

FADE IN

FOOTAGE OF HURRICANE KATRINA MAKING HER WAY TO NEW ORLEANS  
WITH SCREEN CREDITS

AFTER THE CREDITS AND IN BOLD LETTERS; AUGUST 28TH, 2005  
HURRICANE KATRINA AS SHE MAKES HER WAY TO NEW ORLEANS. DAY  
ONE.

EXT. DEBANOUX MANSION - HURRICANE KATRINA DAY ONE - DAY

The wind is picking up quite a bit, outside the Debanoux  
mansion. Trees are blowing wildly etc.

Hurricane Katrina makes her way to New Orleans.

Lieutenant Dan, a New Orleans policeman, stands outside the  
Debanoux mansion.

He lights a cigarette.

He watches an half opened upstairs window with much  
interest. The window curtain flutters in the breeze. He  
seems to be waiting for someone.

INT. DEBANOUX MANSION'S LIVING ROOM - AUGUST 28TH, 2005 -  
MORNING

The action takes place in the Debanoux mansion's living  
room. The living room is lavishly furnished with crystal  
chandelier, a sofa and two matching chairs. An old  
fashioned radio sits on a nearby table. There is a coffee  
table placed in front of the couch. Placed on the coffee  
table is a silver tea set with three cups and saucers for  
tea.

There is a small china cabinet with a bottle of champagne  
and three glasses on a silver tray.

There are three steps leading up to the second floor  
landing. The landing is about two thirds the width of the  
living room.

There is a tall, ceiling to floor, French window on each  
side of the landing. The windows do not have window glass.

Miss Prissy is an elderly, white haired lady, in her mid  
eighties, wearing a simple but appropriate outfit, for tea.

She is seated on the sofa. There is a walking cane beside her. She pours herself a cup of tea.

Miss Prissy's brother, Hugh, an elderly, scholarly looking man, in his early eighties, is seated in a chair beside Miss Prissy. He is impeccably dressed as befitting a Southern gentleman, in a white suit. Hugh has a white hat lying beside him on the chair.

Miss Prissy pours Hugh a cup of tea and hands it to him.

This is DAY ONE of the hurricane Katrina, making its way to New Orleans, August 28th, 2005.

The CAMERA PANS from a tree branch tapping hard against the French window to Miss Prissy pouring Hugh a cup of tea.

MISS PRISSY

Where is Reginald?

HUGH

Working on his latest invention.

MISS PRISSY

Hugh?

HUGH

Reginald has invented a contraption. A wonderful contraption that fits to any mower! You simply flip a switch and voila'.

MISS PRISSY

Voila'?

HUGH

The only problem is...

MISS PRISSY

There's always a problem with Reginald's inventions!

HUGH

Well, some times the do hickey gets hung up!

MISS PRISSY

The do hickey gets hung up?

HUGH

Yes, hung up and when you flip the switch, the do hickey doesn't always pop out!

MISS PRISSY

I see...

HUGH

Or, sometimes, it gets hung up on a bush.

MISS PRISSY

I see.

MISS PRISSY (CONT'D)

Hugh, don't you dare tell me, that you have indeed invested in another of Reginald's inventions!

HUGH

Reginald says we can make a bundle! Why, he's going to advertise it on TV. You've seen those ads... Loose weight fast with this and that? Electrical defoliating devices! Brushes that do a multitude of tasks from shinning up your car to cleaning your pots and pans...

MISS PRISSY

What do you and Reginald call this device?

HUGH

Why, 'The Easy To Install Mower Grass Wacker.' Guaranteed to wack your grass or your money back!

MISS PRISSY

Stop! I cannot hear any more!

HUGH

Dear, I don't think you have your hearing aid turned up high enough!

Miss Prissy turns her hearing aid up.

MISS PRISSY

Which, unfortunately, reminds me,  
And pray, what was Reginald's  
invention last Fourth of July,  
Hugh?

HUGH

Reginald paid for the damage, Miss  
Prissy.

MISS PRISSY

Just a tad too much C4?.

HUGH

Well, Miss Prissy, Reginald  
thought the rockets should have a  
little more zip off the launch  
pad.

MISS PRISSY

A little more zip!

HUGH

The hearing aid hasn't helped,  
Miss Prissy?

There are several uncomfortable seconds as they sip their  
tea.

EXT. DEBANOUX MANSION

A man, the Robber, Lieutenant Dan, stands outside the  
Debanoux mansion smoking a cigarette. He is greeted by the  
second Robber, Tim. Tim is a slow boy and drags a very  
heavy bag that clanks as if it were filled with metal. A  
small hand gun falls out and Tim clumsily fits it back into  
the bulging, heavy sack.

They greet each other rapping fists.

Lieutenant Dan puts his cigarette out on the sidewalk.

LIEUTENANT DAN

Hi there, Tim by boy. Let me tell  
you a little story. There's them  
there that has. And there's them  
there that don't...

Lieutenant Dan pats Tim on the shoulder.

TIM

Yes, Sir?...

LIEUTENANT DAN

Let's you and me take a little walk, son and I'll tell you a story...

INT DEBANOUX MANSION'S LIVING ROOM

Hugh looks at his pocket watch.

MISS PRISSY

Mother did not raise us to be late for tea. She expected punctuality!

HUGH

Yes, mother could be a pain.

MISS PRISSY

Mother taught us Southern manners. Mother always said that a gentleman, or a lady for that matter, always honored their commitments.

HUGH

Miss Prissy...

The tree branch smacks against the window startling Miss Prissy.

MISS PRISSY

You see, Reginald had promised me, only yesterday that after tea he would drive me into town to the beauty parlor. I have an appointment at two, you see. Why Betty is opening her shop on this Sunday, just for me. Just so I can have my hair done. Today is special, oh, never mind me, Hugh!

HUGH

I'm sorry, Miss Prissy, but Reginald cannot take you into town today!

MISS PRISSY

And why not!

HUGH

You, see, the Rolls is in the garage having the brakes relined.

MISS PRISSY

How many times has that old Rolls Royce been in the garage this year alone?

HUGH

Six or seven I believe.

MISS PRISSY

The Rolls, the termites, that have us at their very mercy, as we cannot afford an exterminator! This old mansion, a good wind would blow it over. Only thing that would be left would be the termites.

HUGH

When we were children, remember how wonderful this old mansion used to be. It was one of the finest homes on Maple Street! These days, if it weren't for the termites holding this old place together, I don't know what we'd do! The roof leaks, the doors creak, the basement gets flooded every spring...

The tree branch smacks against the window again startling Miss Prissy.

MISS PRISSY

Forgive me, Hugh, I've just been so cross this morning! Besides, my old bones hurt. It must be the weather. These old bones. My old bones. They just throb in bad weather.

Miss Prissy closes the half opened window.

EXT. MARION'S GUN SHOP IN NEW ORLEANS - DAY

Reginald, a large man in his eighties and his girlfriend, Marion, a very pretty lady in her late sixties stand outside her gun shop.

Reginald holds several large Winchester rifles.

Miss Harvey holds a birthday cake box under one arm. It is quite windy and the both of them look up at the sky.

MARION

This weather! My Lord, another storm up from the Gulf!

REGINALD

Not even God will allow rain, today, on Miss Prissy's 85th birthday! She wouldn't allow it!

MARION

By God's hand that's the living truth!

Reginald kisses Marion and they get into her car.

INT. DEBANOUX MANSION'S LIVING ROOM

HUGH

Old bones are to be expected in the Autumn of our years.

MISS PRISSY

Yes, Hugh, I am reminded each day. These old bones! Youth's regrets catch up with you, when you are finally old. Sometimes, in sleep, I dream forgetting that this old body is finally reneging on youth's promise!. It's hard to let go of dreams. And in my dreams, I dance! I dance...

INT. MISS HELLMAN'S BALLET ACADEMY -MANY YEARS AGO- DAY

Miss Hellman, a very stern, elderly lady holds a thin baton in her hand. She watches a young teenaged Miss Prissy doing a ballet routine.

Miss Prissy is dressed in ballet leotard and ballet shoes.

Miss Hellman pokes Miss Prissy in the ribs when she makes a mistake.

MISS HELLMAN

Oh, no. No. No. This will not do, Girl! Again! Again!

Miss Prissy does the routine again. And Miss Hellman nods approvingly.

MISS HELLMAN

Yes, yes, that's it. You have it. We may make something of you yet as a dancer.

Miss Prissy dances off across the studio, beautifully.

INT. DEBANOUX MANSION'S LIVING ROOM

HUGH

We have to make room for old age, dear. It was always there waiting.

MISS PRISSY

When one is young, dreams melt into summer's stream. And through cupped hands, we drink. Youth wasted in drops, Hands never careful. And when you are finally old, how you miss with aged, weary hands, that cool cup of water.

HUGH

Yes, we are into late autumns now, aren't we, old girl? Mother wasn't as old as we are now, when she passed.

MISS PRISSY

These days, in dreams, Hugh why I find myself apologizing, to ghosts...

HUGH

Ghosts?

MISS PRISSY

Ghosts, Hugh, disappointment. 'I'm sorry, mother.' I wake up saying, 'I'm sorry.' If only... If only... I'd not been such a disappointment to you. 'Your talent is a gift!' 'Try harder, practice more. These are the words I hear in my dreams 'You're better than any girl in Mrs. Hellman's ballet class. You have potential,' she'd say.' How I came to hate that word, 'potential.' I just wanted to dance, Hugh. That's all.

HUGH

Yes, I remember how you could dance!

MISS PRISSY

The mother of a talented dancer, became the mother of a difficult teenager, who was determined to go her own way. And maybe, Hugh, just out of spite!

HUGH

Yes, and mother...

MISS PRISSY

Mother never forgave. She had an unforgiving soul. She had no more dreams for me, you see. She was and continued to be, disappointed in her daughter. Things were never the same between us... And now, in the Autumn of my life, what these old bones wouldn't give to dance. To dance before that young, headstrong girl had her way!

(Miss Prissy massages her temples.)

Ghosts... You see, Hugh, these days I'm apologizing to ghosts.

I'm sorry, mother. I'm sorry. This weather! My bones!

INT. MISS HELLMAN'S BALLET ACADEMY

Miss Prissy dances beautifully again across the dance floor from the opposite direction.

EXT. MRS. THOMPSON'S HOUSE NEXT DOOR - HER BEDROOM WINDOW - DAY

Mrs. Thompson is leaning out of her upstairs bedroom window. She is alarmed that the trellis of her prize winning roses has come loose.

She shakes the trellis checking it.

She holds a few nails in her mouth. She steps out onto the roof ledge holding a hammer.

INT. DEBANOUX MANSION'S LIVING ROOM

HUGH

Oh, Miss Prissy...  
(Hugh again checks his pocket watch.)

MISS PRISSY

You never worry about anything, Hugh. You have a quiet strength, Hugh. You don't show all bravado like Reginald! You are sensitive and caring of others. You always have been. What is the expression?

HUGH

'Mellowed out.'

MISS PRISSY

Yes, that's it. More mellowed out...

HUGH

My philosophy, Miss Prissy is...?

FOOTAGE OF THE GRAND CANYON WITH IT'S WINDING RIVER

HUGH VOICE OVER

I 'go with the flow,' as they say, these days. I think of life as a big river. Maybe the river that formed the Grand Canyon ages ago. Why, Miss Prissy, that river made its way, through time, churning through twists and turns and little by little, inch by inch, every year it eroded just a little bit of that rock! Maybe that river looks the same to us in our lifetime, but that river isn't the same. It isn't done. It's still churning its way through twists and turns and little by little, inch by inch, every year it still continues to erode a little bit of that huge rock! For that river will take you with it, no matter how you struggle. No matter what! Kicking or screaming, Miss Prissy, that old river will take you with it!

INT. DEBANOUX MANSION'S LIVING ROOM - AUGUST 28TH, 2005 - MORNING

MISS PRISSY

Reginald is not your 'go with the flow' kind of man, is he?

HUGH

No, Miss Prissy, no he is not. He'd find a way to dam up that river! He's what you would call a take charge kind of man. Leaves nothing to chance. He's got to be the boss man! He's pert near bossed you and I since we were children! Do this, do that, he'd say. And we did!

MISS PRISSY

Oh, yes, we had no choice in the matter!

HUGH

Big strapping kind of boy and me  
just the puny little brother. Yes,  
Reginald was always the leader. Do  
you remember what we used to call  
ourselves, Miss Prissy?

EXT. OUTSIDE THE DEBANOUX MANSION A LONG TIME AGO WHEN THE  
MAPLE STREET MILITIA WERE CHILDREN -DAY

Miss Prissy, is a very pretty little girl of 8 years, Hugh,  
is a very delicate boy of 10 years, and Reginald is a big,  
strapping boy of 12 years. They are dressed up as soldiers,  
carrying guns and swords.

MISS PRISSY  
The Maple Street Militia!

HUGH  
Comrades in arms, we route out...

REGINALD  
The evil in all men!

