

THE  TIMES

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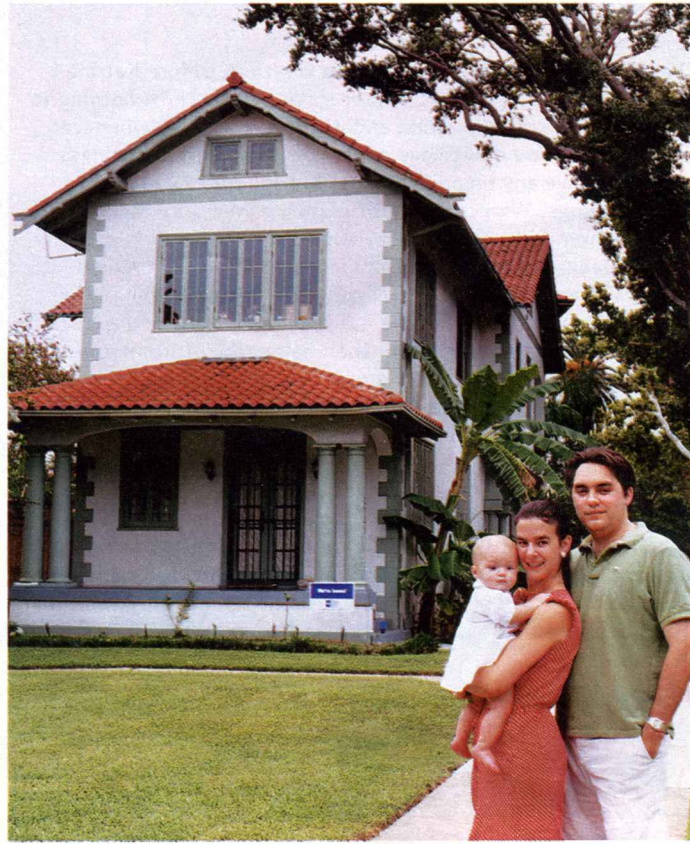
THE LOST BOY
JACKIE DOHERTY ON
HER SON PETE'S
JOURNEY FROM
CRICKET TO CRACK

HURRICANE KATRINA
ONE YEAR ON:
THE SURVIVORS' STORY

PEDRO ALMODOVAR
BROODS ON DEATH—AND
PENELOPE CRUZ



MAGAZINE



ALEXA PULITZER, SETH LEVINE AND KAGAN ▲

35, TEXTILES AND STATIONERY DESIGNER; 30, LAWYER

"Seth and I were on a long-planned weekend away when Katrina hit. All we had with us were two changes of clothes. I didn't go home until the end of November. Watching the mayhem on TV was horrifying. We felt exposed, as if all the negative aspects of our city – poverty, crime and racism – were brought to the surface for the world to see.

It is sad now to drive down many streets in the city and see the enormous piles of debris and trash that have been piled up for months. Our city will never be the same, ever. Too many natives who made up its cultural heritage have been forced to leave. I wish I knew the percentage of accidents since the storm due to everyone self-medicating and driving after drinking absurd amounts of alcohol to dull the depression everyone feels.

Because of the hurricane, many of my close friends have dispersed to other cities. My professional life has been turned upside-down: I lost 90 per cent of my stock and I had no insurance for it. My family lost their home, where I was raised, as did my in-laws. I had three different doctors when I was pregnant with Kagan, which meant I had to take the same tests over and over. I begged Seth to bring me back every day. I was mentally crushed. We are both proud New Orleanians so the thought of having our first child born somewhere else was difficult.

It is a tremendous challenge to raise a child in our once beautiful, broken city: crime, unbelievably poor educational institutions and the fear of more hurricanes.

I want to move away somewhere safe where that fear doesn't hang over me, but my city needs me. If people like us, who love this city, who identify themselves through it, suddenly abandon it, what will it become?"