



# Storm of the Century: The Labor Day Hurricane of 1935 (Adventure Press)

*Willie Drye*

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The most powerful hurricane in United States history assaulted the Florida Keys in 1935, one of the darkest years of the Great Depression. With winds surpassing 200 miles an hour and a storm surge topping 20 feet, the “Storm of the Century” killed more than 400 people in a two-day span, devastating small villages and killing hundreds of World War I veterans working on a federally sponsored project—and kicking up a far-reaching political storm of acrimony and controversy in its wake.

Told from the alternating viewpoints of veterans and local residents who survived the storm, Federal Emergency Relief Administration employees, and governmental officials, *Storm of the Century* is an ambitious work of investigative journalism and historical research, panoramic in scope and haunting in its emotional immediacy. Featuring previously undisclosed documents from the original government investigation, noted journalist Willie Drye’s vivid account of the storm’s rampage is accompanied by fascinating revelations about how federal administrators ignored early hurricane warnings—and why supporters of Franklin Delano Roosevelt were deeply concerned about its effect on the election of 1936. Drye’s bracing narrative expertly evokes the Florida Keys of the 1930s and delivers the first comprehensive explanation of how the economic crises of the Depression and the cruel mandates of political expediency collided full-force with the might of the hurricane itself and ultimately exploded into a national tragedy.

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