INT DEBANOUX MANSION'S LIVING ROOM - PRESENT -DAY

HUGH  
Oh, my goodness, I haven't thought  
of the Maple Street Militia in  
years. Yes, it is funny what  
memory comes back to you when you  
are old. We fought the evil in  
all men! My, my.

MISS PRISSY  
Yes, Lord. And then, Reginald  
with his antics. And the things  
he talked you and I into!

HUGH  
Sixty

INT. BURN OUT BUILDING -THREE STORIES UP -DAY

Miss Prissy, a young girl, has fallen through a hole in the  
floor three stories up in an old burn out building. She is  
holding on by her fingernails to keep from falling!

INT DEBANOUX MANSION'S LIVING ROOM -DAY

MISS PRISSY

Lord, Hugh! Do not mention that game to me! I had nightmares for years afterward. I had to sleep with the night light on! Three stories up in that old burnt out building. 'Girls are sissy,' he'd say. 'Can't climb trees! And can't jump over holes in a floor! Sissy! Sissy! Miss Prissy is sissy,' he'd say. All these years later, I can still remember me there hanging on by my fingernails, for dear life, having misjudged how big one blasted hole was in that rotten floor!

HUGH

Reginald was laughing that side splitting laugh that he has!

MISS PRISSY

Too busy laughing to pull me up and out of that hole! But, Hugh, the look on your face! You looked as if you'd just drop dead of fright. You ran over to me fast as lightning! You pulled me up out of that hole in the floor with some superhuman strength! Then, we both lay there gasping for breath!

HUGH

I think I lost a year of my life that day! Reginald never was scared on anything in his life!

MISS PRISSY

Whatever Reginald said, we did. Whatever mission we were on. He was the leader. The leader of The Maple Street Militia.

Suddenly, Reginald comes in with a gush of wind through the living room door. He is dressed for the party in a white suit and tie. He holds a platter with a fabulous birthday

cake. The cake is lit up with candles. Reginald carefully places the cake on the coffee table.

MISS PRISSY

Reginald! Oh, my! Oh, my!

REGINALD

Happy birthday, Miss Prissy!

HUGH

Happy 85th birthday, Miss Prissy!

Hugh and Reginald both kiss her on the cheek.

HUGH (CONT'D)

Sunday, the 28th of August, 2005,  
now did you think Reginald and I  
would forget?

MISS PRISSY

You have certainly surprised me.  
You certainly have! When one has  
had as many birthdays as I have,  
you wonder if birthdays are rather  
redundant. My 85th birthday. Lord,  
I never! Such a fancy cake. So  
many candles!

HUGH

Here, here, Miss Prissy, make a  
wish and blow out the candles!

MISS PRISSY

Oh, I wish...

REGINALD

You're not supposed to tell us  
your wish! That's the rules. How  
many birthdays you been told that?

MISS PRISSY

Well, 85 or so at least! OK, OK  
here goes...

Miss Prissy places her hands together as if in prayer. She inhales a great amount of air, making a deep inhaling sound! She blows out the candles with one breath. Hugh and Reginald applaud.

REGINALD

Well done, old girl!

HUGH

Well done, Miss Prissy!

REGINALD

Cut the damned cake! I want a big piece, too! Give me one of them pink roses!

HUGH

Yes, dear, I'll have a pink rose as well.

MISS PRISSY

Well, boys, you may indeed have a pink rose each.

Miss Prissy hands Reginald and Hugh a piece of birthday cake. She slices a piece for herself as well.

Hugh and Reginald sit in a chair on each side of Miss Prissy.

HUGH

Delicious.

MISS PRISSY

It is a pleasure to be surprised every now and then!

HUGH

There you see, Miss Prissy, life continues to surprise.

MISS PRISSY

Yes, you are right, Hugh. It does!

REGINALD

Miss Harvey made the cake special!

MISS PRISSY

You must thank Marion for me.

HUGH

Oh, the present! I nearly forgot!

Everyone sits their cake down on the coffee table. Hugh picks up his hat and uncovers a small box wrapped in red paper and a red bow.

HUGH AND REGINALD  
Happy birthday, Miss Prissy!

Mrs. Prissy opens the present. It is a small music box

MISS PRISSY  
A music box. Oh, my! Such a wonderful gift! Thank you both, so!

She sits the music box on the coffee table. She opens the lid and the music box plays a delightful waltz.

HUGH  
We thought you would like it.  
(Hugh bows to Miss Prissy)  
Will you do me the honor, of this dance?

MISS PRISSY  
I would be delighted, Sir! One should always accept an invitation to waltz.

Hugh and Miss Prissy dance to the waltz.

INT. DEBANOUX MANSION'S LIVING ROOM - MISS PRISSY'S 16TH BIRTHDAY PARTY

Alfred Thompson bows gallantly to Miss Prissy.

ALFRED THOMPSON  
May I have the honor of the first dance with the prettiest girl in the room?

MISS PRISSY  
Indeed you may, Sir!

Miss Prissy dances with Alfred. He is a tall gangly youth of 16, dressed in a white suit. She is a lovely girl of 16 and is dressed in white lace and gloves.

The Debanoux living room is decorated with birthday decorations for her 16th birthday party. There is a 'Happy Birthday' banner strung across the living room. There are birthday balloons. On the table there is a beautiful cake with pink flowers and a picture of punch and glasses.

INT. DEBANOUX MANSION'S LIVING ROOM - PRESENT -DAY

Reginald cuts in by the middle of the waltz and he and Miss Prissy finish the waltz. Hugh and Reginald applaud. Miss Prissy curtsies.

We are able to hear Mildred Thompson, Miss Prissy's neighbor. There is only one yard that separates her home from Miss Prissy's mansion. Through the French windows, Mrs. Thompson can, therefore, hear everything that goes on in Miss Prissy's home.

We can hear the sound of hammering and especially the sound of the can of nails which falls off the roof and hits an innocent bystander below.

INNOCENT BYSTANDER VOICE OVER

For the love of God, Mildred  
Thompson!

MILDRED THOMPSON

Sorry, Lloyd, can of nails got  
away from me! Really windy today,  
uh?

INNOCENT BYSTANDER

My head, my head...

MRS. THOMPSON VOICE OVER

Happy birthday, Miss Prissy!

MISS PRISSY

(From her sofa, yelling  
to Mrs. Thompson)  
Thank you Mildred!

REGINALD

That woman!

MISS PRISSY

(with sarcasm and  
insincerity)

Well, old age has finally caught  
up with Mildred Thompson! I must  
say, I saw it coming

REGINALD  
(with sarcasm and  
insincerity)  
Senile, after all, sad.

MISS PRISSY  
(with sarcasm and  
insincerity)  
That poor, poor old woman. She  
led a good life. A cherished  
beacon of the community.

REGINALD  
Indeed!

MISS PRISSY  
Ears keen as a bat! Eyes like a  
hawk! One yard, one yard separates  
our windows! One cannot have a  
private conversation nine months  
out of the year!

REGINALD  
I remember when you and Mildred  
used to be such good childhood  
friends.

HUGH  
Yes, you were. I remember...

MISS PRISSY  
Yes, Mildred Thompson and I grew  
up together, she living next door  
and all, why we were inseparable.

HUGH  
What happened between you and  
Mildred, Miss Prissy?

INT. DEBANOUX MANSION'S LIVING ROOM - MISS PRISSY'S 16TH  
BIRTHDAY PARTY - DAY

The Debanoux living room is decorated for her birthday,  
with Happy Birthday banners and party balloons.

Miss Prissy, at age 16, is a very lovely girl. She is wearing a pretty white lace dress and gloves.

She blows out the candles of her birthday cake. Alfred, her boyfriend, a tall gangly youth of 16 and Mildred, a pretty girl of 16, her best friend, applaud.

ALFRED AND MILDRED THOMPSON  
Happy Birthday, Miss Prissy!

ALFRED THOMPSON  
Happy Sweet Sixteenth! To the  
prettiest girl in town!

Alfred takes a cup of punch and toasts Miss Prissy.

Mildred looks hurt.

MILDRED THOMPSON  
Yes, Miss Prissy, Happy Sixteenth!

INT DEBANOUX MANSION'S LIVING ROOM -MISS PRISSY'S 16TH  
BIRTHDAY PARTY - IN A SECLUDED CORNER OF THE ROOM -DAY

Miss Prissy has obviously surprised Alfred and Mildred, who have been kissing, in a secluded corner of the room. Alfred has red lipstick smudges on his face!

MISS HELLMAN  
Alfred Thompson how could you when  
I loved you with all my heart?

ALFRED THOMPSON  
It isn't what it looks like Miss  
Prissy. Let me explain!

Alfred jumps up suddenly and Mildred falls to the floor like a weight!

MISS PRISSY  
Alfred you and I are through.  
Mildred Thompson, my best friend  
in the whole world. Well, I never  
want to see your face again!

Miss Prissy slams the door and walks out on them forever.

Mildred Thompson, unruffled, starts where she was interrupted, kissing Alfred Thompson!

MISS PRISSY VOICE OVER  
Well, you know, Mildred was a very  
carefree girl. Well, she married  
Alfred Thompson...

INT. DEBANOUX MANSION'S LIVING ROOM - AUGUST 28TH, 2005 -  
MORNING

REGINALD  
Mildred was quite a looker, as I  
recall. Spunk. She always had  
spunk. Hugh, you do remember the  
story of the burglar...

HUGH  
I don't recall that one...

REGINALD  
The burglar that made the mistake  
of trying to break in on Mildred  
Thompson! If he had known that  
there wasn't anything of value in  
that old mansion worth taking, he  
could have saved himself the  
trouble. Shimming up the trellis  
entwined with Mrs. Thompson's  
award prize winning climbing  
crimson red roses, which are  
mightily endowed with thorns, he  
made it up to her bedroom window.  
Well, as we all know, Mrs.  
Thompson has the ears of a bat.

HUGH  
What happened?

REGINALD  
Not so much what happened to  
Mildred Thompson, more like, what  
happened to the burglar!

EXT. MRS. THOMPSON'S HOUSE NEXT DOOR - HER BEDROOM WINDOW -  
SEVERAL YEARS AGO NIGHT

The Burglar has climbed all the way up to the top of Mrs.  
Thompson's trellis next to her bedroom window. Mrs.  
Thompson apparently has already heard him climbing up and

with arms crossed and looking quite irritated at waiting for him, leans out the window and pushes the trellis over.

The Burglar falls to the ground with the trellis over him. He is entwined with Mrs. Thompson's award prize winning crimson red roses and their sharp hooky thorns.

EXT. JUST OUTSIDE MRS. THOMPSON'S HOUSE NEXT DOOR -SEVERAL YEARS AGO - THAT NIGHT

A police car is parked on her drive, lights flashing. The policeman is trying to pull the roses, with their thorns, off the entangled burglar.

POLICEMAN

Harold Jenkins you are under arrest! You have the right to remain silent!

BURGLAR

Ow! Stop it! Ow! Mercy! Stop!

POLICEMAN

Be still! Don't be such a sissy! You have the right to an attorney!

BURGLAR

Oh, my God! Ow! Ow!

Anything you do, say, will be held against you in a court of law!

BURGLAR

Ow! Stop! For the love of God! Mercy! Mercy!

INT. DEBANOUX MANSION'S LIVING ROOM - AUGUST 28TH, 2005 - MORNING

HUGH

Poor man!

MISS PRISSY

Yes, the poor fool!

REGINALD

Any fool burglar tries to rob this house, the fool will find himself

staring down the barrel of my  
Winchester!

MISS PRISSY  
Mildred Thompson. 'Happy Birthday'  
indeed!

HUGH  
I'm sure she was just being  
neighborly, Miss Prissy.

MISS PRISSY  
Mildred Thompson can hear gossip  
five miles in any direction. She  
missed her calling.

HUGH  
Her calling?

MISS PRISSY  
Yes, Hugh, her calling. A spy.  
Mildred should have been a spy.  
She certainly has the eyes and  
ears for one! She can chat folks  
up getting the latest scoop and  
never reveals anything about  
herself.

REGINALD  
Yes, the CIA missed their chance  
with Mildred Thompson! Wonder she  
didn't get her gun and shoot the  
burglar! Marion! Now, that's a gal  
can shoot!

EXT. SHOOTING RANGE -DAY

Marion, chewing gum, holds a hand gun and shoots at a  
shooting range target of a man. Every shot she fires hits  
the target in the head!

INT. DEBANOUX MANSION'S LIVING ROOM - AUGUST 28TH, 2005 -  
MORNING

REGINALD  
In fact, Marion is such a good  
shot, that I am going to ask her  
to become Mrs. Reginald Debanoux!

HUGH

Congratulations! A gun shop is as good a place as any for romance, I guess. Not to mention Miss Harvey is not too bad on the eyes!

REGINALD

Hey, be careful!

MISS PRISSY

Oh, Reginald, that is wonderful news!

HUGH

Let's propose a toast. To Reginald and Miss Harvey!

Reginald goes to the china and retrieves the tray holding the bottle of champagne and glasses. Reginald fills the champagne glasses. He raises his glass in a toast.

REGINALD

To Miss Harvey, the love of my life!

