

# TERRIFYING RIDE IN A HURRICANE

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Apalachicola – The rain blew across Battery Park harbor like a thick, choking fog. The tops of the pilings jutted through it like black tombstones. Trapped aboard this fishing boat a hundred yards from shore, watching Hurricane Kate grab one boat after another from its moorings, I felt doomed.

I had come aboard Thursday afternoon to ask Bill and Mary Tuten why they felt compelled to stay in their boat rather than seek safer shelter. I photographed them, interviewed them and prepared to go.

That's when I saw that the pier I had walked out on was gone. The rising water had swallowed it or destroyed it. What should I do: jump into a 75-mph crosswind and hope the pier was just under the surface, or stay on this boat and pray?

Had I known what I was to face in the next five hours – the violent waves, the wind's constant jet-engine roar, the seasickness, the fire, the snake encounter – I would have strapped on a life jacket and taken my chances in the water.

But I didn't know. So I slung my empty cameras to the floor, settled onto the couch with my notepad, tried to ignore the watermelon-sized knot in my stomach and waited for Kate's full fury.

It's 4:00PM, and I'm getting to know my hosts. Bill is a 43-year-old fisherman, Mary works in the Piggly Wiggly in Apalachicola, and they live in a trailer on St. George Island. They seem like nice, well-adjusted people – so why do they want to ride out a hurricane in their boat?

"It's about all we got," Bill explains. Mary, who had never been in a hurricane until this summer, now has been in three – counting two separate swipes by Elena. They rode it out in this 33-foot **(Remainder Of Article Not Available)**