

SURVIVAL

Ice Storm!

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For my friend Karen Krossing

CHAPTER ONE

January 7, 1998

Ethan glanced up and down the street.

He had to find help. But how could he leave Sylvie and Mrs. Greenbaum in the freezing cold?

A wave of dizziness rolled over Ethan. He stopped to take a breath. Drops of freezing rain flew into his face and eyes, making it hard to breathe. Sharp ice pellets stung like needles against his cheek.

The houses on their block were draped in coats of thick white ice. They looked like they were splattered in layers of icing. Icicles the size of swords hung down from the roofs, the entrances, the balconies and the window ledges.

Trees were bent over. Some had snapped in half. Huge limbs had crashed down on frozen, buried cars, garbage cans and mailboxes. The cars that weren't damaged lay abandoned and useless under the heavy ice.

The streets looked like a world of endless winter — a world where all the people had disappeared.

Ethan shivered. The cold pierced through his jacket and pants.

The ground was as slick as glass. Every step made him feel like he'd slide across the ice on his back.

The wind whistled in his ears and the freezing rain kept coming down as he crossed the street to Rafi's building.

He was about to press the apartment buzzer when it hit him: the bell wouldn't work without power.

He banged hard on the door, hoping that someone inside would somehow hear him. But no one came to the door.

He would have to look for help on the main street instead!

He was about to cross the street when a chunk of sharp ice crashed down in front of him.

Ethan stumbled and fell to the ground.