Both windows suddenly fling open and bang wildly with the wind. Everyone watches silently as if with foreboding, the violent banging of the windows.

Reginald turns on the radio.

EXT. FOOTAGE OF HURRICANE KATRINA MAKING HER WAY TO NEW ORLEANS, FOLLOWED BY THE WORDS: AUGUST 28TH, 2005 HURRICANE KATRINA MAKES ITS WAY TO NEW ORLEANS.

NEWS REPORTER VOICE OVER

August 28th, to recap today's story 2 a.m.: Katrina escalates to Category 4 strength, heading for the Gulf Coast. The last time Mississippi or Louisiana saw landfall from a Category 4 or stronger storm was 1969 with Hurricane Camille. 7 a.m.: Hurricane Katrina intensifies to Category 5, the worst and highest category on the Saffir-Simpson scale. As of this hour, 10 a.m.,

Katrina has hit 175MPH winds. New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin has ordered mandatory evacuations as the storm seems to beat a direct path to the city. Earlier today, President Bush declared a state of emergency in Mississippi and ordered federal assistance. The National Hurricane Center says low-lying areas along the Gulf Coast could expect storm surges of up to 25 feet as the storm, with top sustained winds of 160 MPH, should hit early tomorrow.

REGINALD

Oh, my God, Katrina's heading right for us!

INT. DEBANOUX MANSION'S LIVING ROOM - AUGUST 28TH, 2005 - MORNING

The windows are banging wildly. Suddenly, Mrs. Mildred Thompson crashes through the opened window. She is straddled on top of the trellis entwined with her award prize winning climbing crimson red roses! Red rose petals are blown through the window after her.

FOOTAGE OF HURRICANE KATRINA MAKING LANDFALL ON THE LOUISIANA COAST

ON SCREEN IN BOLD LETTERS: AUGUST 29, 2005, KATRINA MAKES LANDFALL ON THE LOUISIANA COAST

INT DEBANOUX LIVING ROOM - AUGUST 29, 2005, HURRICANE KATRINA MAKES LANDFALL ON THE LOUISIANA COAST -MORNING

This is August 29, 2005, as Katrina makes landfall on the Louisiana coast.

A candle is placed on the living room coffee table. The power is off due to the hurricane and the flooding in New Orleans.

The living room is stockpiled with several huge water bottles and boxes of food items. There is a large first aid kit as well.

In one corner of the stair landing are four Winchester rifles.

Mrs. Thompson sits on the sofa which has been made up for a bed that she slept in last night. Miss Prissy sits in a chair beside her.

There is a car battery with electrical chords and two car headlights in the middle of the living room. Reginald kneels in the middle of the living room floor working on attaching the cable from the car battery to the car headlights. Hugh helps Reginald work on attaching the headlights to the car battery.

Reginald has successfully completed his emergency light project, as the power is off. The car lights have been turned on

Miss Prissy and Mrs. Thompson applaud. Reginald takes a bow.

Hugh takes Reginald by the arm and they move towards the French window on the landing.

INT DEBANOUX LIVING ROOM - THE STAIR LANDING - BY THE FRENCH WINDOW - AUGUST 29TH -MORNING

Reginald peers through his binoculars and leans outside the French window.

HUGH

Reginald, I have to speak with you.

REGINALD

What is it, Hugh?

HUGH

It's the cellar, Reginald. There's at least a foot of water in the cellar right now. We should find a place on higher ground than this old mansion.

INT. THE FLOODED CELLAR -AUGUST 29TH -EARLIER THAT MORNING

Hugh checks out the cellar, cupping the candle's flame with his hands. The cellar is flooded about a foot deep with water.

The camera pans from Hugh's worried face, silhouetted in the candle's flame to the cellar window.

Rain beats down in torrents against the window glass.

There is the sound of wind whipping and beating against the old mansion.

The candle's flame blows out.

INT DEBANOUX LIVING ROOM - THE STAIR LANDING - BY THE FRENCH WINDOW - AUGUST 29TH -MORNING

REGINALD

Yes, the house has been battered a bit, but it isn't going to collapse! The Louisiana National Guard, God bless them, will be here in a day! At least! We have food and water enough!

HUGH

Reginald, For God's sake we need to find higher ground!

REGINALD

Haven't you forgotten something? Miss Prissy. Her heart.

HUGH

Reginald...

REGINALD

Hugh? Can we lug enough supplies with us? If we do need to climb to a roof to be safe, do you really think that Miss Prissy or Mildred could do that? If it comes to climbing a roof, I can't think of a better one than this roof, battered or not! The Louisiana National Guard...

HUGH

The Louisiana National Guard may very well have thousands of people stranded on rooftops to rescue!

Reginald takes a closer look through his binoculars, adjusting them.

REGINALD

I stand where I stand, Hugh.

HUGH

For once in my life, Reginald, I know you are wrong! It is the wrong thing to remain here in this old house. This old house has taken a beating from the storm.

REGINALD

It's sound enough, Hugh!

HUGH

Sound enough? The roof. Look out the window and see the damage done to the roof. And the cellar!

REGINALD

Hugh, you are tired. You're just overreacting. Yes, the house has been battered a bit, but it isn't about to collapse! We are safe here in the living room! The Louisiana National Guard, God bless them, will be here in a day. At least! We have food and water...

HUGH

Reginald!

REGINALD

What we don't need, Hugh, is to alarm these women unnecessarily!

HUGH

And you're wrong about the women. They have a right to know what's happening. They need to prepare themselves.

REGINALD

No. I say that you'll worry the women needlessly.

HUGH

I say again, you are wrong about this Reginald. It is my opinion that we need to find higher ground!

REGINALD

Hugh, enough of this! Follow my plan. We'll hang in there till the National Guard rescues us! They'll be here before you know it. Miss Prissy doesn't need to be fleeing and in a panic for no good reason. Wait. Wait a minute. I see Mr. Murphy.

EXT. THE MURPHY'S HOUSE - NEAR THE MURPHY'S ROOF THAT IS HALF SUBMERGED IN THE FLOODING - AUGUST 29TH - DAY

REGINALD VOICE OVER

He's floating on debris of some kind.

Mr. Murphy struggles with the raging water's current, trying not to drown in the flood.

Mr. Murphy finds the trellis on the side of his house to grab on to.

Mrs. Murphy is also being swept by the raging water's current.

Mr. Murphy tries to grab onto Mrs. Murphy, before she is swept away by the fast moving current.

REGINALD VOICE OVER

He's trying to grab Mrs. Murphy's hand.

Mrs. Murphy is desperately holding on to a floating piece of wood to keep from drowning.

A body floats by her almost knocking her out of Mr. Murphy's grasp just as he has grabbed her hand.

MR. MURPHY

Mary, grab my hand. Quick! Grab my hand!

MARY

Hank! Hank!

REGINALD VOICE OVER

Wait, he's got her! God! Hold on Mrs. Murphy! She's made it!

With his leg jammed into the trellis for support, Mr. Murphy, grabs her, just as she floats by!

He pulls Mrs. Murphy up on to the roof!

She falls into his arms clutching him for dear life!

Mary starts screaming. Hank holds her to him.

MR. MURPHY

Mary! Be quiet! You're safe now. We're safe!

MARY

Hank! My God! Hank! I nearly drowned! I would have. I would have. You saved me from drowning.

MR. MURPHY

Mary! Darling! You've got to calm down. You'll have an attack. We don't have your inhaler. Try to calm down. Breath slow. Try to breath slow.

MARY

Hank! Hank! Hold me! Hold me!

MR. MURPHY

Mary! Mary! Yes, that's it, Darling. Just calm down a bit. Breath slow... Yes, just like the doctor showed you to do. Yes, that's it. That's it. Help will come. We're safe. We'll be fine. I know it. Help will come.

MARY

Yes, help. Help will come.

MR. MURPHY

Soon. They'll rescue us, Mary.  
Soon.

MARY

Oh, Hank. What's going to happen  
to us, if they don't get here  
soon!

MR. MURPHY

Mary! It's all right. We're  
gonna be fine. Breath slow. Yes,  
that's it...

INT DEBANOUX LIVING ROOM - THE STAIR LANDING - BY THE  
FRENCH WINDOW - AUGUST 29TH -DAY

Miss Prissy and Mildred have come to look out the French  
window with Hugh and Reginald to see what is happening to  
the Murphys.

HUGH

Oh, Jesus, Joseph and Mary!

MRS. THOMPSON

I can't see! I can't see!

MISS PRISSY

For once your eyesight has let you  
down Mildred! Are the Murphys all  
right, Reginald?

MRS. THOMPSON

Help! Someone! Help them!

Hugh puts his arm around Mrs. Thompson to comfort her.

REGINALD

Don't you worry ladies! The  
Louisiana National Guard is on its  
way!

MISS PRISSY

How many lives lost.

Miss Prissy swoons.

MRS. THOMPSON

Oh, Lord, she's going to faint!

HUGH

Reginald help me get her to the  
sofa!

INT DEBANOUX LIVING ROOM - BY THE SOFA - AUGUST 29TH -DAY

Reginald and Hugh carry Miss Prissy, with their arms around  
her, to the sofa.

Mrs. Thompson gets the first aid kit and takes out the  
smelling salts holding the bottle under Miss Prissy's nose.  
Miss Prissy begins to recover!

MISS PRISSY

Lord, did I faint? I'm so sorry!

Mrs. Thompson comforts her, taking a chair next to her.

Hugh and Reginald return to the landing.

MISS PRISSY

Mildred, I'm suddenly so tired. I  
think I need to take one of my  
midday naps!

MRS. THOMPSON

You go ahead, dear. It will do you  
a world of good.

MISS PRISSY

Yes, a midday nap...

MRS. THOMPSON

Dear Miss Prissy... It's been so  
long since we've really had a  
conversation. I mean a heart to  
heart.

MISS PRISSY

Well, Mildred, you have been so  
busy in local charities and the  
Red Cross, that I don't think  
you've had much time for  
socializing and conversing with  
neighbors!

MRS. THOMPSON

Well, that's the God's truth, Miss Prissy! Too busy to scratch my nose!

MISS PRISSY

Though, sometimes, Mildred, I have seen you out in your garden tending those beautiful roses you grow. I wish I had your green thumb!

MRS. THOMPSON

Let me fill you in on a little secret. Roses ain't for sissies! The most dedicated gardener has been brought to his knees by root rot!

MISS PRISSY

I envy those folks that can grow them... Beautiful roses so cherished when they are given just to show one's love for another.

MRS. THOMPSON

And cherished when received from someone we hold dear.

MISS PRISSY

We haven't always been close have we? We used to be so close when we were girls. We'd play hopscotch. Discuss the latest Nancy Drew. Finally, we just talked about boys.

MRS. THOMPSON

Yes, yes, we were close. We were close, like sisters really. Told each other all our secrets.

MISS PRISSY

And one of those secrets, Mildred, was how I felt about Alfred Thompson! How could you!

MRS. THOMPSON

The past is the past, Miss Prissy!

MISS PRISSY

He was my boy friend, Mildred, how could you!

MRS. THOMPSON

I was in love with him.

MISS PRISSY

Mildred!

MRS. THOMPSON

He drank. He was an alcoholic. He wasn't the boy I fell in love with. He changed. He became unpredictable. He became violent when he drank. And he drank most of the time!

MISS PRISSY

Mildred, oh, Mildred...

Miss Prissy and Mrs. Thompson embrace.

MISS PRISSY

Just a little nap is all I need...  
(She closes her eyes.)

MRS. THOMPSON

So, you see Miss Prissy, love is often paid with pain. A soul's pain. I was young, Miss Prissy, just that. When you're old, finally, old, you see your life so clear. And everything in your life becomes as plain as day. The only excuse I can offer, dear, dear Miss Prissy, is that I was young and in love, with Alfred Thompson.

Hugh walks silently up to Mrs. Thompson and puts his arm around her.

HUGH

There, there, Mildred. Has she done to sleep? She is exhausted with all this. She needed some rest.

MRS. THOMPSON

Yes, Hugh, she said she would take one of her midday naps as she calls them.

HUGH

Mildred as long as we have a home you are welcome!

MRS. THOMPSON

I am so grateful to you all for taking me in.

HUGH

I wouldn't have it any other way, Mildred!

Hugh hugs Mrs. Thompson and she weeps.

MRS. THOMPSON

You don't agree with Reginald, do you Hugh?

HUGH

His plan, Mildred?

MRS. THOMPSON

Yes, his plan. Do be honest with me, Hugh.

HUGH

Reginald is so certain about being rescued soon. He puts his faith and trust in the Louisiana National Guard to rescue us tomorrow, for Christ's sake!

MRS. THOMPSON

No, even I don't think it'll be that soon.

HUGH

With hundreds of people on their rooftops? No, I don't think that is a likely scenario!

MRS. THOMPSON

No.

HUGH

No. A few more days maybe.

MRS. THOMPSON

But, Hugh, we have enough water and food, just what Reginald says.

HUGH

Yes, if we are rescued soon, Mildred. We do have enough water and food.

MRS. THOMPSON

You're very worried, aren't you, Hugh. I overheard your conversation with Reginald. Then, what is it Hugh?

