

Summer Jane a OneWorld Vocalist shares her harrowing experience of Hurricane Dorian



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OneWorld Vocalist

A resident of Hope Town, Abaco, 16-year-old vocalist Summer Jane endured the wrath of Hurricane Dorian up-close and personally. Although she and her family had already been through several damaging hurricanes in Abaco, they decided to ride Dorian out in their home rather than evacuate. They never imagined the extent of devastation it would inflict on northern Abaco and Grand Bahama.

“Before the storm, I was thinking ‘Is this going to be like a few other hurricanes I’ve been through, which weren’t that bad,’” Summer said. “But once it hit, it was scary. The entire time.”

Nine people had taken shelter in Summer’s family house as the storm approached, but that number grew to 15 once they were able to go outside as the calm of the storm’s eye passed overhead. They encountered neighbors on the street--whose homes had been completely destroyed--and quickly gave them shelter. Appropriately and amidst all the chaos and anxiety, it was singing that provided the most comfort, as the family and guests endured seemingly endless hours of pounding 180mph winds, flooding in the house, and the recurring mental images of the absolute destruction they had witnessed outside.

“The second part of the storm was so much longer [than the first],” Summer said. “And the feeling [inside the house] had completely changed. We had more people in the house, more people to feed, more people to look

after. My little sister went into a complete panic attack and my little cousins began to cry as well. At one point we all just started singing praise songs. We had nothing else to do and it was something to take our minds off what was going on. We just sang.”

After the storm moved away, Summer was forced to relocate to Nassau, where she enrolled in Windsor High School and began the process of evaluating what she had just gone through. She had always loved singing and was active in Hope Town’s choir and annual Christmas productions. She had even received some vocal coaching from a classically-trained Youth Leader from Canada who had worked in the town several years ago. So, when her mother encouraged her to audition for the Climate Change Relief Song, she jumped at the chance.

“Ever since the storm,” she said, “I’ve wanted to start giving back to the people who are less fortunate than me, who I can relate to in that way [being a storm survivor]. I just felt that I needed to help them out.”