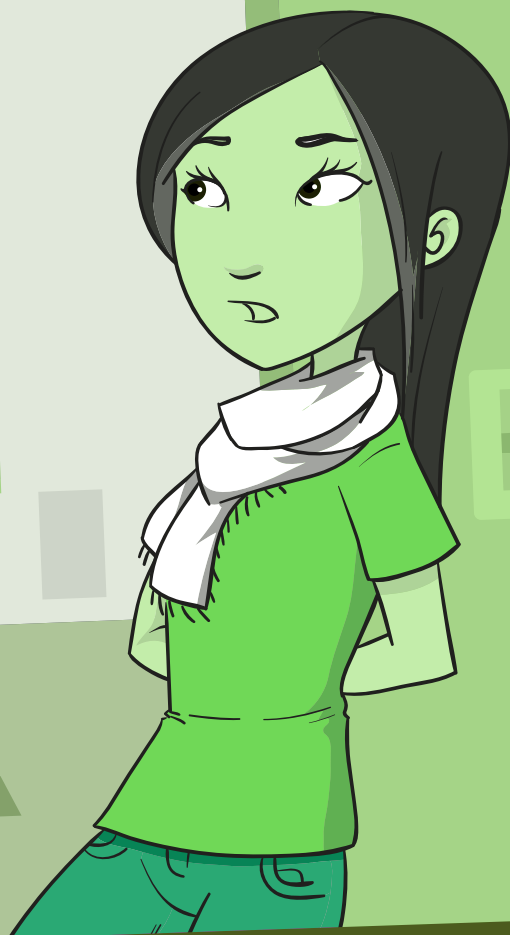


**CHOOSE YOUR OWN PATH TO
PREPAREDNESS**



#4



ZONE 1



Office of Emergency Management
Department of Education

Bill de Blasio, Mayor

Zone 1

Summer mornings at Lauren's house were always the same. Before sitting down to breakfast with her family at the kitchen table, her father would tease her about her bed head, which Lauren did not find the least bit funny. Her mother would ask her to feed the family dog, Chestnut. And Lauren's grandmother would greet her brightly.

"Good morning, Sleeping Beauty!"

This morning, however, was different. Lauren's father, mother, and grandmother were all watching hurricane coverage on the all-weather cable channel. Instead of the usual morning greetings, all the talk at the kitchen table was about Hurricane Nancy, which might be headed toward New York City.



As Lauren fed Chestnut, Lauren's mother said, "We need to make sure nothing out back can blow away. That patio furniture needs to be stacked and tied down." A few minutes later, her mother headed out the door holding a coil of rope, adding, "Lauren, when you're done with Chestnut, I need you to help me outside."

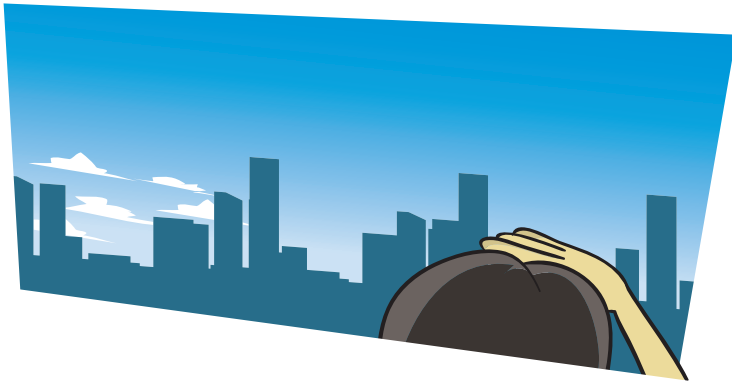
Lauren had made plans for her friend Claire to come over. Should she help her mother first? Or should she check to see when Claire was coming?

IF LAUREN DECIDES TO HELP HER MOTHER, TURN TO PAGE 19.

IF LAUREN STALLS AND DOES NOT HELP HER MOTHER, TURN TO PAGE 21.