HUGH

The cellar. It's the flooding in the cellar. We may be on higher ground, but, who's to say that we may not be wading in water up to our knees or our waist, in a few days!

MRS. THOMPSON

Reginald doesn't seem to be concerning himself with the flooding in the cellar.

HUGH

No, he doesn't seem to be.

MRS. THOMPSON

You're worried about Miss Prissy through all this, aren't you, Hugh?

HUGH

Mildred, as you've probably already guessed, Miss Prissy has a bad heart.

MRS. THOMPSON

You don't think that she can make it through this, do you, Hugh?

HUGH

No. I don't think that she can.

MRS. THOMPSON

Mercy.

HUGH

It isn't just the flooding in the cellar. While I was down there, I saw that there is a big crack in the very foundation of the house. I don't think that the termites will be able to hold this old mansion together, after all, if there is more flooding.

MRS. THOMPSON

Oh, my...

HUGH

I didn't mean to upset you, Mildred. Just think that you and Miss Prissy deserve the truth.

MRS. THOMPSON

Yes. Yes, we do. Thank you for telling me, Hugh.

HUGH

Yes.

MRS. THOMPSON

It's just that Reginald seems so confident in his judgement.

HUGH

Yes, Reginald is always confident in his judgement. Except...

MRS. THOMPSON

Except?

HUGH

Except when he blew half of the roof off last year, with just a touch too much C4 in the fireworks! Broke every damned window on the first floor!

INT. DEBANOUX MANSION'S LIVING ROOM -LAST YEAR -DAY

Miss Prissy is seated on the sofa having a cup of tea.

Suddenly, we hear a big explosion! The windows rattle in their frames!

Miss Prissy is bounced from the sofa to the floor!

INT DEBANOUX MANSION'S LIVING ROOM -DAY

MRS. THOMPSON

I thought there had been a gas leak, or something!

HUGH

Well, it sure was something!

MRS. THOMPSON

Well, my Lord!

HUGH

Probably where the crack in the foundation came from! Though, Reginald would never admit that he might have used a tad too much C4. Or, perhaps that it wasn't a very good idea to begin with. Miss Prissy's hearing hasn't been the same since!

MRS. THOMPSON

No, he would not admit to having made such a mistake, or maybe that he might have taken you all with him!

HUGH

Yes, that's the whole trouble, here. Reginald doesn't have the right to make decisions for the rest of us. Decisions which could jeopardize our lives!

MRS. THOMPSON

I hold you all so dear to me. What would I have done without you

all. I'd surely have died.  
Truly.

HUGH  
Mildred...

MRS. THOMPSON  
I hold you dear, too, Hugh...

HUGH  
Mildred...

MRS. THOMPSON  
Hugh, do you ever wonder what  
might have been?

HUGH  
You mean, between us?

MRS. THOMPSON  
Yes. I mean, I know that you and  
Kathy Lee were very happily  
married.

HUGH  
Yes, we were happily married. She  
was everything to me, Mildred.

MRS. THOMPSON  
Oh, to have been loved like she  
was.

HUGH  
Yes, and still is. She will  
always be my beloved.

MRS. THOMPSON  
The love of your life.

HUGH  
Yes, and the light of my life.

MRS. THOMPSON  
Don't let her memory fade, Hugh.  
Cherish your memory of her.

HUGH

Yes, as I will always cherish your memory, Mildred. You were a special young girl.

MRS. THOMPSON  
Remember, the tree...

HUGH  
Yes, the old maple tree in your back yard.

MRS. THOMPSON  
You carved our initials in it.

EXT. MILDRED THOMPSON'S BACK YARD BY THE OLD MAPLE TREE -  
MANY YEARS AGO - DAY

A young Hugh carves his and Mildred's initials in the old maple tree in Mildred's backyard.

Hugh kisses Mildred.

YOUNG HUGH  
There you are Mildred! Now, our love has been officially declared! Forever!

MILDRED THOMPSON  
Forever!

INT DEBANOUX LIVING ROOM - BY THE SOFA - AUGUST 29TH -DAY

HUGH  
Yes, our love carved within a heart and arrow!

MRS. THOMPSON  
Our initials are still there. Or, were there, only a day ago! The trees were so old. They'd been there forever. Then uprooted and smashed splintering my house into a million pieces. Just yesterday. Oh...

HUGH  
There is always the memory, Mildred, of our initials being carved into that tree.

MRS. THOMPSON

I'm glad that you found true love with Kathy Lee. I wish I could have been as lucky.

HUGH

Alfred. Well, how can you know a boy's true character, when you are young. You cannot know how just plain living can strengthen one man's character and be the ruin of another's. Some men become better. Some bitter.

MRS. THOMPSON

How true, Hugh. How I do wish I had had a clue into his true nature, though.

HUGH

Time, finally makes it all so clear. Love begins and ends. Love's passion is sometimes smothered to embers...

MRS. THOMPSON

How true. I've seen both. In the beginning, Alfred was all I wanted and admired in a man. He was handsome. He was tender. He was a good husband. He was hardworking. He was a good man. When his business failed, he took to drink. That's a common enough story, Hugh. His health suffered from drink. His moods became more and more violent. And he took those violent moods out on me, his wife. And he drank more and more till it finally killed him.

HUGH

Yes, Mildred, I confess that I knew most of the story.

MRS. THOMPSON

Who did not! But, as you say,  
time moves on. Time heals all  
wounds. Time...

HUGH

And in time, Mildred, this  
disaster will be overcome and  
houses and lives rebuilt!

MRS. THOMPSON

Amen! But, the damage to my  
house! It's just too despairing!

HUGH

Mildred, thank God you are safe  
and with us.

Hugh embraces Mrs. Thompson.

INT DEBANOUX LIVING ROOM - THE STAIR LANDING - BY THE  
FRENCH WINDOW - AUGUST 29TH - LATER THAT DAY

We hear the sound of gunfire in the distance. Reginald  
takes his binoculars and looks out the window.

REGINALD

Gunfire! For sure! The shots seem  
to be coming from Miss Harvey's  
gun shop

EXT. MISS HARVEY'S GUN SHOP - NEW ORLEANS - AUGUST 29TH  
ONLY MOMENTS EARLIER - DAY

Miss Harvey's gun shop has been broken into and set on  
fire.

One of the Robbers, Lieutenant Dan, tosses another gun to  
the second Robber, Tim, to carry in his large bag.

TIM

I didn't see the lady, at first.

LIEUTENANT DAN

I know, Tim.

TIM

I didn't mean to, Lieutenant Dan,  
Sir.

LIEUTENANT DAN  
I know, Tim, my boy.

TIM  
I, I... I mean...

LIEUTENANT DAN  
She surprised you. That's all.

TIM  
I didn't want to...

LIEUTENANT DAN  
Don't worry about it anymore.

Lieutenant Dan takes aim at the gun shop and shoots out another window!

TIM  
The lady's face...

LIEUTENANT DAN  
There, New Orleans, the world's finally gone to hell!

They are the same two Robbers who were outside casing the Debanoux residence earlier.

INT DEBANOUX LIVING ROOM - THE STAIR LANDING - BY THE FRENCH WINDOW - AUGUST 29TH - DAY

More shooting is heard!

HUGH  
Miss Harvey's gun shop!

REGINALD  
I bet that's where they've gotten the guns from!

Both Hugh and Mrs. Thompson look out the window.

HUGH  
Her gun shop, all right, my God!

Miss Prissy holds onto the stair banister for support.

MISS PRISSY  
My Lord!

MRS THOMPSON  
God in Heaven!

Hugh puts his arm around Mrs. Thompson to comfort her.

REGINALD  
Well, Marion is one fine marksman!  
We've spent lots of time in the  
shooting range of a morning!

MISS PRISSY  
Folks should be helping each  
other. Not shooting each other!

MRS. DEBANOUX  
Amen, Miss Prissy!

REGINALD  
Well, let me give them a taste of  
real Southern hospitality looking  
down the barrel of my Winchester!

HUGH  
There is smoke coming from Miss  
Harvey's gun shop!

MISS PRISSY  
My, my, Lord!

MRS. THOMPSON  
Are these hoodlums setting fires?

HUGH  
My God, those buildings are old,  
they'll catch fire like kindling!

REGINALD  
So would these old mansions.

MISS PRISSY  
Termites or not!

MRS. THOMPSON  
God in heaven, they'll murder us  
in our sleep! They'll rob us and  
then shoot us dead!

REGINALD

Law and order don't exist any more  
in New Orleans! They'd shoot us  
and not think twice.

MISS PRISSY

Well, I for one will be ready for  
them! I've lived too long to die  
at the hands of some hoodlum.

MRS. THOMPSON

Me, neither Miss Prissy.

REGINALD

Neither Hugh, nor I, Miss Prissy!

MISS PRISSY

Why, we'll be ready for them!

Shots are heard, which are louder and therefore, the  
looters must be much closer to their home.

REGINALD

To the Maple Street Militia!  
Comrades in arms!

MISS PRISSY AND HUGH

We route out the evil in all men!

MRS. THOMPSON

Here! Here! To the Maple Street  
Militia!

EXT. OUTSIDE THE DEBANOUX MANSION A LONG TIME AGO WHEN THE  
MAPLE STREET MILITIA WERE CHILDREN -DAY

Miss Prissy, is a very pretty little girl of 8 years, Hugh,  
is a very delicate boy of 10 years, and Reginald is a big,  
strapping boy of 12 years. They are dressed up as soldiers,  
pointing their guns!

MISS PRISSY

The Maple Street Militia!

HUGH

Comrades in arms, we route out...

REGINALD

The evil in all men!

INT. DEBANOUX LIVING ROOM - DAY

Reginald picks up the four Winchester rifles on the landing. One at a time, he hands a rifle to everyone.

They stand back-to-back-together pointing their rifles in all four directions; north, east, south and west!

REGINALD, HUGH, MISS PRISSY AND MRS.  
THOMPSON

The Maple Street Militia!

FOOTAGE ON SCREEN OF HURRICANE KATRINA'S DEVASTATION OF NEW ORLEANS ON AUGUST 31st, 2005

FOLLOWED BY THE WORDS: AUGUST 31st, 2005 NEW ORLEANS IS LEFT WITH NO POWER, NO DRINKING WATER, DWINDLING FOOD SUPPLIES, WIDESPREAD LOOTING, FIRES -- AND STEADILY RISING WATERS FROM MAJOR LEVEE BREACHES. PRESIDENT BUSH FLIES OVER THE GULF COAST IN AIR FORCE ONE TO SURVEY MOBILIZATION TO HELP THE VICTIMS.

INT. DEBANOUX MANSION'S LIVING ROOM -IT IS THE EVENING OF AUGUST 31ST, 2005

A single candle is burning on the coffee table.

Miss Prissy and Mrs. Thompson sit by the French window on the landing. Miss Prissy has already dozed off and Mrs. Thompson is about to. Both Miss Prissy and Mrs. Thompson hold Winchester rifles in their laps.

Reginald kneels by the car lights which are off, adjusting a wire on them. His rifle is beside him.

Hugh is situated so that he won't be seen at the front door. He holds a rifle pointed at the front door.

It is the evening of August 31st., 2005.

New Orleans is left with no power, no drinking water, dwindling food supplies, widespread looting, fires -- and steadily rising waters from major levee breaches. President Bush flies over the Gulf Coast in Air Force One to survey the damage. He later announces a major federal mobilization to help the victims.

MRS. THOMPSON

Reginald, it has been a day since we heard the gun shots. I'm so tired that I've forgotten even what day it is.

REGINALD

It's Wednesday, Mildred, August 31st. Yes, we are all bone weary to the soul. We've just got to hang in there.

MRS. THOMPSON

And it's getting dark outside.

MISS PRISSY

They might come when it's dark...

HUGH

Because we haven't heard gun shots for a day, now, doesn't mean that those maniacs out there, looting and burning buildings to the ground, won't try to rob us tonight!

MRS. THOMPSON

Maybe they just won't come this way, Hugh?

HUGH

Mildred, this old mansion is a prime target for any burglar. You of all people, should know that!

MISS PRISSY

Well, one thing's for sure, Mildred can take care of herself!

MRS. THOMPSON

Well, that was ten years ago, Miss Prissy! Ten years can do a lot to one's stamina and courage...

MISS PRISSY

Mildred is a survivor!

HUGH VOICE OVER

We are all survivors!

REGINALD

That's the spirit, folks! We just gotta stay frosty, people!

MISS PRISSY

Reginald and his military lingo!

HUGH

Stamped forever, like a tattoo, on Reginald's thick hide!

REGINALD

I served my country, thank you!

HUGH

Thank God, we still have enough water and food rations left for a day or two!

MRS. THOMPSON

And Miss Prissy seems to be feeling all right, aren't you dear?

MISS PRISSY

Yes, I'm hanging in there, Mildred!

Miss Prissy sees something out the window. She gets up from her chair. She points her finger at something she sees.

MRS. THOMPSON

What is it dear? What do you see?

