My Name is Aku

Based on “The Storm”
My name is Aku.

I am a teenager.

I live in Brooklyn.

My family is from Africa.
This is my father, Kojo.

He is a dreamer.

He dreams of having a boat.
This is my mother, Efie.

She worries a lot.

Before I go out, she always asks me a lot of questions...
“Where are you going?

Do you have a hat?

Do you have your cell phone?

What time did I say to meet?”
Today, I am going to a friend’s house.

In the morning, we are going to the beach.

In the afternoon, I am meeting my parents in the park.

We are going to have a picnic.
When I get to my friend Maya’s house, she says:

“We can’t go to the beach. There is a Severe Weather Alert. It’s not safe to be outside.”
“Sorry, girls,” says Maya’s mom, Mrs. B.

“I got a storm alert from Notify NYC. We have to stay inside.”
I go to my bag to get my cell phone.

I want to call my parents.

I want to tell them I am safe.

But I left my phone at home!
I want to use Maya’s phone to call my parents.

But the line is dead.

Now it is raining very hard.

The wind is blowing hard, too.
“Don’t worry,” says Mrs. B.

“There are 3 things to do for an emergency.

Make a plan.

Gather supplies.

Get informed.”
“Does your family have a Ready New York guide? You can get one at www.nyc.gov/readyny. The Ready New York guide can help you make a plan.”
I explain:

“We have a Ready New York guide at home. It’s called My Emergency Plan.

I gave it to my mother, but we never finished our plan!”
“In an emergency, everyone needs a plan. You need a meeting place in your neighborhood. And, you need a meeting place outside your neighborhood.”
“You also need the names and phone numbers of people you can call if your family is separated.”
“Well... I thought we were prepared.

We got supplies for a Go Bag—
flashlight, first aid kit, bottled water.

My dad got extra batteries, too.”
“But what can we do without a phone?
How can we get information without a phone?”
Mrs. B explains:

“I have Notify NYC. With Notify NYC, I can get text messages about emergencies.”
“And, we have a computer.
We can use Facebook to get information.”
“But don’t worry.

Your parents have good friends and neighbors, like Mrs. Chen.

Mrs. Chen will check on everyone in your building.

Your parents will be safe.”
Finally, I reach my mother on the phone.

My mother asks:

“Where are you? Are you okay?”
I explain:

“Mom, thanks to Mrs. B, I’m safe.
And I know more about emergencies, too.”
When I get home, my mom and dad are very happy to see me.

It’s still very wet outside, so we have a picnic on the floor!
It’s good to be together.

And it’s good to have a plan
for a picnic...

Or for a storm!
All **We Speak NYC** episodes and *“My Name is...”* books are available on the website:

www.nyc.gov/WeSpeakNYC

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