LAUREN DECIDES TO HELP HER MOTHER.

Lauren followed her mother outside. *It sure doesn't look like a hurricane is coming here*, she thought. In the City, the sky looked tranquil and a light breeze barely rattled the tall oak trees.



Lauren and her mother began stacking the chairs and moving them close to the railing. Lauren's mother showed her how to wrap the rope through the chairs, making sure to keep the knots tight and leave no slack in the rope.

“What about the picnic table?” Lauren asked.

“Yes, that needs to be tied down too. And the flowerpots need to be brought inside,” her mother said. “We don’t want anything getting airborne.”

Lauren stayed busy helping her mother for quite some time until Claire arrived.

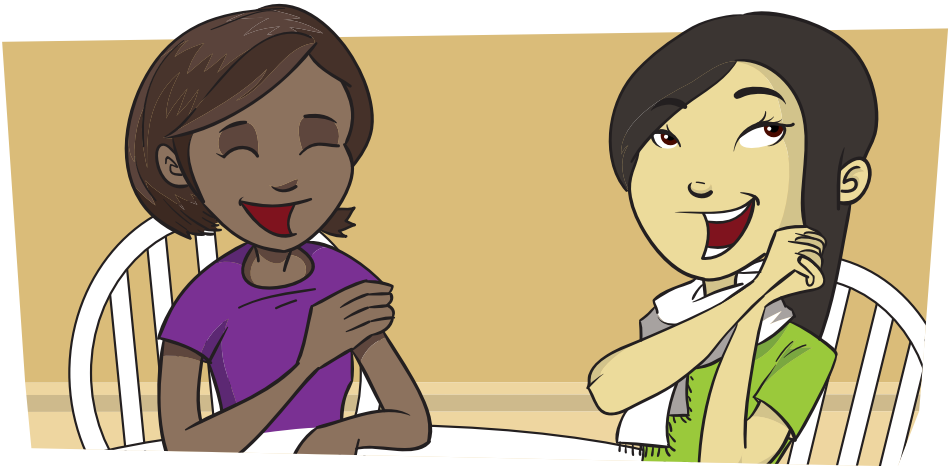
“Thanks for helping,” her mom said. “Now go be with Claire, but no loud music!”

GO TO “THE STORY CONTINUES” ON PAGE 22.

LAUREN STALLS AND DOES NOT HELP HER MOTHER.

Just then, Lauren got a text from Claire. Good news; Claire was coming over in a few minutes. Lauren flopped down on her bed to text her friend back.

A few minutes later, Claire arrived. The two friends were soon deep in conversation at the kitchen table. There was a lot to catch up on. Lauren wanted to hear the latest about Josh Rietman. Was he moving to Florida? Was he still going out with that Liebowitz girl?



Suddenly the girls heard a crash. Lauren’s mother stood outside holding a broken flowerpot. She stuck her head inside the door.

“Lauren, I could really use your help to get everything brought in and tied down out here,” she said, sounding annoyed.

Lauren followed her mother outside. *It sure doesn’t look like a hurricane is coming here*, she thought. In the City, the sky looked tranquil and a light breeze barely rattled the tall oak trees. Lauren stayed busy helping her mother for quite some time.

“Thanks for helping,” her mom finally said. “Now go be with Claire, but no loud music!”

GO TO “THE STORY CONTINUES” ON PAGE 22.

THE STORY CONTINUES.

Lauren and Claire went to Lauren's bedroom to talk—that is, until Claire got another text.