Mrs. Thompson leaves her window and joins Miss Prissy at her window on the right. They look out the window.

MISS PRISSY

There, there!

MRS. THOMPSON

What is it, Miss Prissy? What do you see? Why, it is the Big Dipper!

MISS PRISSY

Such bright stars tonight!

MRS. THOMPSON  
Yes, indeed, Darling!

MISS PRISSY  
Remember, Mildred?

MRS. THOMPSON  
Yes, I remember, many a time...

MISS PRISSY  
We would take our sleeping bags  
out in the back yard, when your  
mother would let us!

MRS. THOMPSON  
And a flashlight, so that we  
wouldn't get too scared.

MISS PRISSY  
And we'd lay under the peaceful  
branches of that old maple tree,  
that had been there for ages and  
just gaze at that very same Big  
Dipper...

MRS. THOMPSON  
As if the tree could somehow  
protect us and keep us safe, till  
sleep finally won out.

MISS PRISSY  
And there we'd lie, in our  
sleeping bags, flashlight burning,  
under that old maple tree, gazing  
at the Big Dipper and all the  
bright stars of the Milky Way.

EXT. MILDRED THOMPSON'S BACK YARD UNDERNEATH - THE OLD  
MAPLE TREE - MANY YEARS AGO - NIGHT

As little girls, Miss Prissy and Mildred Thompson are sound  
asleep, snuggled in their sleeping bags, safe under the old  
maple tree in Mildred Thompson's back yard.

MRS. THOMPSON VOICE OVER

Changeless, ageless, fathomless.  
The mysteries of the universe,  
through the eyes of two little  
girls. The Big Dipper, so far,  
far away...

INT. DEBANOUX MANSION'S LIVING ROOM -LATER THAT NIGHT -IT  
IS THE EVENING OF AUGUST 31ST, 2005

The same two robbers, Lieutenant Dan and Tim, who have been casing the Debanoux residence and have already looted Miss Harvey's gun shop, have broken into the Debanoux mansion.

They are armed with rifles. They are hiding behind the china cabinet in a darkened corner of the living room.

LIEUTENANT DAN

Breaking that back door lock was a  
Piece of cake.

TIM

Piece of cake.

LIEUTENANT DAN

Now, remember what I told you Tim,  
this is how's it's gonna go down,  
man? Repeat it back to me Tim!

TIM

You tie 'em up Lieutenant Dan and  
I'll put the fear of God in 'em!

The Looters sweep into the room like a military operation  
with rifles aimed!

Miss Prissy and Mrs. Thompson are startled awake.

Hugh grabs his rifle.

LIEUTENANT DAN

Put your hands up! Hey you, old  
geezer, by the door, drop your  
weapon and put your hands up! Tim,  
over there, keep your riffle aimed  
on that old geezer there!

Hugh puts his weapon down and his hands up.

TIM

What next, Lieutenant Dan? I forget!

LIEUTENANT DAN

Just keep the riffle pointed at them. There, there, on the fat one, the old bugger in the corner. There.

TIM

I got 'em! Do I kill him now Lieutenant Dan?

LIEUTENANT DAN

Now, now, let's us all here, just relax a bit. No need to hurry it. No need to hurry there Tim my friend.

TIM

Yeah, yeah, you old farts, you hear Lieutenant Dan. Do what he says, or, or... I forget Lieutenant Dan. What is I supposed to do now?

LIEUTENANT DAN

Well, well, there. Settle down now, Tim. Every body up against the wall!

TIM

Yeah, yeah, that's it. By Gawd, I remembers now. Up against the wall. Lieutenant Dan's in charge now and....

Tim points the gun at Miss Prissy, who promptly faints. Hugh starts to run towards her to help her.

LIEUTENANT DAN

Steady there old fellow. What's your name?

HUGH

My name is Hugh. Listen, if your after money we don't have any...

LIEUTENANT DAN

Hugh, Hugh, is it. See now, Tim, everyone has gotten so polite in these last few moments. Haven't they Tim?

TIM

Uh, huh, yeah, so polite.

LIEUTENANT DAN

And by the looks of you, Hugh, a refined Southern gentleman. And so, Hugh, go on over and help that old Lady, she's done fainted right away!

HUGH

Her name is Miss Prissy. She is ill. Very ill. This whole hurricane disaster has taken a toll on her.

Hugh holds Miss Prissy in his arms and tries to revive her.

LIEUTENANT DAN

Such a comfort in such trying times to see a true Southern gentleman.

TIM

They's got money, like you told me Lieutenant Dan. I know it. I heard it around town, too.

HUGH

There's no money and what we had is long, long gone in this family.

Miss Prissy revives.

MISS PRISSY

Termites. Termites is all we have. All that's holding this old house this wonderful old house together.

HUGH

There there Miss Prissy...

REGINALD

How could you, an officer of the  
law...

Reginald takes a step towards Lieutenant Dan.

LIEUTENANT DAN

Stop right there. I'll shot you  
where you stand. Law's all gone to  
hell there old fellow. What's your  
name?

REGINALD

Reginald.

LIEUTENANT DAN

Reginald. Now see here Reginald. A  
fine name. Why, I can always tell  
about a person. Good instincts. A  
cop in New Orleans got to has good  
instincts. A military man. Am I  
right. I'm right, aren't I.  
Reginald, is it? Tim isn't  
Reginald a fine name for an old  
fine fart in these parts.

TIM

Yes, Lieutenant Dan. Reginald is a  
fine name.

LIEUTENANT DAN

For an old fart.

TIM

For an old fart. Ha. Ha.

LIEUTENANT DAN

Keep your gun pointed at them Tim  
not me! Remember what I've told  
you!

TIM

I'll try sir.

REGINALD

This boy is a slow boy. By God,  
I'll bet he was a good boy till he  
met up with you Lieutenant Dan!

LIEUTENANT DAN

Tim is a good boy. And he is going to follow my instructions all the way around. Aren't you Tim my boy?

TIM

Yes, Sir, Lieutenant Dan. Them's my orders!

LIEUTENANT DAN

Tim, if Mr. Southern Gentleman there, doesn't answer my question and I only have one, really. I want you to shoot that old woman. Shoot her in the face. Do you understand, Tim?

TIM

In the face.

LIEUTENANT DAN

Right. Here's my question. Hugh, are you ready?

HUGH

We don't have any money. God, please, please, believe me. There isn't any money in this old mansion.

MISS PRISSY

Termites.. Lots of termites.

HUGH

Miss Prissy, please be quiet, Darling.

LIEUTENANT DAN

Shut up you crazy old bitch.

Tim aims his gun squarely in Miss Prissy's face. Sweat drips from his face.

LIEUTENANT DAN

Hugh, I'm going to ask you one last time. Where is the money?

MISS PRISSY

The cellar. Momma didn't want Papa to bury the money in the cellar. I was just a little child, but I remember...

LIEUTENANT DAN

Yes, Miss Prissy, as you were saying..

HUGH

She doesn't know what she's saying. She's ill. Her mind. She's had several strokes, for Christ's sake!

LIEUTENANT DAN

Now, Hugh. That is definitely not a gentlemanly thing to say about a dear old lady!

HUGH

There is no money buried in the damned cellar!

LIEUTENANT DAN

I tell you what. Let's just have a look see.

TIM

Let's have a look see, Lieutenant Dan. Do I shoot her now, Sir?

LIEUTENANT DAN

That's up to Mr. Hugh, here, Tim.

TIM

Do I shoot the old lady now, Mr. Hugh?

LIEUTENANT DAN

Tell you what Tim. Let's take Hugh here down to the cellar.

HUGH

God almighty. There is no such thing. No gold is buried in the God damned cellar!

Lieutenant Dan walks up to Miss Prissy who is lying on the floor cradled in Hugh's arms.

LIEUTENANT DAN

Dear, Dear Miss Prissy, is it?  
Miss Prissy, where did your fond  
old Papa bury the money in the  
cellar?

MISS PRISSY

Gold. It's gold coins.

LIEUTENANT DAN

Gets even better by the minute.

MISS PRISSY

Gold all kinds of gold coins.  
Locked away. And Mamma was  
furious. Should be in a bank she  
said. Till the market crashed and  
she wrung her hands and said, "Oh,  
we are poor. We've lost our money  
and she screamed and wrung her  
hands and cried tearing her hair,  
running through the house in her  
bed robe and slippers.

INT. THE DEBANOUX LIVING ROOM MANY YEARS AGO -SHORTLY AFTER  
THE STOCK MARKET CRASHED -DAY

Mrs. Debanoux, with her hair in curlers, bathrobe and  
slippers runs screaming with her hands thrown up in the  
air.

MRS. DEBANOUX

Oh, we are poor! Poor! All our  
money! Gone! Gone! We'll be  
turned out into the streets to  
starve!

MISS PRISSY VOICE OVER

Mother collapsed of nervous  
exhaustion the next day.

INT. DEBANOUX MANSION'S LIVING ROOM - IT IS THE EVENING OF  
AUGUST 31ST, 2005

LIEUTENANT DAN

But, she needn't have worried so.  
Because...

MISS PRISSY  
The gold coins is buried in the  
cellar!

LIEUTENANT DAN  
Where in the cellar dear?

MISS PRISSY  
A big old wooden crate...

HUGH  
Dear. Please stop.

LIEUTENANT DAN  
No, no, Hugh. Let her go on. You  
were saying, dear?

MISS PRISSY  
He buried it in a box. Mamma was  
so happy. We weren't poor any more  
she said. And she held us children  
on her knee and she sang a song to  
me. She sang...

LIEUTENANT DAN  
Hugh, you're coming with me to the  
cellar.

HUGH  
What do I have to say to convince  
you, you fool!

LIEUTENANT DAN  
Watch it there, Hugh. Tim has an  
itchy trigger finger. Don't you  
Tim.

TIM  
Yes Sir, if you say so, Sir.

HUGH  
That boy is going to commit murder  
and go to prison and it's your  
fault you fool! There is no gold!

LIEUTENANT DAN

Let's go see. Tim, keep the gun  
pointed at the old Lady's face.  
I'm taking Hugh to the cellar.

Lieutenant Dan grabs Hugh roughly by the arm.

MISS PRISSY

I'd like to sit up now. May I have  
a chair?

REGINALD

I'll get her a chair.

Reginald sits Miss Prissy carefully in a chair.

MISS PRISSY

Reginald. What does that awful man  
want with Hugh for?

REGINALD

Please relax dear. They'll be gone  
soon.

MISS PRISSY

Don't you hurt Hugh. You  
hooligans. You awful people.  
Lieutenant Dan, you are a  
policeman! A policeman that steels  
from folks! And a young thug, Son,  
you aren't taking my papa's gold!

Miss Prissy takes a swing at Tim. His gun goes off, just  
missing her!

Miss Prissy stands up knocking her chair over behind her.  
The Miss Prissy screams!

Miss Prissy collapses back onto the floor. Mrs. Thompson  
screams!

Suddenly, Reginald turns the headlights on right into the  
hoodlums' eyes! The bright lights blind the looters who  
have become acclimated to the darkness of the room!

MRS. THOMPSON

Miss Prissy! Miss Prissy!

While Lieutenant Dan is disoriented from the bright lights that Reginald shines in his eyes, Hugh grabs Tim and struggles with him, trying to get the gun.

Lieutenant Dan fires at the car lights and they go out! He flees out the front door!

Hugh continues to struggle with Tim, in the darkness and there is suddenly the sound of a gun shot!

Mrs. Thompson screams!

Tim has been shot dead in the struggle by his own gun and is lying on top of Hugh.

Hugh rolls Tim off of him. Tim has been shot dead, right through the heart!

REGINALD

Hugh! Hugh! Are you all right?

HUGH

Yes, yes, I am all right. Is he dead Reginald?

REGINALD

Dead as a door knob.

MRS. THOMPSON

Miss Prissy! Lord, Miss Prissy!  
Miss Prissy.

Miss Prissy is lying on the stair. Everyone runs to see about her!

Hugh and Reginald carry Miss Prissy to the living room sofa. They lay her down.

REGINALD

Miss Prissy?

HUGH

Is she's all right!

MRS. THOMPSON

My God! I thought she'd been shot for sure!

REGINALD

I think she's just in shock. Stay  
with her Mildred. Hugh, help me  
carry the body outside.

Mrs. Thompson covers her with a blanket on the sofa.

MRS. THOMPSON  
Darling...

HUGH  
(To the looter)  
For Christ's sake you fool, was  
trying to rob innocent folks worth  
dying for?

Reginald and Hugh carry Tim's body out the front door.

Mrs. Thompson, sits down on the sofa and holds Miss  
Prissy's hand.

MISS PRISSY  
Mildred. It is coming back to me.  
Those evil men tried to rob us!  
They had guns!

MRS. THOMPSON  
That's right, Miss Prissy!

MISS PRISSY  
One of the looters was shot!

MRS. THOMPSON  
Yes, he's dead.

MISS PRISSY  
Yes, I'm starting to remember!  
But, they didn't steal father's  
gold, did they? You know,  
Mildred, father would want us to  
keep it safe!

