



**Disaster  
SURVIVORS**

# Blitzed by a BLIZZARD!

by Joyce Markovics

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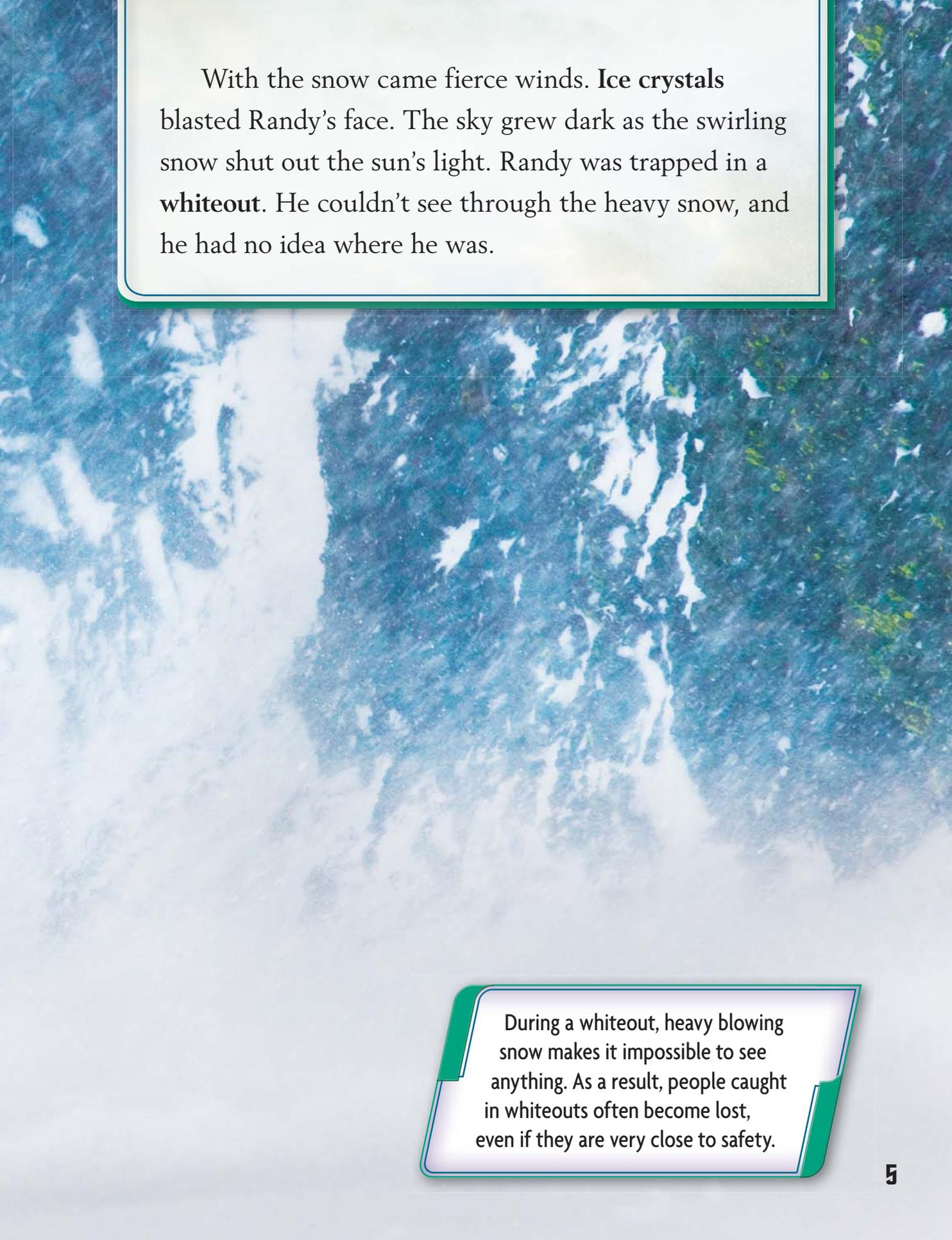
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# Whiteout!

The sky was clear when skier Randy Kraxberger left the visitor center at Olympic National Park in Washington State. It was December 29, 2007, and Randy was looking forward to skiing alone near Hurricane Hill. After several hours of skiing, the sky began filling with snow. “The tracks got covered up fairly fast,” Randy said. The trail soon disappeared under a blanket of white.





With the snow came fierce winds. **Ice crystals** blasted Randy's face. The sky grew dark as the swirling snow shut out the sun's light. Randy was trapped in a **whiteout**. He couldn't see through the heavy snow, and he had no idea where he was.

During a whiteout, heavy blowing snow makes it impossible to see anything. As a result, people caught in whiteouts often become lost, even if they are very close to safety.

# A Snowy Blast

Randy found himself lost in a **blizzard**—the most extreme kind of winter storm. A blizzard combines heavy snow with winds that blow 35 miles per hour (56 kph) or more. During a blizzard, **visibility** is very poor. The blowing snow stops people from seeing more than a quarter mile (.4 km) in front of them for at least three hours.

Randy took this photo of himself during the blizzard.



Luckily, Randy had a backpack and cell phone with him. He immediately called his wife Lisa, who put him in touch with park rangers. The rangers set out on skis to find Randy. However, wind gusts of 45 miles per hour (72 kph) and the possibility of **avalanches** forced some of them to turn back. It would soon be dark. With no help in sight, Randy had to do something quickly or risk freezing to death.



In the winter, park rangers often use skis to reach people who are trapped in the snow.

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## About the Author

*Joyce Markovics is an editor, writer, and orchid collector. When it snows, Joyce enjoys staying indoors with her husband, Adam, and reading books about treacherous winter storms.*

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# Blitzed by a BLIZZARD!

The sky was clear when Randy Kraxberger left the visitor center at Olympic National Park in Washington State. He was looking forward to skiing alone near Hurricane Hill. After several hours, however, the sky began filling with snow. With the snow came fierce winds. Ice crystals blasted Randy's face. The sky grew dark as the swirling snow shut out the sun's light. Randy was trapped in a blizzard. He couldn't see through the heavy snow, and he had no idea where he was.

Look inside to find out more about Randy and other survivors of blizzards who narrowly escaped death. You'll also discover what causes the dangerous winter storms, where and when the world's worst blizzards have occurred, and—most important—how to stay safe if one is heading your way.

**Blitzed by a Blizzard!**

**Devastated by a Volcano!**

**Erased by a Tornado!**

**Hammered by a Heat Wave!**

**Leveled by an Earthquake!**

**Mangled by a Hurricane!**

**Slammed by a Tsunami!**

**Struck by Lightning!**

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