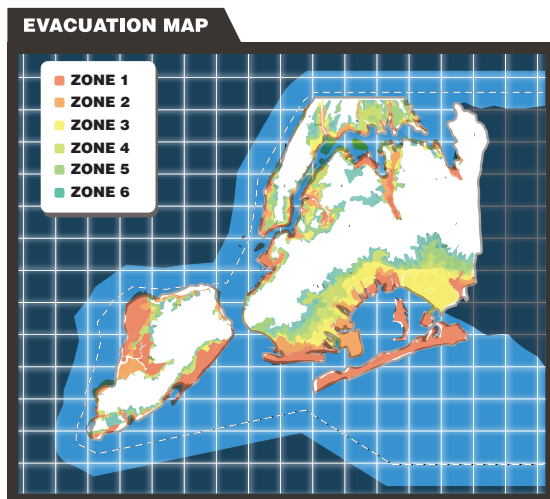
“Oh, you have got to be kidding me,” she said after reading it.

“What?”

“It's my dad. He wants me home. Like now. I hope this doesn't mean we're evacuating because of the hurricane. We don't even know if it will hit the City.”

After seeing her friend to the front door, Lauren went into the living room. Her grandmother was still watching the weather station. When Lauren sat down beside her, Chestnut hopped onto her lap.

Lauren couldn't quite figure out why everyone was so worried about the hurricane. Before school had gotten out for the summer, her family sat down at the kitchen table one evening to talk about emergencies. Her father explained that the family lived in Zone 1, which meant evacuation the next time a hurricane threatened the City. They had an emergency plan.



Lauren closed her eyes and thought back to that night, remembering that her father had given her responsibility for putting together her emergency Go Bag, as well as one for Chestnut.

“New York City evacuation centers will let people bring their pets in,” her father had said. “But pet owners need to provide pet food, leashes or crates, bowls...you name it. So Chestnut needs his own Go Bag.”

IF LAUREN REMEMBERED TO PUT TOGETHER HER OWN GO BAG AND ONE FOR CHESTNUT, TURN TO PAGE 23.

IF LAUREN DELAYED PUTTING TOGETHER GO BAGS FOR HERSELF AND CHESTNUT, TURN TO PAGE 24.

LAUREN PUT TOGETHER HER OWN GO BAG AND ONE FOR CHESTNUT.

As soon as the family discussion was over, Lauren remembered how Chestnut had followed her everywhere as she put together two emergency Go Bags. First, Lauren got her things collected, including extra house keys, bottles of water, snacks, a flashlight, and all the other things the City recommended. Then she worked on Chestnut's bag, including water, dog food, treats, a bowl, a muzzle, and an old leash. Chestnut licked her face and Lauren smiled, imagining that Chestnut was thanking her for making sure he had his own Go Bag.

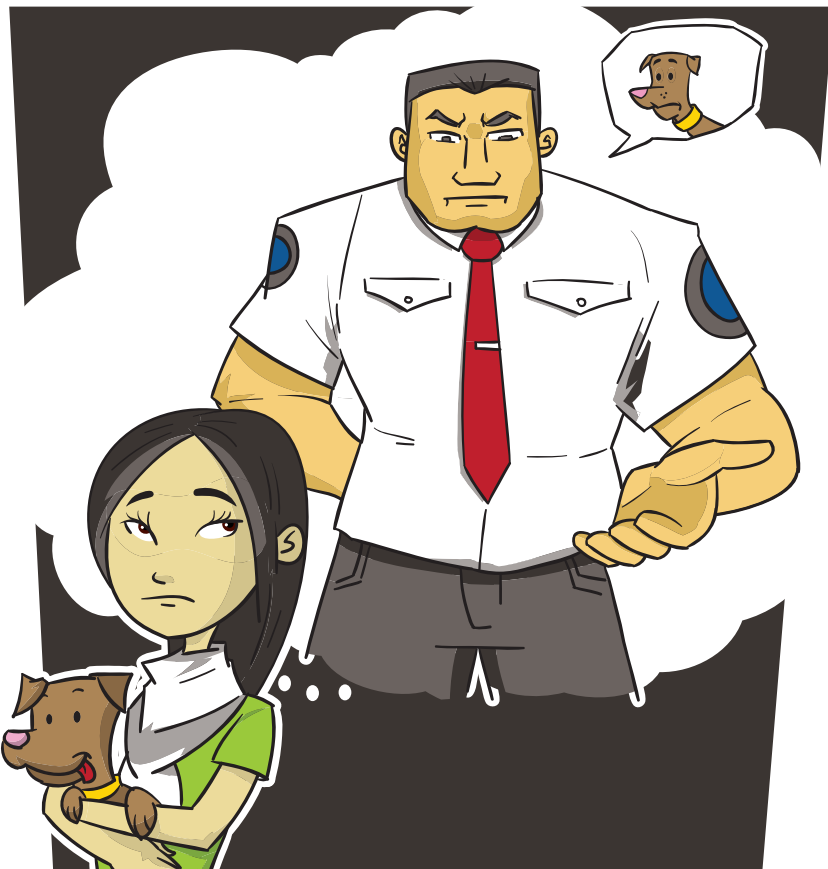
**GO TO "THE STORY CONTINUES" ON PAGE 26.**

