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Superstorm: Nine Days Inside Hurricane Sandy



Synopsis

The first complete moment-by-moment account of the largest Atlantic storm system ever recorded—a hurricane like no other. The sky was lit by a full moon on October 29, 2012, but nobody on the eastern seaboard of the United States could see it. Everything had been consumed by cloud. The storm's immensity caught the attention of scientists on the International Space Station. Even from there, it seemed almost limitless: 1.8 million square feet of tightly coiled bands so huge they filled the windows of the Station. It was the largest storm anyone had ever seen. Initially a tropical storm, Sandy had grown into a hybrid monster. It charged across open ocean, picking up strength with every step, baffling meteorologists and scientists, officials and emergency managers, even the traditional maritime wisdom of sailors and seamen: What exactly was this thing? By the time anyone decided, it was too late. And then the storm made landfall. Sandy was not just enormous, it was also unprecedented. As a result, the entire nation was left flat-footed. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration couldn't issue reliable warnings; the Coast Guard didn't know what to do. In *Superstorm*, journalist Kathryn Miles takes readers inside the maelstrom, detailing the stories of dedicated professionals at the National Hurricane Center and National Weather Service. The characters include a forecaster who risked his job to sound the alarm in New Jersey, the crew of the ill-fated tall ship *Bounty*, Mayor Bloomberg, Governor Christie, and countless coastal residents whose homes—and lives—were torn apart and then left to wonder . . . When is the next superstorm coming?

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Customer Reviews

This book is an excellent read. It takes the reader behind the scenes as the meteorologists wrestle with the problems inherent in both predicting storms of this nature and alerting the public to the seriousness of what they are facing. It was written in such a way that all readers will be able to understand the science behind what's happening; and it gives us a sense of what happened to the people who experienced the storm. I highly recommend it.

In a gripping narrative, Kathryn Miles takes us back to late October 2012 when Superstorm Sandy wreaked havoc on a wide swath of the Caribbean and the United States. It is a detailed hour-by-hour account of how this monster hurricane formed, the damage it wrought and the human toll it left in its wake. The author draws a full picture of what was going on behind the scenes at the National Hurricane Center and National Weather Service as the storm scientists struggled to come to grips with the enormity of the storm and get the information out to the public. She describes the mistakes that compounded the tragedy such as the confusion over how the storm should be classified resulting in delayed warnings. Beyond providing a birds-eye view of events, the author manages to make the reader get to know the people involved and understand how these storms form and behave. The narrative is detailed without being overly technical. Adding to the pathos is the tragic story of how the *Bounty*'s captain decided to set sail in the face of the hurricane resulting in the sinking of the ship and the loss of the captain and a member of its crew. Although Superstorm is a harrowing tale it will be enjoyed by weather geeks and everyone else who appreciate a well written real life story.

The author did a superlative job of presenting a massive amount of information and history in a thoroughly enjoyable and riveting style. She gave an exciting look into how forecasters work and the massive responsibilities that they face...and also the things that hamper them as they try to predict an unpredictable Mother Nature. The book reads like a good fiction novel...the best praise I can give to nonfiction.

Sitting cozy in California, I marveled at the courage, foresight and daring of people confronted with a storm they simply could not imagine ever happening. And, kudos to the author for including the stupid ones -only some of whom survived to tell lies over a beer later about their prowess. I have never personally experienced a storm like this so the lead in was especially interesting. The weather bureau trying to figure out what all their computers were telling them, the officials who encouraged people to act smart and leave, the ones who did and didn't heed that advice, and the myriad of officials and just plain folks who found themselves in a storm that will be studied and taught for years. Miles background as a news reporter is why this book reads so well, is organized, and tells the story emphasizing the old "Who, What, Why, When Where, and How" that used to be the mantra of every reporter and editor.

The research of Kathryn Miles is the superstar in this book. She is precise while presenting information in a well written, understandable format. She helps the layperson to understand and view the storm like a scientist. I kept thinking that this story was playing out like a movie, reminiscent of *The Perfect Storm*, only "this is no movie, this is really happening." Living on the coast, Superstorm opened my eyes to crisis decision making and how convoluted it can be. Conditions can change on a dime, and you can bet I will be making decisions to be safe sooner rather than later after reading this book. My only complaint is the abrupt ending of the book. Storm hits, story over, even though we watched the aftermath and the stories of tragedy and misery play out for weeks. I would think as an author, if you really wanted to convince people to take hurricane preparedness and evacuations seriously, you would include some descriptions of that outcome and the consequences of decisions made.

This was one great book! I was living outside the country when Sandy hit and my news coverage was not the best. When I returned Stateside, I wanted to know more about this historical storm. I can truthfully say that Kathryn Miles did a superb job of all aspects of the storm. And she did it in a way that was totally readable, and at the same time imparted a lot of scientific information in a way that the average layman could understand. For anyone who would like to know more about this historical and devastating event, I highly recommend *Nine Days Inside Hurricane Sandy*.

The details explained so much about the predicting of storms. The author did an excellent job of maintaining that "edge of your seat" quality, combined with a personal saga, and the science. Very

well done!

Very insightful. I drove up from Florida to Mass. just behind Sandy. Took the inland route so I saw the size of the storms damage. Was a great read.

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