

# Surviving the earthquake

28th February 2010

Dear Diary,

You're never going to believe what happened last night! Our small town, including our home, was demolished by an enormous earthquake! Everything we have ever known has been destroyed and I am devastated.

It all started as a normal night. Nothing special happened, just the usual arguments about teeth brushing and bedtime. I decided to hit the sack to escape Mum and Dad's moaning and I must've fallen asleep quite quickly.

What felt like seconds later, I woke up to ear-splitting cracks and extreme bangs and my bed was shaking violently! It took me a little while to work out what was going on, but when I saw my multi-coloured picture frames trembling on the wall, I knew it was an earthquake! In an instant, I was out of bed and bolting towards the front door! Just as I got there, a book from my shelf came flying down and hit me on the head. At the time, I didn't notice, but it left a deep cut on my forehead.

Reaching the landing, I saw Mum and Dad racing towards me. Dad grabbed me and chucked me over his shoulder while Mum had Jennie cradled in her arms. We were outside within seconds and watched in horror as our road buckled underneath us, creating colossal cracks that ripped through the route we always took to school.

Next door's house was the first to go and, heartbreakingly, they were still inside. Did they survive? Was anyone able to help them?

We huddled together in an open space. Dad said this was the safest option so nothing could collapse on top of us. Shockingly, we then saw our home start to crumble. First,

the windows smashed, and we saw thick dust oozing from the building. Then, the roof started to cave in. Before we knew it, there was nothing but a pile of rubble on the floor. Can you even imagine how awful it was?

The shaking probably lasted for about three minutes, although it felt like much longer. When it stopped, we could hear terrified screams and the muffled cries of the injured and buried. I started to cry, so Dad squeezed me tightly. For that split second, I felt all the terror leave my body. It felt like home. Wiping away my tears, Dad told me to be brave for we had people to help. Frantically, we started to pull gigantic lumps of broken brick and debris from our neighbour's house to try to find them. It was hard work and my head was pounding, but I kept going. We didn't find anyone.

After what felt like a lifetime, we heard sirens and we knew help had arrived. A kind lady guided me to a doctor who stitched my forehead and wrapped it in a bandage of soft material. We were then sent to a makeshift rescue centre at an address in town. We each have a camp bed to sleep on and there is medicine, food and water, although I have no interest in eating at the moment.

I can't believe how fortunate we were. These recent events have made me realise how lucky I am to have my family here safe with me. We don't have a home and we don't have any of our belongings with us, but we are alive and we are together which is the best feeling in the world.

I'm losing the battle with my weary eyes, so I'll write again soon.

*James*