LAUREN DELAYED PUTTING TOGETHER GO BAGS FOR HERSELF AND CHESTNUT.

Eyes still closed, Lauren remembered that as soon as the family discussion was over, Chestnut had followed her everywhere. But she never put the Go Bags together.

She hadn't given it another thought—until now. Where was Chestnut's old leash? Did they have extra food on hand for him? As she wondered, she soon found herself imagining a terrible scene: They'd just arrived at the evacuation center and Lauren held Chestnut in her arms. A very tall, very wide security guard stood in front of her, arms folded across his chest.

"No dogs allowed without their own Go Bags," the guard said. "Leave him here."



Hands shaking, Lauren handed Chestnut to the guard, who carried him to a waiting truck that was full of dogs. Chestnut whimpered.

As Lauren snapped out of her daydream and opened her eyes, she saw Chestnut sleeping on her lap.

“We have to get our Go Bags packed, little buddy,” she said. She got to work, and luckily, the family had what she and Chestnut needed on hand. She got the Go Bags ready and brought them to the front door.

GO TO “THE STORY CONTINUES” ON PAGE 26.

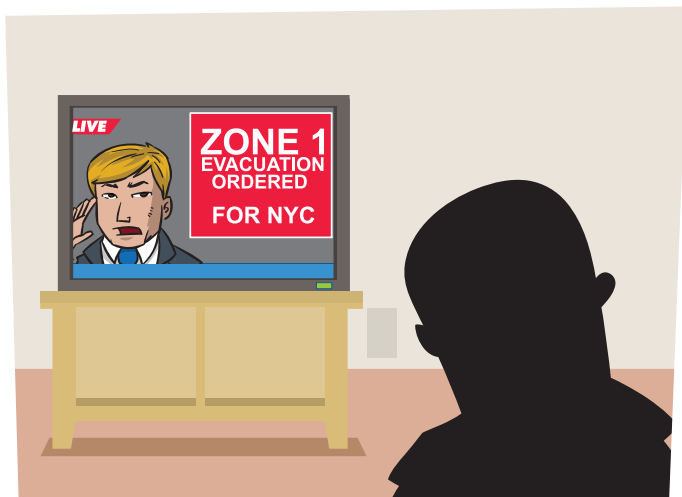
THE STORY CONTINUES.

When Lauren walked back through the living room, the images on the television caught her attention. Hurricane Nancy was hitting the Outer Banks of North Carolina. Weather and news crews were showing flooded streets, downed power lines, massive waves, and battered buildings.

“If you’re on the New Jersey coast, New York City’s more flood-prone areas, or the coasts of Long Island and Connecticut, now’s the time to get ready. This hurricane’s got you in its sights,” the storm expert said. The expert started discussing how the New York and New Jersey coastlines meet at a right angle, practically guiding a storm surge directly into New York City.

Then came the next bit of news. “We have an important update,” the TV weather man said. “New York City officials have just announced an evacuation order for Zone 1 residents. Those are residents in low-lying and flood-prone areas of the City. Make immediate preparations to evacuate.”