MRS. THOMPSON  
Miss Prissy, please don't upset  
yourself. The gold is safe.

MISS PRISSY  
Father should have been buried  
with it. Then it would be safe!

MRS. THOMPSON

Maybe so!

MISS PRISSY

Mildred?

MRS. THOMPSON

Yes, Darling?

MISS PRISSY

You know, Hugh still is very fond of you.

MRS. THOMPSON

Why, Miss Prissy...

MISS PRISSY

It's true! I don't think he's ever really gotten over you. His first love and all...

MRS. THOMPSON

Darling...

MISS PRISSY

Promise me, Mildred.

MRS. THOMPSON

What is that, Darling.

MISS PRISSY

Promise me that you won't lose your last chance for happiness. Hugh is a good man.

MRS. THOMPSON

Yes, he is a good man.

MISS PRISSY

Hugh is the best man in the world for the right woman.

MRS. THOMPSON

Yes, I believe he is.

MISS PRISSY

He missed Kathy Lee so much after her death. He really loved her.

MRS. THOMPSON  
Yes, he did, Darling.

MISS PRISSY  
But, Mildred.

MRS. THOMPSON  
Yes...

MISS PRISSY  
Hugh needs to move on with his  
life. He needs to find that love  
again. A man like Hugh is a  
generous man, through and through.

MRS. THOMPSON  
I know.

MISS PRISSY  
And generous with his love.

MRS. THOMPSON  
He is indeed a good man, Miss  
Prissy.

MISS PRISSY  
Will you promise me that you will  
take this last opportunity for  
happiness in life. Promise me!

MRS. THOMPSON  
Yes, Darling, I promise.

MISS PRISSY  
I won't be around to see you both  
happy, though, will I?

MRS. THOMPSON  
Darling, you will live to be one  
hundred!

MISS PRISSY  
I am so tired. Mildred. I'm so  
tired. Let me close my eyes for  
just a little while.

MRS. THOMPSON  
Yes, rest now, Miss Prissy. Rest.  
There are those of us, who

heartbroken to our very core,  
somehow reach up out of our  
misery. Reach up from that  
pitiful love lost bottomless pit.  
Yes, we finally reach up and hold  
onto that dream, that maybe one  
day not quite so lost, Miss  
Prissy, we pray that our hearts  
will mend.

INT. DEBANOUX MANSION'S LIVING ROOM -LATER THAT EVENING OF  
AUGUST 31ST, 2005 -

Hugh, Reginald, and Mrs. Thompson are seated on the  
landing. They hold rifles in their laps.

Miss Prissy, who has been lying quietly on the sofa, gets  
up unobserved by the others.

She begins to dance as if held in someone's arms. She  
dances to a waltz that only she can hear.

MISS PRISSY

Oh, Alfred...

INT. DEBANOUX MANSION'S LIVING ROOM -MISS PRISSY'S 16TH  
BIRTHDAY PARTY -DAY

Miss Prissy and Alfred dance a waltz together.

INT. DEBANOUX MANSION'S LIVING ROOM - EVENING OF AUGUST  
31ST, 2005

Hugh, Reginald and Mrs. Thompson, seated on the landing,  
finally notice Miss Prissy.

Miss Prissy is dancing her waltz with her imaginary bow.

MRS. THOMPSON

Oh, dear, Miss Prissy! Reginald!

REGINALD

Hugh, see to her.

Hugh, starts to get up to see about her.

MRS. THOMPSON

Oh, no, Hugh. I'll sit with her on  
the sofa.

Suddenly, there is the sound of a huge crack, as if the  
floor were splitting into!

MRS. THOMPSON  
My God, what on earth is that?

REGINALD  
Look, the living room floor is  
giving out!

Reginald grabs Hugh to stop him from rescuing Miss Prissy!

REGINALD  
Hugh, you can't rescue her,  
without the floor giving out under  
your weight.

MRS. THOMPSON  
Reginald's right, look there.  
There's a huge hole in the floor!

HUGH  
Mercy! Darling. Come to us. Jump!

MISS PRISSY  
Termites only thing holding this  
mansion together!

REGINALD  
There are no sissies in the Maple  
Street Militia! Sissy, sissy.

EXT. A NEARBY STREAM -A LONG TIME AGO WHEN THE MAPLE STREET  
MILITIA WERE CHILDREN -DAY

Miss Prissy, Hugh, and Reginald are dressed up as soldiers.

They stand on rocks in a shallow stream.

Reginald and Hugh jump from one rock to another without  
getting wet.

They show their impatience with Miss Prissy, because she is  
afraid to jump to their rock.

Reginald makes faces at her and mouths the word, 'Sissy, sissy, sissy.'

REGINALD

Sissy, sissy, Miss Prissy is a  
sissy! Scaredy cat! Scaredy cat!  
Scaredy cat!

MISS PRISSY

I ain't so sissy! Who you calling  
a sissy!

REGINALD

Miss Prissy is a sissy! You're a  
whiney little girl. Girls are  
dumb! You can't run! You can't  
climb trees and you can't even  
jump over stones in a stream.

MISS PRISSY

I'll show you Reginald Debanoux.  
I'll show you.

INT. DEBANOUX MANSION'S LIVING ROOM - EVENING OF AUGUST  
31ST, 2005

Suddenly, there is the sound of gushing water! Water is  
gushing into the damaged structure of the old mansion, from  
the cellar!

HUGH

Jump Darling! Jump! We are the  
Maple Street Militia! Miss Prissy!  
Comrades in arms we... Say it,  
Miss Prissy!

MISS PRISSY

We route out the evil in all men!

EXT. A NEARBY STREAM -A LONG TIME AGO WHEN THE MAPLE STREET  
MILITIA WERE CHILDREN -DAY

Miss Prissy, Hugh, and Reginald are dressed up as soldiers.

They stand on rocks in a shallow stream.

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getting wet.

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sissy! Scaredy cat! Scaredy cat!  
Scaredy cat!

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a sissy!

REGINALD

Miss Prissy is a sissy! You're a  
whiney little girl. Girls are  
dumb! You can't run! You can't  
climb trees and you can't even  
jump over stones in a stream.

Finally, she has had enough and a 'wild look of determination' comes across her face and she jumps!

INT. DEBANOUX MANSION'S LIVING ROOM - EVENING OF AUGUST  
31ST, 2005

HUGH AND MRS. THOMPSON

You can do it Miss Prissy! Jump!

Miss Prissy hikes up her skirt and jumps over the huge hole in the floor! Reginald and Hugh grab her and pull her up the stairs!

Water is gushing up from the floorboards!

Hugh holds onto Miss Prissy as she slumps limply onto the landing!

HUGH

My God, no!

Hugh cradles Miss Prissy in his arms.

FOOTAGE OF HURRICANE KATRINA'S DEVASTATION - NEW ORLEANS  
SEPTEMBER FIRST, 2005.

ON SCREEN THE WORDS: SEPTEMBER FIRST 2005. STRANDED PEOPLE REMAIN IN BUILDINGS OR ROOFTOPS. VIOLENCE DISRUPTS RELIEF EFFORTS AS AUTHORITIES RESCUE TRAPPED RESIDENTS AND TRY TO EVACUATE THOUSANDS OF OTHERS LIVING AMONG CORPSES AND HUMAN WASTE.

INT DEBANOUX LIVING ROOM STAIR LANDING - SEPTEMBER FIRST, 2005 - EARLY MORNING

The living room is completely flooded, except for the stair landing which is only inches from being submerged.

Everyone; Hugh, Reginald, Mrs. Thompson and Miss Prissy, have sought refuge on the landing.

Reginald is seated, looking out the French window through his binoculars.

Hugh, Miss Prissy and Mildred sleep on the hard floor without any blankets to lie on. Mrs. Thompson holds Miss Prissy in her sleep.

There is only one jug of water for them to drink. Surely, not enough water if they are not rescued soon.

There are two rifles in one corner of the landing.

Morning. September first. Day five of their ordeal. Stranded people remain in buildings or rooftops. Violence disrupts relief efforts as authorities rescue trapped residents and try to evacuate thousands of others living among corpses and human waste.

Reginald, exhausted, begins to nod off to sleep.

EXT. NEARBY RIVER A FEW MONTHS AGO - ON A ROWBOAT -DAY

Reginald and Marion are on a rowboat. The scene is very romantic.

Reginald is dressed in an impeccable white suit and hat. He rows the boat gently along the blue, placid, river.

Marion has a book on her lap which she has been reading. She lets one hand gently dip into the cool water. Marion wears a very pretty hat tied with a ribbon and wears a lovely dress.

REGINALD

Recite the poem again.

Marion picks up the book of poetry to read.

REGINALD

Oh, no. Not the Keets. Recite  
the poem you wrote. The pretty  
one. The one you wrote for me.  
The one that made me sad. The one  
that made me smile. My poem...

MARION

HUMMINGBIRD

In wish filled dreams you've flown  
over my garden wall  
Love's dance in a heartbeat, will  
hold you should you fall  
'Twas on a midday breeze, soft as  
a whispered word  
That such a true vision came to  
me, hummingbird

Hummingbird, you're gonna fly,  
'til the day you die  
Then, fly, oh won't you fly,  
across the wind and sky  
Till wrapped in dreams of wood and  
lake and earth and stream  
Come to rest in my garden of  
imaginings

It was there he kissed her under  
that very tree  
'Twas love at first sight, Darlin'  
what else could it be  
She was just a young girl and he  
had touched her heart  
How was she to find the lie in  
we'll never part

Hummingbird, you're gonna fly,  
'till the day you die

Then, fly, oh won't you fly,  
across the wind and sky  
Till wrapped in dreams of wood and  
lake and earth and stream  
Come to rest in my garden of  
imaginings

One day she died of love's  
heartbroken reverie  
Now hummingbird's come to nest in  
that very tree  
And it's so hard to say, just what  
the spring may bring  
Hummingbird's found rest in silent  
imaginings

Hummingbird, you're gonna fly,  
'till the day you die  
Then, fly, oh won't you fly,  
across the wind and sky  
'Till wrapped in dreams of wood  
and lake and earth and stream  
Come to rest in my garden of  
imaginings

REGINALD  
Marion, Marion...

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There are two rifles in one corner of the landing.

Morning. September first. Day five of their ordeal. Stranded people remain in buildings or rooftops. Violence disrupts relief efforts as authorities rescue trapped residents and try to evacuate thousands of others living among corpses and human waste.

Reginald suddenly nods and startles awake out of his dream.

REGINALD

(Talking to himself)

In God's name isn't help coming?  
I've been in the military  
practically all my life. I've  
never seen such... Where are you?  
FEMA where the hell are you? When  
in God's name is help coming? God  
if you are up there, please help  
us?

(Yelling out the window.

)

Hey, Louisiana National Guard...  
Where the hell are you? Miss  
Prissy isn't going to make it.  
She just might recover if only  
help would come. Please...  
Please... Jesus, the heat and the  
stench of that water. God knows  
what is in that water. Bodies...  
For heaven's sake, God. Those  
pitiably lost. Caught up in the  
old maple trees that have snatched  
them. Then carried on floating in  
the stench, diseased water. Those  
poor souls. Is death waiting for  
us? From that river, from the  
little water we managed to save  
from the flooded living room?  
From dehydration. From  
starvation. Well, Lord, as for  
me, I won't chose those options as  
a way out of this world. I'll  
take my rifle and my guess is that  
you know the rest God, if it comes

down to it. Can I watch Miss Prissy suffer... No, the answer to that question is 'no' God. I won't.

(Reginald stands in front of the window. He holds his rifle.)

Where are you God? These are elderly folks. Their time on this earth was just a little more through this veil of tears, as Miss Prissy says. Show what small, pitiful mercy you have at your fingertips. Not a lot to ask. Not a lot to ask for me.

(Yelling out the window)

Hey, Louisiana National Guard... Where the hell are you and I'll ask again. Where are you in this disaster. Show yourself. My faith in you is pert near finished. I don't see any helicopters, rescuing the Murphys.

(His voice is almost quiet)

If they aren't rescued soon and I mean today, they will die. Today. Hours. Show your omnipotent, merciful justice for the Murphys. They are waiting for death.

Hugh wakes up from his place on the floor. He walks to the window and places a hand on Reginald's shoulder.

HUGH

Reginald?

REGINALD

It is September first, for Christ's sake Hugh! No helicopters. No planes. No boats. Nothing. Miss Prissy? Her heart... Yes, she can't last long. We have to accept that fact, Hugh. If we aren't rescued soon, then Miss Prissy will die. She no longer has the strength. She won't make it. Too late. Yes,

Hugh, help will have come too late  
for her. I don't see any help.

HUGH

Nothing?

REGINALD

Nothing.

HUGH

Reginald we still have some hope  
left, we...

REGINALD

No, Hugh, I don't believe that  
there is any hope left. Miss  
Prissy will have left this veil of  
tears. Her body will be long cold  
before help arrives.

HUGH

Why, why? Why hasn't FEMA acted  
sooner? Human beings cannot live  
long without clean drinking water.

REGINALD

No, Hugh, everyone on this planet  
knows that!

