❊ "There was nothing," says Libby, standing in what used to be her mom's bedroom.

twist real life:

"My family lost everything we owned"

How a deadly tornado changed TWIST reader Libby's life forever.

Fifteen-year-old Libby looked around at the rubble as tears welled in her eyes. She couldn't believe that the pile of wood, broken glass and trash used to be her home. Her whole town of Joplin, Missouri had been torn apart by a tornado — so much so that it was hard for her family to find the block they lived on. Luckily, her whole family was safe, but the tornado killed over 100 people in her town, and changed Libby's life forever.

"It's scary what Mother Nature can do"

"I was having lunch with my mom and brothers at my grandma's house when we heard sirens in the distance," Libby tells TWIST. Her grandfather and uncle were at her house across town when the tornado started. "We tried to call

❊ The tornado made Libby extra grateful for her family.

them, but the phone lines went completely dead," Libby remembers. She was paralyzed with fear that she'd never hear from them again, but all she could do was huddle with her mom and brothers, and wait anxiously for it to end.

"I was shocked when I saw my house"

The next time Libby's grandpa called, he said when he came out of the basement where he had hidden, the whole house was gone. "My mom started bawling," Libby says. "The first time I saw my house after the tornado, I was in shock." All she was able to salvage was a laundry basket of clothes and a few family photos. "I wish I was able to save my dance trophies, but they were crushed," she shares mournfully. Even

though Libby lost all her belongings, she feels lucky her family is safe. Now, she's living with her grandparents and taking it one day at a time. "I just hope to see the town rebuilt," she says. ❊

Twist gives back!

❊ TWIST staffer Kathleen sent clothes to Joplin.

How You Can Help!

What you can do for Joplin!

✓ Raise awareness by liking Joplin, MO Tornado Recovery on Facebook.

✓ Organize a clothing drive at your school to generate clothes to send.

✓ Mail boxes of donations to: United Way of Greater St. Louis, 910 N. 11th St., St. Louis, MO 31101. ATTN: Joplin Tornado Relief.