

## Synopsis of the screenplay, *Mrs. Paine's Garage*

by Stephen M. Rapp

Inspired by the book of the same title by Thomas Mallon  
and true historical events

On Feb. 22, 1963, a housewife named Ruth Paine attended a party in an affluent section of Dallas where she met a young Russian woman, Marina Oswald, and her American husband, Lee. Ruth Paine a Quaker and a liberal Democrat trying to raise two children on her own and lonely in a city renowned for its conservatism, saw something of herself in the displaced and isolated Marina, who, unable to speak English, had retreated to a bedroom to tend to her infant daughter.

From that meeting on, Ruth decided she needed to help Marina. It was obvious to Ruth that Lee was unsteady and self absorbed, and there was evidence that Marina was being physically abused. Lee was an opportunist when he chose to be, and in order for him to achieve his own standard of fame, he agrees to have Marina move in with Ruth on the stipulation that Ruth does not teach Marina to speak in English. Lee goes to New Orleans where he obtains menial work and begins his pursuit of being a powerful influence for Marxist ideals, best exemplified by Fidel Castro in Cuba, and more importantly, to get out of Dallas, having just made a failed assassination attempt on a right winged retired General.

The now pregnant Marina, joins Lee in New Orleans and endures poverty and the anger of Lee, as all his best laid plans come to naught. Lee decides to make a bid to enter Cuba and become a hero in the revolution along side Fidel. Marina returns to Irving Texas at the welcomed largesse of Ruth. The two set up housekeeping, share child-rearing, and develop an intimate friendship, less the full disclosure from Marina of Lee's crimes and secrets. One secret being, that stored in Ruth's garage, is a high-powered rifle and scope used in an attempt to kill a public political figure.

As always, Lee's plans for fame fall awry as neither, Cuba or his former host, Russia, want anything to do with him or his odd behavior. Depressed and forlorn he returns to Dallas and seeks work while he lives in, dollar a night rooming houses. He makes weekend stays at the Paine house, which most always turn out to be unpleasant and contentious.

As a gesture of concern for Marina, Ruth follows up a lead that a job opening is available at the Texas Schoolbook Depository in downtown Dallas. Lee applies and gets the job. Its unforeseeable proximity to the route of Kennedy's motorcade would prove lethal.

On Thursday, Nov. 21, Lee unexpectedly spends the night. He usually confines his visits to the weekends. The next morning he retrieves his rifle and enters the realm of infamy and controversy that haunts our national psyche, even now.

The world has argued and chronicled the events and evidence from that morning till today. Little is known about the whirlwind that swept Marina from Ruth's wing and hurled into the care of a psychotic mother-in-law, an over protective brother-in-law, FBI, Secret Service Agents, lawyers, managers, and the overwhelming flood of money being sent to her from charitable American's, who sympathize with her plight.

The tragedy and story of Ruth Paine's Garage, lies in the inability of Marina and her entourage to acknowledge or allow the relationship between these two accidental tourists.

On Saturday afternoon, following the assassination, Marina is swept away into protective care, essentially never to return to Ruth as a friend or as an acquaintance. Suspicion, greed, fear and pride do as dastardly a deed as three bullets from a sixth floor snipers nest.