HUGH

Pitiful. The suffering out there.

REGINALD

The lucky ones maybe...drown.

HUGH

Don't say that, Reginald!

REGINALD

What, the lucky ones made it to  
their roofs? The lucky ones  
watched their family drown.  
Scars, Hugh. Scars enough to last  
a lifetime, for the lucky ones.

HUGH

And then...

REGINALD

And then, if help doesn't arrive soon. The lucky ones will die of thirst, of dehydration. In that hot sun.

HUGH

The heat. The mosquitoes.

REGINALD

The plain exhausting stench of that water out there.

HUGH

Yes, it is getting pretty bad.

REGINALD

That disease ridden water.

HUGH

God knows what disease is breeding down there in it.

REGINALD

Yes, that water is death, all right.

HUGH

Death... Reginald, I ask you to hang in there. Don't lose your hope. It is the only... It is the last thing we have to hold on to. For Miss Prissy. For Mildred... For me and you Reginald. In the military, leadership came naturally to you.

REGINALD

Natural. Yes... But, I never watched my own family die. And to die like this! There is no excuse, Hugh. No excuse whatsoever! How can the government do this to us, to New Orleans? To Louisiana! Perhaps we could somehow touch their bureaucratic hearts, Hugh...

HUGH

How is that, Reginald?

REGINALD

Well, we are all tax paying citizens, aren't we!

(Reginald laughs)

And the burden of all this, Hugh, can't you see that Americans will have to take up that burden?

HUGH

I imagine the effects of Hurricane Katrina will be felt years to come.

REGINALD

What man power and pure human will is needed to rebuild the great city of New Orleans! I imagine, when the government gets their sorry asses moving, they will assume part of the burden as well. Too late for all these poor folks out there. The ones that are lucky. The ones who survive.

HUGH

We will survive this tragedy, Reginald. We will survive. Miss Prissy and Mildred are strong in spirit and faith in God!

REGINALDHUGH

Faith in God, come on Hugh!

HUGH

Yes, faith in God, everything happens for a reason! There is God's plan in this. We'll learn whatever lessons we need to from Katrina.

REGINALD

Why, I wish I could share that faith in a powerful, caring God!

HUGH

We know that the levees weren't strong enough for a category 5 strength hurricane!

REGINALD

Yes, indeed, we know that for a frigging fact!

HUGH

The levees will be built stronger. The next hurricane that hits, the levees won't give out!

REGINALD

Next time? Too late for us, Hugh. We won't even live to see that in our life time.

HUGH

No, I believe the government and the people of this country will move mountains to build a levee that will withhold such a disaster as Katrina in future.

REGINALD

Hugh, that will be too late for us. We will die here. I've lost my faith in the Louisiana National Guard. I've lost my faith in FEMA. I've lost my faith in our President Bush. I've lost my faith in God.

HUGH

Reginald, we need you. We need your leadership to get us through this. Miss Prissy and Mildred need you. What would we do without your strength.

REGINALD

Hugh...

HUGH

You cannot give up hope, Reginald. I have faith in you. We all have faith in you.

Reginald puts his rifle down leaning against the window. He puts his hands down on the window and hangs his head as if in serious prayer.

REGINALD

Yes, all right, Hugh. I'll go on. I'll go on for you and Miss Prissy and Mildred.

HUGH

Yes, Reginald. We have always counted on your strength. We have always counted on you since we were young. We would have followed you to hell and back!

Mrs. Thompson wakes up. She gently removes her arm from Miss Prissy. She moves to Hugh and Reginald by the window.

MRS. THOMPSON

Reginald. Reginald. Do you see anything. Anything at all?

REGINALD

No, Mildred, there is no help, that I can see.

MRS. THOMPSON

No helicopters, then. No rescue?

REGINALD

No, I'm sorry Mildred.

MRS. THOMPSON

How are the Murphys? I mean, stranded on that roof for days, out in the hot sun. This heat! No water! No food!

EXT. THE MURPHY'S ROOF -SEPTEMBER FIRST, 2005 - DAY

Mr. And Mrs. Murphy sit on their roof out in the hot sun. They are in very poor condition; sun burnt and dehydrated. Mr. Murphy puts his arm around Mrs. Murphy consoling her.

MARY

I'm not going to make it, Hank. My mouth is so dry and I'm so

thirsty. I'm having trouble taking in a breath. I want to tell you that I love you so much before it's too late. That's all. You've been such a good husband and you are such a good hard working man, is all. I'm proud of you and I always was.

MR. MURPHY

Shush, Mary. Calm yourself. Ease your mind. You trust me? You'll make it. We both will. Sweetheart, just don't loose hope. That's all we have left. As the Lord above is my witness, I'll see that we will survive this. Hell, why, we'll be rescued just anytime! Soon!

MARY

Hard to miss us up here on our very own roof, I guess!

Mary goes into a fit of coughing. She is getting weaker.

MR. MURPHY

That's it! Darling, you just rest. You just hang in there. Help is coming.

MARY

Then, Hank, they'd better rescue me soon. I can feel it. I can feel the hand of God on me. My time is neigh.

MR. MURPHY

Your time is neigh! Church talk, Mary! If I, Hank Murphy, give my word to my woman and by God I seldom do, then, this day, Judgement Day or not, we will be rescued. We will make it. Mary, sweetheart, I'll see to it we do and you will make it out of this alive and well. Because, you know why I know this?

MARY

No, why?

MR. MURPHY

Because I love you Mary Murphy and we ain't doin' the 'Death Till You Part' business yet! No Sirree! Not with Hank Murphy by his woman's side!

MARY

I love you Hank Murphy.

Mr. Murphy embraces Mary. His expression changes to worry.

INT DEBANOUX LIVING ROOM STAIR LANDING - SEPTEMBER FIRST, 2005 - DAY

HUGH

Help will come soon, it has to!

How is Miss Prissy, Mildred?

MRS. THOMPSON

I don't know Hugh. I checked on her about every hour last night!

REGINALD

Yes, who for the love of God, could sleep!

MRS. THOMPSON

I've never had such a long night in my life? Waiting.

REGINALD

Yes, waiting for her to take her last breath.

HUGH

Miss Prissy is made of sterner stuff than you both think!

REGINALD

Well, then, I tell you. I hope that the helicopters see us, soon! And I mean soon. I put Miss Prissy top of His omnipotent list!

MRS. THOMPSON

They have to come today. They have to.

HUGH

We won't lose hope, Mildred. We won't let go of the one thing we have.

Hugh puts his arm around Mrs. Thompson, comforting her.

Miss Prissy sits up where she is lying on the floor.

MISS PRISSY

What is going on? Reginald what is going on! Have they come?

REGINALD

No, not yet. Don't worry yourself, Darling! Help will come soon, won't it Mildred?

MISS PRISSY

Well, it had better. I'm sure my body would be a big inconvenience to you all!

REGINALD

Miss Prissy!

MRS. THOMPSON

What a thought, dear!

MISS PRISSY

Well, Mildred, we aren't spring chickens any more! Death picks us off, one by one!

Reginald takes his binoculars and looks out the window. He leans out the window, trying to get a better look.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE DEBANOUX MANSION - BENEATH THE FRENCH WINDOW - SEPTEMBER FIRST, 2005 -DAY

Marion's lifeless body is floating, tangled up in a low tree branch nearby in the flood. Her long hair is tangled up in the tree's branches. Her white blouse is covered in her blood. She has been shot through the heart. She has a gun holster strapped to her waist.

REGINALD VOICE OVER  
Oh, God, it's another body. It's  
tangled up in a low tree branch.  
It's a woman.

INT DEBANOUX LIVING ROOM STAIR LANDING - SEPTEMBER FIRST,  
2005 - EARLY MORNING

Hugh leans out the window.

HUGH  
Reginald I think I know who she  
is. Reginald come, I think that  
you should move away from the  
window. Please.

REGINALD  
Yes, there she is, caught up in  
that low tree branch by her long,  
black, hair.

HUGH  
Reginald, don't...

REGINALD  
Poor, pitiful woman, lost in this  
flood. What was she doing when the  
flood took her? Did she think  
she'd found higher ground. Did she  
think she was safe? That she'd be  
safe for a little while? Did she  
make it to her roof? Did she hold  
on to some debris? Did she just  
get tired and let go. Did she  
lose hope and let go?

HUGH  
Reginald...

REGINALD  
Wait! There is a bullet hole in  
her chest. There is blood on her  
white blouse. That poor woman. The  
looters, maybe even the looters  
who tried and failed to rob us.  
Did she struggle? Did she plead  
for her life. Her pleas didn't  
work. They murdered her. Her long

hair, caught on that low tree  
branch.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE DEBANOUX MANSION - BENEATH THE FRENCH  
WINDOW - SEPTEMBER FIRST, 2005 -DAY

Marion's lifeless body floats right beneath their window.

REGINALD VOICE OVER  
Wait, the water is carrying her.  
She's floating right under the  
window! That long hair. Wait!  
She's got a gun holster strapped  
to her waist. That long hair! It's  
Marion!

INT DEBANOUX LIVING ROOM STAIR LANDING - SEPTEMBER FIRST,  
2005 - EARLY MORNING

MISS PRISSY  
Miss Harvey! Oh, God, no! Miss  
Harvey!

HUGH  
There's nothing we can do for her  
now, Reginald! She's one of the  
many drown in this flood...

REGINALD  
Well, I'm going to do something!

Hugh grabs Reginald in a strong hold!

HUGH  
Reginald! No! You can't save her  
now.

REGINALD  
Yes, I can! There is still time!

Mrs. Thompson looks down out of the window.

MRS. THOMPSON  
No, you can't save her, Reginald.  
It's too late, the current has  
taken her.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE DEBANOUX MANSION - BENEATH THE FRENCH  
WINDOW - SEPTEMBER FIRST, 2005 -DAY

Marion's body is being carried away by the flood.

MRS. THOMPSON VOICE OVER

She looks peaceful, Reginald, so peaceful. All her cares are gone. All her fears are gone, now, you see. She has surrendered now, in death. And though the flood has won over her struggles, she did not give in. She would not give in. She did not.

INT DEBANOUX LIVING ROOM STAIR LANDING - SEPTEMBER FIRST, 2005 - DAY

Hugh lets go of Reginald. Reginald looks out the window in a state of shock and finally calm.

REGINALD

Marion. Marion. She was a strong woman. She could shoot better than anyone I ever saw. What stopped you, Marion? What stopped you from shooting those looting maniacs right through the heart! I know you would have. I know you could have. What stopped you, Marion.

MRS. THOMPSON

She's gone, Reginald, to a better place...

REGINALD

Don't talk religion to me, Mildred Thompson! I was taught to believe in a God that was merciful and just. Though in later life, I found that he wasn't always just.. Now, I know for a fact, that he is not a merciful God. Marion, Marion, what happened? She was so strong...

HUGH

Let her go, Reginald. Reginald?

Mrs. Thompson slumps to the floor beside Miss Prissy. They hold each other crying.

Reginald takes a deep breath that somehow draws some strength and resolve back into him.

MISS PRISSY

Oh, my bones! My poor old bones!  
My arthritis! Yes, it is strange,  
but I think in a crisis, your mind  
relies more on spirit than body,  
to get you through. I saw mother  
last night. Just as clear. She was  
waiting in the light. The light!  
You know like when people die?

HUGH

Yes, Miss Prissy?

MISS PRISSY

There was mother, Hugh. And  
father, though I must confess, I  
didn't expect to find father  
there.

REGINALD

Miss Prissy...

MISS PRISSY

They want me to come home. I  
wanted to, too. But, they wouldn't  
let me. Mother said, just as  
clear, 'Miss Prissy, it isn't your  
time. Not now. Soon, it'll be  
soon. But, not now...' Oh, mother!  
I'm sorry. I'm sorry.

HUGH

Dear Miss Prissy.

MISS PRISSY

I visit their graves now and then.  
And that beautiful angel  
overlooking their graves, in the  
cemetery 'Grief' it is called. I  
sit there, under the big shade  
tree, Hugh, on that stone bench  
beside their grave, trying my best  
to see mother's face. But, her  
face seems to be like a shadowy

memory, Hugh. I'm sorry, Mother,  
I'm sorry...

HUGH

Memory fades, Darling. With the  
years.

MISS PRISSY

And I sit there on that cold stone  
bench, Hugh, apologizing to  
ghosts. With that angel, weeping  
so, over their graves. I think,  
it is regret, that has lead to  
sorrow, and makes her weep so.

HUGH

That's the plain truth. Time is  
even fading the memory of my Kathy  
Lee, just a little bit, each day.  
Like that winding river in the  
Grand Canyon, taking a little  
piece of memory with it each day.  
I see her in my heart, as she was  
as a young girl, swinging on that  
old tire swing in the back yard.  
'Push me higher, Hugh!' Her long  
blonde hair flying... I forget  
her long illness. The endless  
tests. The cancer. The funeral.  
The rain.

MISS PRISSY

You just remember her as that  
young girl, then, Hugh.

HUGH

I will. I will.

REGINALD

Miss Prissy, are you all right!