Lauren knew she had to tell her parents. But maybe she’d better watch for a few more minutes to see what other announcements were coming.



IF LAUREN DECIDES TO TELL HER PARENTS ABOUT THE EVACUATION ORDER RIGHT AWAY, GO TO PAGE 27.

IF LAUREN DECIDES TO WATCH MORE STORM COVERAGE ON TELEVISION BEFORE TELLING HER PARENTS, GO TO PAGE 29.

LAUREN DECIDES TO TELL HER PARENTS ABOUT THE EVACUATION ORDER RIGHT AWAY.

Lauren's mother was still outside securing the last few things in the yard.

"Mom! Mom, I just heard that the City has ordered Zone 1 evacuations," Lauren told her.

"Really?" her mother said, sounding surprised. "When did you hear this?"

"Just now. On the weather station."

"Go tell your father. Make sure Chestnut stays with you. We need to get ready to go," her mother said. "I'll be right in."



In just a few minutes, the family collected their Go Bags and loaded their car.

"We're going to your uncle's house," her mother said. "Let me call Frank and let him know we're on our way."

Lauren could hear the muffled sound of a strange voice on her mother's phone. Her mother hung up and dialed again. This time,

Lauren could make out the recorded message *all circuits are busy*. Her mother dialed again and then again.

“Everyone in the City is on their phones.”

She dialed again and said, “Forget it. I’m going to text him.” She was relieved when Uncle Frank called her back just a few minutes later. “Frank, I’m so glad you called me,” Lauren’s mother said. “We’re getting set to head your way. The City’s evacuation order really threw a wrench into our plans, but we were prepared.”

Her mother listened for a moment; then Lauren saw her expression quickly change from relief to concern.

“Oh. Oh, that’s right, yes,” her mother said into the phone. “Yes. Don’t worry, we’ll be fine. We’ll call you later.”

“What did he say?” Lauren’s father asked.

“They’re not home. Frank and Sheila were at their beach house this morning to prepare it for the storm. They are in traffic.”

“But can’t we still go to his house?” Lauren’s father said.

“There’s no key outside. We can’t get in,” Lauren’s mother replied. Lauren’s father groaned.

“So now what?” Lauren and her father asked at the same time.

“Maybe we should just go to a City evacuation center,” her grandmother said. “If we get there early, that gives us time to settle in and figure things out. Better to be safe...”

“...than sorry. You’re right,” Lauren’s mother added. “There’s an evacuation center close to the house. But should we drive or take the subway?”

“We have time, and the subway trains are running fine,” Lauren’s father said. “Let’s park the car in our garage and take the subway.”

GO TO “THE STORY CONTINUES” ON PAGE 32.

**LAUREN DECIDES TO WATCH MORE STORM COVERAGE
ON TELEVISION BEFORE TELLING HER PARENTS.**

Lauren continued watching as reporters from the field updated the weather situation where they were, from Georgia to North Carolina to Delaware to New Jersey to Battery Park. Time slipped by.

“Keep an eye on that water,” the host told the reporter in Battery Park.

“We’ll eventually have to evacuate this area,” the reporter replied.

“That’s right, to recap for all of those watching: a mandatory evacuation order has been issued for New York City residents in Zone 1,” the host said. “Zone 1 residents are now in the process of evacuating. We’re getting reports of people streaming into evacuation centers all around the City.”

Lauren’s father walked through the kitchen. “Okay, windows are taped up, we’ve got plenty of water, emergency kits are out of the basement,” he said, talking to himself. Then the TV caught his eye.

“Did they issue an evacuation order?” Lauren’s father asked.

“Yeah, a little while ago,” Lauren said.

“We need to get going,” Lauren’s father said, looking startled.

