



READ-ALLOUD

In this read-aloud from *I Survived the Galveston Hurricane, 1900*, the sun is rising on Charlie and Gordon. They made it through the night of the hurricane in the safety of a big tree that, somehow, is still standing...

Assign roles to your family and friends. Then recreate Charlie's and Gordon's reunions with their families.

CHARACTERS:

Narrator	Mrs. Potts
Charlie	Lulu
Gordon	Mama
Mr. Potts	Papa

Narrator: As the sun comes up, the wind and rain have stopped. Charlie and Gordon hold onto the tree that saved their lives, afraid to let go.

Charlie: Should we get down?

Gordon: Do you think it's safe?

Charlie: I don't know. But I have to go see if my family...

Narrator: Charlie can't finish the sentence.

Gordon: Right. Okay, let's go.

Narrator: The boys start to climb down. They move slowly because of their scrapes and bruises. At the bottom, Charlie is so grateful to the tree that he wants to hug it. Instead, he puts his hand on it for a moment. Then Gordon gasps.

Gordon: Charlie, I...I can't...

Narrator: Charlie looks over at Gordon, then follows his eyes to what used to be their beloved town.

Charlie: Impossible.

Gordon: I don't recognize anything. Do you?

Narrator: Charlie shakes his head. Houses are smashed like eggs. People with injuries cry as they look through the wreckage. A pile of stones sits where a church used to be. Gordon is trying not to cry.

Gordon: Where *is* everything?

Narrator: Charlie puts a hand on Gordon's shoulder.

READ-ALoud (CONTINUED)

Charlie: We should go. Our families—they might be worried about us.

Gordon: Yours might be. I don't think my father would care if I ever came back.

Charlie: That's not true, Gordon. It can't be.

Narrator: Gordon just shakes his head. Charlie takes a few steps, pulling Gordon with him, their shoes making a strange sucking sound.

Gordon: We're sinking into the mud.

Charlie: Then I guess we'd better walk fast.

Narrator: The exhausted boys try to move quickly. But the mud tugs at their feet and they have to climb over endless piles of wood that used to be buildings.

Gordon: Charlie, what if—

Charlie: Don't. Don't think about *anything* but getting home.

Narrator: It takes hours to make the journey but finally, Gordon cries out.

Gordon: My house! It's my house!

Narrator: A man on the front steps turns suddenly.

Mr. Potts: Son!

Narrator: Gordon's father dashes toward them and wraps Gordon in a huge hug.

Mr. Potts: He's back! He's safe!

Narrator: Gordon hugs his father back as Mrs. Potts rushes out of the house. She joins the hug, looking Gordon over as best she can.

Mrs. Potts: Are you all right? Are you hurt?

Narrator: Gordon looks over at Charlie with a smile, tears in his eyes. Charlie nods, happy for his friend. But then his heart sinks. As he looks around, he sees no sign of Mama, Papa, or Lulu. What if they were washed out to sea? What if—

Lulu: *Chowie!*

Narrator: Charlie sees his family running toward him. The sight of them is too much for him and he falls to his knees.

Mama: Charlie! Oh, thank goodness!

Papa: We were so worried!

Mama: Look at you. You're bleeding.

Charlie: I'm fine, Mama. Really. I'm just so glad we're all here.

Lulu: That was a scary cloud monster, Chowie.

Charlie: I know, Lulu. I know. But we made it. And we'll be okay.

Narrator: The family holds tight to each other, grateful to be together again. ■