MISS PRISSY

Yes, Reginald. Just can't seem to  
stop apologizing to ghosts. Bad  
habit.

HUGH

Leave the dying to those that  
have, Miss Prissy!

REGINALD

That's right, no one is going to  
die on my watch!

MISS PRISSY

Reginald, how you sound like some  
general in some war movie!

HUGH

Now, that's the truth, Miss  
Prissy!

Off stage is the sound of gunfire. Mrs. Thompson absolutely  
startles.

MRS. THOMPSON

I'll be having a heart attack  
next! I know I will.

Mrs. Thompson runs to the window. She begins to scream out  
the window!

MRS. THOMPSON

What in God's name is wrong with  
you people! You insane people. May  
you burn in hell for all eternity!  
When you are caught and brought to  
justice, I hope to hell that they  
hang you!

HUGH

Mildred! Mildred! Settle down.  
Settle down! Be brave Mildred.  
You're made of sterner stuff! I  
know it!

MRS. THOMPSON

I'm sorry. I'm all right, now. I'm  
sorry.

REGINALD

It's all right Mildred. If we  
don't get help soon, I'll be the  
one screaming! It's the heat or

the stench out there, that's  
almost making me crazy!

Mrs. Thompson nods. She goes to Miss Prissy and sitting  
beside Miss Prissy, holds her to her.

HUGH

The stench out there. The water.  
The bodies. The heat.

REGINALD

It's gonna make what it takes for  
an epidemic.

HUGH

But, the city of New Orleans will  
recover. I know it. New Orleans  
will never give up and neither  
will we, or neither will you,  
Reginald!

REGINALD

Unfortunately, it isn't in my  
nature! Too bossy! Always had to  
be in charge, didn't I? And by  
God, you and Miss Prissy obeyed!

MISS PRISSY

The Maple Street Militia! Lord in  
heaven. Reginald had more energy  
than any child I ever met.  
Remember when we used to play  
cowboys and Indians?

HUGH

And we were always the Indians.

MISS PRISSY

Remember that bow and the arrows  
that Reginald made?

HUGH

The amount of time he spent on  
making the bow just so.

MISS PRISSY

And the arrows? Real chicken  
feathers!

HUGH

He was quite the marksman!

MISS PRISSY

And lucky for you and me, Hugh.  
Remember how he'd place us in  
front of that hand painted target,  
with an apple on our heads!

EXT. OUTSIDE THE DUBANOUX MANSION A LONG TIME AGO, WHEN  
THE MAPLE STREET MILITIA WERE CHILDREN

Miss Prissy is a small girl. She has an apple on her head.  
She is standing in front of a hand painted target! We hear  
the zing of the arrow. The arrow pierces the apple on her  
head! Miss Prissy has a fearful but relieved expression!

INT DEBANOUX MANSION'S LIVING ROOM STAIR LANDING -  
SEPTEMBER FIRST, 2005 -DAY

HUGH

Sort of like that TV pattern with  
the Indian that you would see  
early in the morning before the TV  
programs began.

MISS PRISSY

Yes, I still have visions. There  
we were, live targets, Mildred,  
arrows whizzing by. I can still  
hear the arrows whizzing past my  
ears! I had nightmares for years  
as a child!

HUGH

And of course you remember when we  
played Tombstone?

MISS PRISSY

Tombstone! I refuse to discuss  
it, Hugh! I won't listen  
(Miss Prissy turns down  
her hearing aid)  
You see, Hugh, I'm turning down my  
hearing aid, that I ordered  
special, from one of those TV  
commercials. I cannot hear you.

HUGH

Nonsense, Miss Prissy. That was so long ago! Surely, you can see the fun in it? A childhood memory, for the love of God!

MISS PRISSY

A childhood memory! You make it seem like unwrapping gifts on Christmas! High noon in Tombstone, Mildred! And you know what happened to the bad guys!

HUGH

In the black hats!

MISS PRISSY

They hang 'em, Mildred! They hang 'em high!

HUGH

It was just a game, Miss Prissy...

MISS PRISSY

How can you be so dense Hugh? Reginald meant to go through with it!

HUGH

Oh, now come now, Miss Prissy!

MISS PRISSY

We were always the bad guys, Hugh. Remember, we were the guys in the black hats!

HUGH

True.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE DUBANOUX MANSION A LONG TIME AGO, WHEN THE MAPLE STREET MILITIA WERE CHILDREN

Reginald swings a noose over the branches of the old maple tree.

MISS PRISSY VOICE OVER

Reginald swung each noose over the  
branches of that old maple tree in  
the back yard!

Miss Prissy and Hugh stand in front of the gallows tree.  
They audibly gulp with fear!

HUGH VOICE OVER  
Fashioned each noose himself.

MISS PRISSY VOICE OVER  
On Boot Hill. The gallows. I  
tell you, Hugh, Reginald was going  
to go through with it!

HUGH VOICE OVER  
Reginald always tried to be  
authentic, like with the bow and  
arrows.

MISS PRISSY VOICE OVER  
Authentic! He meant to drop us  
swinging off a box, that's what!

HUGH VOICE OVER  
He read the 23rd Psalm...

MISS PRISSY VOICE OVER  
Exactly, Hugh! If mother hadn't  
come outside to tell us that  
dinner was ready, I just wonder  
what would have happened to us!

Their mother, Mrs. Debanoux, steps outside the kitchen  
steps to call the children in for dinner.

MRS. DEBANOUX  
Dinner!

Miss Prissy and Hugh, bolt for the kitchen door as if they  
have had a reprieve of sentence!

INT DEBANOUX MANSION'S LIVING ROOM STAIR LANDING -  
SEPTEMBER FIRST, 2005

HUGH  
Well, you have to admire  
Reginald's determination, Hugh.

MISS PRISSY

But, it was more than just being bossy, wasn't it Hugh? Reginald just had that leadership quality about him, and in the United States Air Force for God knows how many years. Yes, Reginald is a leader, that's all there is to that. Some folks are leaders, some followers. There is always a leader and there are always followers. We've just always been the followers, Hugh.

HUGH

Yes, but we loved you, Reginald. We'd have followed you to the moon!

MISS PRISSY

To the moon and back!

HUGH

There you have it Reginald.

MISS PRISSY

We won't give up, give in, give out!

REGINALD

The Maple Street Militia!

MISS PRISSY REGINALD AND HUGH

The Maple Street Militia! Comrades in arms...

REGINALD, MISS PRISSY, HUGH AND MRS. THOMPSON

We root out the evil in all men!

EXT. OUTSIDE THE DUBANOUX MANSION A LONG TIME AGO, WHEN THE MAPLE STREET MILITIA WERE CHILDREN - DAY

Hugh, Reginald and Miss Prissy are dressed as pirates. They swear an oath. First Reginald extends his sword, then Hugh and then Miss Prissy, with swords locked together.

REGINALD, HUGH AND MISS PRISSY

We root out the evil in all!

INT DEBANOUX LIVING ROOM STAIR LANDING - SEPTEMBER FIRST,  
2005 -DAY

There is the sound of a motor boat! Reginald and Hugh lean  
out of the window to see out!

MRS. THOMPSON  
What is it? What is that?

REGINALD  
A motor boat!

Mrs. Thompson runs to the window!

EXT. THE MURPHY'S ROOF -SEPTEMBER FIRST, 2005 -DAY

A motor boat arrives to rescue the Murphys! There are two  
Rescuers.

MR. MURPHY  
Here! Here! Mary, wake up,  
they're here! We're saved!

MARY  
Hank! Hank! We're saved! We're  
saved!

MR. MURPHY  
I never give my word, Sweetheart,  
unless I know I can keep it!

MARY  
I love you Hank Murphy

Mr. Murphy kisses Mary.

A rescuer lowers himself over the side of the boat. He  
attaches a life jacket to her with a rope.

REGINALD VOICE OVER  
A boat! They're going to rescue  
the Murphys! A rescuer is being  
lowered over the boat! Wait! He's  
securing Mrs. Murphy.

The rescuer pulls Mrs. Murphy into the boat.

REGINALD VOICE OVER

Thank the Lord! Now, he's got her  
and she's being lifted up into the  
boat!

EXT. THE MURPHY'S ROOF -SEPTEMBER FIRST, 2005 - A FEW  
MINUTES LATER - DAY

The Rescuer secures Mr. Murphy with a a life jacket and  
rope and he is lifted into the boat.

REGINALD VOICE OVER

Mr. Murphy! They've lowered a  
rescuer over the boat. Wait! He's  
securing Mr. Murphy! They're  
lifting him into the boat! The  
Murphy's are saved!

MISS PRISSY VOICE OVER

Amen! Thank the Lord!

Mr. Murphy holds Mary. She is very weak, sunburnt and  
dehydrated. Hank has a bottle of water and has her drink  
it.

MR. MURPHY

See, I told you, sweetheart, we'd  
be rescued. This was God's plan  
after all, The Louisiana National  
Guard!

Suddenly, a dog swims up to the boat.

MARY

Old Ralph. My God.

MR. MURPHY

Old Ralph! God in heaven! Old  
Ralph.

Mr. Murphy pulls Old Ralph into the boat. He is greeted by  
the most sincere welcome from Old Ralph!

INT DEBANOUX LIVING ROOM - STAIR LANDING - SEPTEMBER FIRST,  
2005 - DAY

The sound of the motor boat is louder. It is closer to  
their old mansion!

MRS. THOMPSON  
The boat! How can he see us?

HUGH  
This is our chance, folks!

Reginald pulls a red handkerchief from his pocket.

Reginald waves the handkerchief out the window.

MRS. THOMPSON  
Oh, please see us! Oh, Please see  
us! Over here! We're over here!

Reginald leans out the window.

HUGH  
Reginald what are you doing?

REGINALD  
I'm going to make the ledge  
outside the window!

HUGH  
For Christ's sake, Reginald be  
careful!

Reginald climbs out the window.

EXT. THE DEBANOUX MANSION - THE LEDGE OUTSIDE THE FRENCH  
WINDOW - SEPTEMBER FIRST, 2005 -DAY

Reginald waves the red handkerchief at the boat.

We can clearly see the others; Hugh, Mrs. Thompson and Miss  
Prissy, as they lean out of the French window.

MRS. THOMPSON  
Do they see him? Do they see him  
at all!

Reginald is waving his arms at them frantically!

REGINALD  
Over here! Over here!

MISS PRISSY  
Hugh, do they see Reginald!

MRS. THOMPSON

My God! We won't make it if they  
don't see him!

MISS PRISSY

Lord, help us!

The rescuers in the boat are starting to turn towards New  
Orleans! The boat is turning away from them.

REGINALD

Over here you! Don't you see me!  
I'm standing on a God damned  
window ledge outside my God damned  
upstairs window, trying to get  
your God damned attention!

MRS. THOMPSON

Do they see him, Hugh? Do they see  
Reginald, for heaven's sake?

MISS PRISSY

Oh, please Lord... Let them see  
him.

MRS. THOMPSON

Do they see him? Tell me! Tell me  
now!

MISS PRISSY

Mother... Mother... I'll find you.

REGINALD

I think they see me! Finally you  
see me you, you! About time. I pay  
my frigging taxes! You better  
frigging turn around!

HUGH

Wave the handkerchief, Reginald!  
The handkerchief!

MISS PRISSY

What's happening, Hugh?

REGINALD

They see me! They see me!

MISS PRISSY

They see Reginald? Truly, Hugh,  
they see him?

REGINALD

Yes, I believe they do! Wait! They  
are turning around! They are  
coming this way!

MRS. THOMPSON

For Christ's sake don't fall now,  
Reginald!

MISS PRISSY

Well, then, they'd see us for  
sure, wouldn't they?

MRS. THOMPSON

Miss Prissy!

HUGH

Yes, they are coming this way!  
They do see Reginald!

REGINALD

They see me! They see me! About  
frigging time you... You... This  
way! Yeah, I'm here! Am I the only  
one around here waving a God  
damned red hanky holding on to the  
God damned window with my God  
damned fingernails? Help! Help!

The sound of the motor boat is very loud, almost drowning  
out the sound of Reginald's voice

REGINALD

You wonderful guys! I knew the  
United States government would  
come to our rescue. The greatest  
military force in the world!  
America! God bless you and God  
bless America! I knew you'd find  
us! I never lost hope! I knew  
you'd  
rescue us! I never doubted it for  
one second! I knew you wouldn't  
let us die here!

Mildred and Hugh embrace and kiss each other!

MRS. THOMPSON  
We're rescued! We're rescued!

HUGH  
Yes, darling, we're rescued!

Miss Prissy stands up and Hugh and Mildred support her.  
They look out the window.

MISS PRISSY  
Mother, father, be patient, I  
ain't coming home so soon after  
all ...

They lean out the window and wave, overcome with emotion at  
seeing the helicopter.

Reginald ducks under the window and returns to the living  
room landing.

INT DEBANOUX LIVING ROOM STAIR LANDING - SEPTEMBER FIRST,  
2005 - DAY

He takes Miss Prissy's arm and escorts her to the window.

REGINALD  
Ladies first...

FADE OUT