

**The Eye of the Storm**

by

Catherine Chen



Catherine Chen  
CTAN 436 - Week 6  
Professor Brauer

catherrc@usc.edu

FADE IN:

INT. CATHERINE and JACKIE'S ROOM - SOUTH FLORIDA - DAWN, 6AM  
CATHERINE (8) sleeps in the dark under loose blankets. A pillow has fallen onto the ground. A short five second flashback of soft light of dawn trespassing through the curtains and window head is superimposed on top of plain darkness in the present. The shutters are up, preventing any light from passing through. There is a constant thudding on the shutters outside. Catherine hears a memory of the news on the television.

TELEVISION

(distant)

Katrina's eye will reach West Palm Beach in-

The thudding outside stops, waking up Catherine. Suddenly there is a stillness. She searches the bed around her. Alert, she peeks under the bed.

CATHERINE

Huahua? Where is Huahua?

She looks to her right. JACKIE (7) was sleeping under the pillow fort. A short four second flashback still of sleeping Jackie during the night is superimposed on the present: now, Jackie's bed is empty. But there is a clear imprint in the bed to where she has been. All of the pillows in the entire house were used to make the pillow forts in the bedroom, including the couch pillows. Catherine is still looking for the cat. She is exploring up and around her sister's bed. Not a good finder, her cursory searches led her out of the bedroom.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAWN

Catherine carefully traverses across the living room. It is dark. A short 4 second flashback of microwave and tv lights are superimposed on top of the darkness of the present. No lights are on.

CUT TO:

INT. MOM AND DAD'S CLOSET - DAWN

MOM (30s) and DAD (30s) are sleeping in the closet on a red waterbed. Jackie has rolled off to the sides and is cuddling a blanket on the ground. Jackie wakes up lazily but closes her eyes again.

CATHERINE

Jackie!

JACKIE

Mmmmm

Jackie rolls back to sleep. Leaving Catherine frantic. She hastily peers around and goes back into the living room.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAWN

Catherine goes to open the front door. But it is already open. A squirrel peers inside the house, sees Catherine coming, and darts away.

EXT. CATHERINE'S PARENT'S HOUSE - DAWN

Water is dripping softly onto the stained pavement outside. Catherine is small in the frame. Steps out, gently puts her feet on the welcome mat.

CATHERINE

It's the eye of the storm.

Catherine runs to the puddles on the sidewalk, realizes the blades of grass are too sharp, and goes back inside to put her shoes on.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAWN

Catherine puts on her shoes. Having trouble, she sits on the tile floor. Ants are crawling in from the open doorway and into the laundry room.

Catherine opens the door to the laundry room.

CATHERINE  
Huahua?

Tons of lizards huddle in the laundry room, taking shelter in the house. Surprised and a bit scared of the lizards, she quickly closes the door, and returns outside. As Catherine exits the frame, Jackie enters. She looks into the laundry room to check to see if the lizards are doing well. The lizards open their mouths when they see, about to make an "ahh" sound.

JACKIE  
Shhh. Stay safe.

EXT. FRONT YARD - DAWN

The dip in the driveway is collecting water. A pond formed. Catherine drops her hat onto the water. It floats. It's like a boat.

MATCHING CUT TO:

EXT. ATLANTIC OCEAN - DAWN

Collision montage: A boat sits in the water. Hurricane Katrina's winds flip the boat into the water.

EXT. FRONT YARD - DAWN

Catherine observes her hat floating on the water. It is still floating. The water is still. Jackie comes up from behind.

JACKIE  
Dad says not to touch the water.

CATHERINE  
Why?

JACKIE  
Cuz electricity.

Jackie points. Catherine turns her head and sees a lightning monster standing on a telephone pole that has crashed into the water. Catherine dries her hat and puts it back on her head again.

JACKIE (CONT'D)  
Yeah, he can't get us if we stay away from  
the water.

Catherine stares at the lightning monster.

CATHERINE  
Jackie! I can't find Huahua. She's missing!

The two girls look around the yard hastily. They seem to see the cat's two bright eyes everywhere.

EXT. BACKYARD - NOON

They brush past a hibiscus tree with spiky caterpillars on it. Jackie has been crying earlier from getting her fingers pricked by the caterpillars. Now she is walking around with a bandage on her hand. Catherine spots something in the distance.

CATHERINE  
(gasps)  
It's a. Are they -

JACKIE  
naked mole rats?

They uncover a nest of baby squirrels, fallen from a tall tree. Catherine and Jackie notices the mother squirrel breathing hard in the distance, frightened by the presence of the two girls.

CUT TO:

EXT. BACKYARD - AFTERNOON

They continue their search. A pair of bright eyes are on a fence.

CATHERINE

That's an iguana! It has to be an iguana!

Catherine is jumping up and down in excitement, staring at a baby alligator on the fence.

JACKIE

An iguana!

CATHERINE

Yeah! Yeah!

JACKIE

I'm don't know.

CATHERINE

Let's go get the butterfly net.

JACKIE

Ahhh.

Catherine leaves. Jackie follows. They return with a small butterfly net. The alligator is gone. They look around precariously. Can't find the "iguana."

CUT TO:

EXT. FRONT YARD - SUNSET

Jackie and Catherine return to the house, fetched by their dad. Dad has been looking around for the cat for a while as well.

DAD

It's okay. We'll find the cat later. Go inside. It's starting to get dark.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. KITCHEN - EVENING

There is a small square table in the middle of the kitchen. The lights are all off. Only candles and flashlights light the room. Dad and Mom cheer up Catherine and Jackie who are distracted by their flashlights. The two girls wave their box-like 6V flashlights around while the parents make shadow puppets. Jackie turns her flashlight towards her face and waves her hands together. A giant hawk shadow wavers on the ceiling above her head.

JACKIE

Caw! Caw!

The lights from the flashlight attracts bugs from outside. They slam themselves onto the window to enter. Slap, slap - slap. Somehow one of them shimmy their way into the room through the hurricane shutters even. Dad looks around for the bug, bracing himself to catch the fly. The candle light is reflected in his eyes, two bright lights.

JACKIE

(whispers)

Awwh no.

Jackie turns off her flashlight in reaction to the large fly. Catherine is watching, still thinking about the cat. But now she is looking for the fly. With all the flashlights turned off, the candlelight is reflected in all the eyes around the room. Catherine counts the eyes while looking for the fly. One pair, two, three, four - that's Mom. -Five? There are five pairs of eyes.

CATHERINE

(recounting)

No. One. Two. Thrfour ... -Five? Five.

The last pair of eyes move closer.

CATHERINE

Huahua!

Jackie turns her head to the cat. Mom turns her head in the same direction as well. HUAHUA, the orange tabby cat, jumps into Catherine's arms. She's covered in coal.

MOM

Oh. How dirty she is! Where has she been?

(beat)

Catherine remembers the barbecue coal placed in the patio outside. Dad recently bought a big bag for the hurricane.

CATHERINE

Playing in the coal!

Catherine is now a mess, dirtied by stains of coal. Jackie tries to turn on her flashlight again, spamming the button several times. It flickers and fails. The cat jumps in Jackie's arms.

DAD

Who needs lights? You guys are the shadows  
puppets now! Continue with Act 2!

FADE TO BLACK.

ROLL CREDITS

The credits are still image cards of the girls and the cat covered in coal, acting as shadow puppets for a play. Mom and Dad watch with only candlelight. Mom is worried, knowing that they have no running water. The last image are the girls washing the cat and their dirty clothes in a plastic water basin, with their mom watching them, grinning.