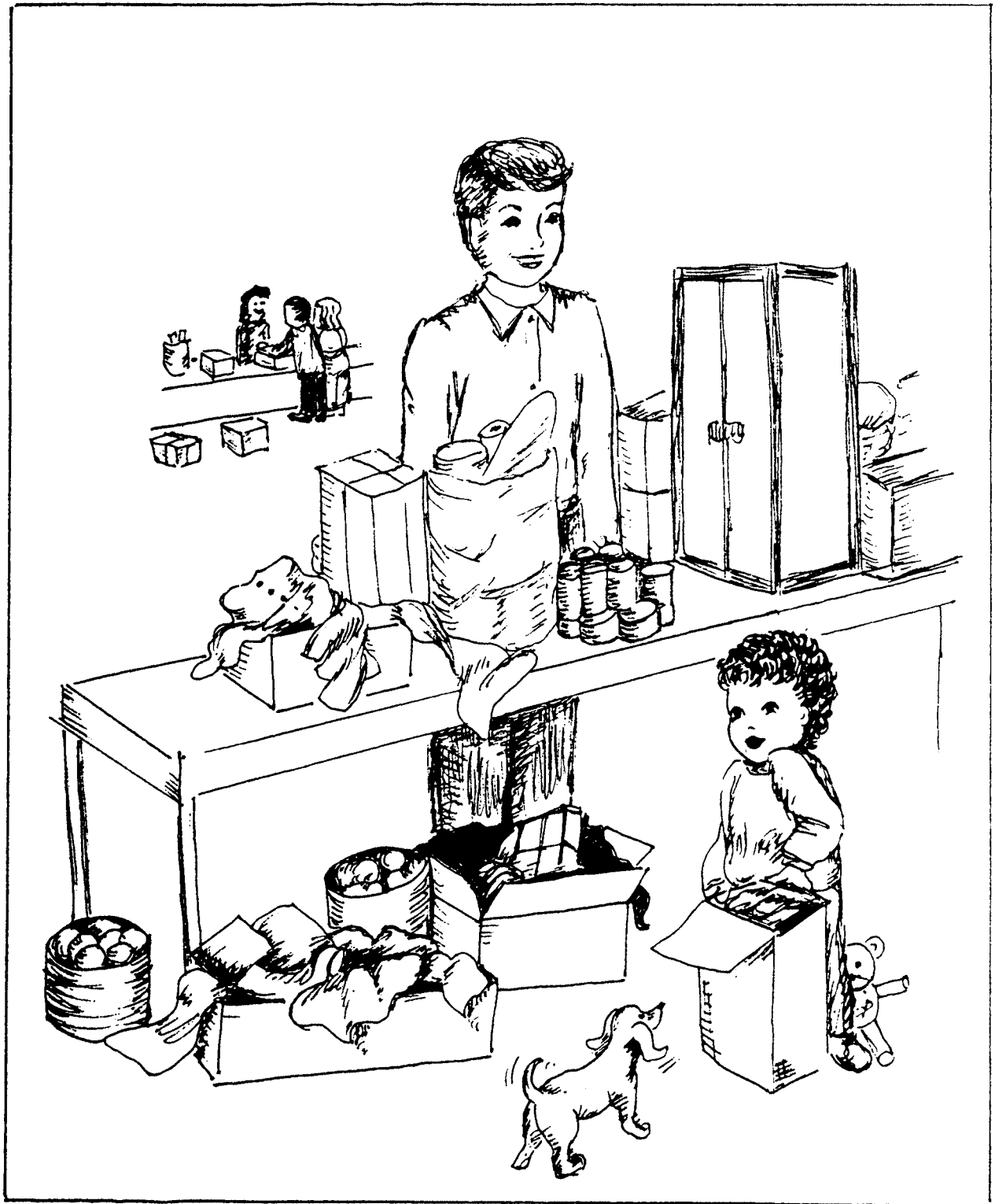
Soon, I needed to talk with someone about the storm. I found out from my friend Jennifer that she had some of my same feelings. Mama and I shared our feelings, too. I thought, "I'll bet I can share with my teacher and with my counselor at school."

Do you know some grown-ups and friends who will let you share your feelings and who will answer your questions?



Many people have been very nice. Some of them have helped by sending food, clothes, and things that people have lost. Others have sent money to help build back homes, bridges, stores, and buildings.

Do you know anyone who has received things sent by people from other places?



That's my story about the windy, rainy, stormy, terrible night. Things at my home still look a mess. Trees are on the sidewalk; and the homes haven't been fixed, yet. Sometimes, I have bad dreams. And when it rains, boy, am I scared.

A man on TV said that a hurricane like this one probably won't come to our town for another two hundred years. Am I ever glad!

Now I'm safe and lots of people are helping my family and me.



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Appreciation to the following organizations for their support:

American School Counselor Association
South Carolina Association for Counseling and Development
South Carolina School Counselor Association

A Message to Caring Adults

Many children hear of natural disasters such as floods, hurricanes, and tornadoes through the news media, but few of them personally experience and actual crisis. Adults, while going through their own shock and grief, many times fail to recognize signs of distress in their children. The following suggestions may be helpful to adults in helping their child better deal with the crisis.

1. Allow the child to help with some reconstructive tasks, no matter how small. This action gives the child a sense of being able to control part of his living space and to make changes for the better.

2. Acknowledge that children have feelings of loss, grief, fear and anger and allow them to express these feelings verbally.

3. Keep the child's schedule as consistent as possible. This task may be difficult, but changes may be confusing and frightening.

4. Answer children's questions openly, honestly, and frequently. Situations which seem apparent to adults are sometimes not as obvious to young people. Facts may be distressing but perhaps not as devastating as the fantasy created in the child's mind.

5. Be alert for the following stress signals. If these behaviors are present, contact your child's school counselor or another mental health professional in your area.

- crying
- irritability
- daydreaming
- disobedience
- frequent aches
& pains
- fits of anger
- over dependency on adults
- change in eating or
sleeping habits
- change in school
performance

It is difficult for adults to overlook the tragedy of a natural disaster; however, with patience and understanding, caring adults can minimize the negative emotional effects the disaster may have on a child.