

Baby's First Hurricane

Written by

Elise Van Pelt

INT. APARTMENT- DAY

A young woman sits on the couch in her small studio apartment anxiously watching the weather. This is Kayla, 22, a recent college graduate who has just moved back to her home city of New Orleans after attending school out of state.

WEATHERPERSON

Evacuation orders are in place for Plaquemines, St. Bernard, Terrebonne, and Lafourche Parishes. Expect heavy rainfall, and winds up to 87 miles per hour in all parishes starting around 8 PM. The governor reminds you to stay off the roads and stock up on supplies. It is currently 88 degrees, so expect a hot night ahead of you.

As the TV blares, Kayla gets up and grabs a plastic Walmart bag from a pile of supplies stacked by the door. She brings it back to the couch and starts setting out candles. She also takes out a lighter and places it beside them. Beside her, her phone rings. She answers, holding it to her shoulder with her head as she mutes the TV and continues taking out candles.

KAYLA

Hey! No, yeah I'm fine. It hasn't even started raining yet.

She gets up and walks over to the window. Outside it's grey, overcast, and oddly dark for the middle of the day.

KAYLA (CONT'D)

It's disgusting outside though. It's super muggy, and kinda dark. Storm weather, you know.

(beat)

Ok, you would know if you lived here. It's normal.

She returns to the pile and begins taking water bottles out of their packaging and putting them in the fridge.

KAYLA (CONT'D)

I'm kinda excited honestly. It's baby's first hurricane away from home!

(beat)

Oh don't be so worried! It's just a category one. I mean, the power'll go out, but other than that nothing's gonna happen.

(MORE)

KAYLA (CONT'D)

(beat)

Maria, I-

(beat)

Ok, I'm gonna hang up now. There's no need to worry. Ah, ah! Ok bye!

Kayla hangs up, shaking her head in amusement. She closes the fridge and returns to her couch. The phone rings again, and without looking her answers and puts it to her ear.

KAYLA (CONT'D)

Girl, I told you- sorry mom. Thought you were someone else. How's it going over there?

(beat)

What, really? Come on! It's a category one! We're nowhere near the parishes they're evacuating.

(beat)

You're really gonna go?

(beat)

Yeah, I'm watching it right now.

Kayla unmutes the TV and for the first time concern shows on her face.

WEATHERPERSON

The river is at 18 feet right now, only 2 feet under the minimum levee height. The City is now warning all residents on the riverfront that evacuation is the safest option as the river continues to rise.

KAYLA

Momma, I'm gonna call you back. I'm not going anywhere though.

(beat)

Ok, tell me when you get to Mobile. I'll talk to you then.

(beat)

Love you too. I will.

She hangs up, and pulls up the map on her phone. She holds it up next to the tv screen, which has big red highlights on dangerous areas on the riverfront. Kayla's apartment is smack in the middle of one. She lowers her phone, reaching for the remote to turn the tv up.

WEATHERPERSON

The mayor of Orleans Parish warns-

The tv shuts off as the lights in the room go out. Kayla looks very worried now.

She begins lighting candles, bringing a flickering warmth to the room. She sits in silence for a moment, contemplating her situation, candlelight dancing on her face. She grabs a blanket from beside her on the couch and wraps it around her like a cape. She stands, clutching the blanket to her body, and walks to the window. She looks out at her city as the rain begins to fall.

FADE TO BLACK.