Lauren grabbed Chestnut. Then she, her parents, and her grandmother scrambled into the car with their Go Bags. Her father was nervously drumming his fingers on the steering wheel, her mother looked tense, and her grandmother was nervously twisting her Go Bag strap in her hands. Even Chestnut seemed tense. “We really should have gotten an earlier start,” Lauren’s father said, shaking his head. For the first time since she’d heard about Hurricane Nancy, Lauren was worried.

“Let me call Frank and let him know we’re on our way,” her mother said next.

Lauren could hear the muffled sound of a strange voice on her mother’s phone. Her mother hung up and dialed again. This time, Lauren could make out the recorded message *all circuits are busy*. Her mother dialed again and then again.

“Everyone in the City is on their phones.”

She dialed again and said, “Forget it. I’m going to try texting him.” She was relieved when Uncle Frank called her back a few minutes later. “Frank, I’m so glad you called me,” Lauren’s mother said. “We’re getting set to head your way. The City’s evacuation order really threw a wrench into our plans, but we were prepared.”

Her mother listened for a moment; then Lauren saw her expression quickly change from relief to concern.

“Oh. Oh, that’s right, yes,” her mother said into the phone. “Yes. Don’t worry, we’ll be fine. We’ll call you later.”

“What did he say?” Lauren’s father asked.

“They’re not home. Frank and Sheila were at their beach house this morning to prepare it for the storm. They are in traffic.”

“But can’t we still go to his house?” Lauren’s father said.

“There’s no key outside. We can’t get in,” Lauren’s mother replied.

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“So now what?” Lauren and her father asked at the same time.

“Maybe we should just go to a City evacuation center,” her grandmother said. “If we get there early, that gives us time to settle in and figure things out. Better to be safe...”

“...than sorry. You’re right,” Lauren’s mother added. “There’s an evacuation center close to the house. But should we drive or take the subway?”

“I’m afraid subways might close at a specific time before the storm,” Lauren’s dad said. “I’m sure the subways were running earlier, but I don’t know if they are now. At this point, we’d better drive.”

At the evacuation center nearest their house, Community Emergency Response Team, or CERT, officials stood on the sidewalk in their green vests. The adjacent parking lot was full. Lauren and her family didn’t even have to ask the question that the officials had, no doubt, been answering all day long.

“You need parking? I hear there’s a garage on the next block that still has some space available. Try there,” one of the police officers called out.

Lauren’s father thanked him and drove down the street. The lot attendant smiled as they pulled in.



“Not too many spots left,” the attendant said as they stopped. “Got a few down, and about six or seven on the upper deck. All of the good ones are gone.”

Lauren’s parents exchanged looks.

“I’d go up,” the attendant said. “We’ve had a few other storms that flooded the lower levels the last couple of years.”

As Lauren’s father handed over the parking fee, the attendant added, “Just keep your fingers crossed that the people in the building next door secured their belongings. All kinds of stuff blew off their balconies during other storms,” the attendant said.

Lauren’s family headed up and soon found one of the last spaces on the upper deck. Lauren’s dad spent a moment looking at the chairs, plants, tables, and bicycles on the balconies of the neighboring apartment building.

GO TO “THE STORY CONTINUES” ON PAGE 32.

THE STORY CONTINUES.

Lauren and her family soon arrived at the City evacuation center. Emergency personnel explained where to go, what to expect, and how to conduct themselves. Lauren stood nearby, holding Chestnut.

“Can I see that dog?” a deep voice asked.

Lauren turned to see a security guard standing beside her. He had his arms folded across his chest.

“Please don’t take him away,” Lauren said, frightened. “I thought we could bring pets. I have his Go Bag...”

“What’s his name?” the guard asked, his voice softening. He reached out to pet Chestnut’s head. “I brought my dog to the evacuation center too—*with* his Go Bag, of course.”

As Lauren and her family got settled, she spied Claire talking to Josh Rietman. Going to Uncle Frank’s house would have been better, maybe even fun, but this would be okay. Lauren was sure her family had made the right decision. They would be safe in the City evacuation center.

