

**BRAND LIBRARY AUDIO TOUR** by GREG GONZALEZ

The sound of rusty wheels turning, and a heavy landing

PILOT

Oh hello there, you must be Leslie Brand.

MISSES BRAND

Actually, Leslie is my husband. I'm Mary Louise.

PILOT

Well hello there, Mary Louise Brand.

MISSES BRAND

Good afternoon, child. I see you have your invitation to my husbands fly-in party. Most people brought in their air machines, but you--

PILOT

Hey now, this is technically an aeroplane. It has wings, does it not? Did I not take flight like a bird?

MISSES BRAND

Bicycle pedals? Leather wings? You know people are now putting ENGINES in their planes?

PILOT

Engines are too loud, my dear. Can't hear myself think. (beat) Say, is that the Taj Mahal up on the hill? How far did I pedal? It is the first of April, 1921, correct?

MISSES BRAND

(delighted)

Oh you. That's our home, the Brand Castle; The jewel of jewel city.

PILOT

Jewel City? I thought I was in Glendale, California.

MISSES BRAND

Oh well yes, Glendale IS the Jewel City.

(MORE)

MISSES BRAND (CONT'D)

My husband is entertaining guests at the moment, would you like a tour of my residence?

PILOT

Absolutely, Misses Brand.

MISSES BRAND

My pleasure, one of my favorite things on this earth is giving tours of my castle.

PILOT

Say, I've heard about your husband from the society meetings, but if I may ask, how did he make his fortune?

MISSES BRAND

Real estate is what got us here, but since then he's set up water and power, connected the area to telephone lines, planted palm trees, had a Masonic Temple built, and he's reached out to HH, oh sorry, Mr. Huntington, and had PE, oh sorry, Pacific Electric, lay tracks through Glendale so the rail now comes through. On top of all that, my husband is a transportation enthusiast. As you can see, he absolutely adores aeroplanes. He started with an automobile, of course, he calls it the Tioga Wolf.

PILOT

An automobile? My word, I've only really seen one passing through. Those things can go.

MISSES BRAND

He certainly thought so when he got it. But after a few months, it wasn't fast enough for him. 'Too slow' he says. First, he said the automobile would get us to our place in Mono Lake much faster than wagons. Cut days off the trip, he says. He acquires the automobile, gets fed up with how long THAT took, and he turns to Pomeroy, our driver, and says, Pomeroy, we need to cut HOURS off the trip now.

(MORE)

## MISSES BRAND (CONT'D)

So they look into air machines. And now we're here. Now he even flies out to the golf club because that drive is too slow. Could you believe it?

## PILOT

Oh come on, you must like soaring in the air with him?

## MISSES BRAND

Poppycock. Hogwash, you're not gonna catch me flying miles in the air with something that was delivered to my home in a box and had to be assembled. No no.

## PILOT

I suppose it's only for daredevils like me. Nevertheless, your husband sounds like a busy fellow. I like that. He build the house too?

## MISSES BRAND

Oh no, no. My brother-in-law, Nathaniel, did. Leslie was at the World's Fair in Chicago, the one back in 1893, and went to the Colombian Exposition and saw the East Indian Pavilion, and fell in love. He told Nathaniel, 'I want that'. He finished building in '04.

## PILOT

East Indian Pavilion, huh. What'd it look like?

## MISSES BRAND

You're looking at it.

## PILOT

Oh right, you're home.

## MISSES BRAND

Not identical, but pretty similar. Leslie flew Nathaniel out to India to study elements and styles from out there, and incorporate it into the design for our home. (beat) So here we are, at the front steps of the Brand Castle. You can see the Moorish elements: the towers, the minarets, and the scalloped arches throughout the design.

(MORE)

## MISSES BRAND (CONT'D)

See the curved arches between the columns there. We added some Islamic design elements as well. Notice the decorated surfaces and tiles, the bulbous domes and horseshoe, and the pointed, multi-foil arches.

## PILOT

It's grand.

## MISSES BRAND

Ah ah, it's **Brand**. Brand grand. Let's take a look at the Veranda.

## PILOT

(winded)

How about we take a break, for just a moment. A long moment. You know I pedaled here. With my legs.

## MISSES BRAND

We can take a break on the porch, excuse me, veranda, we can take a break on the veranda as I tell you about it. Come, follow me.

## PILOT

Lovely view from up here.

## MISSES BRAND

From the veranda? It's picturesque. Can't you just see this view on a postcard for Glendale, CA. Leslie and I love to sit here and gaze upon the hills. Leslie will sit here with binoculars and tell me about the air machines that are landing down at the Grand Central Air Terminal, just down the road there. And right below us is my garden. Over there on the other end is our carriage porch, which leads directly here from those steps. And I'm sure you noticed the mosaic tiles beneath your feet. It's a bit of a secret where they came from, we don't know tell a soul.

## PILOT

Hm, that's interesting.

## MISSES BRAND

Okay, well this once.

Incoherent whispers are heard.

PILOT

Is that right? That *is* interesting.

MISSES BRAND

Oh hush child, hush. My roses might hear.

PILOT

Misses Brand, this is an absolutely stunning home. Anyways, I think I hear people having fun at the pool. In fact, is Marco Polo here? I believe I hear people calling his name--

MISSES BRAND

Oh you silly fool, we're not going to the pool, we're gonna look inside my home now.

PILOT

Oh. Alright.

MISSES BRAND

Come come, to the reception hall.

PILOT

Is there a pool in there?

MISSES BRAND

No, but there's a fountain in the patio room.

PILOT

Big enough to swim with movie stars in?

A door opens and closes.

MISSES BRAND

This is the reception hall. Now you might be a tad bit confused so they let me ease your mind: the exterior is Moorish with elements of Indo-Saracenic, but the interior is all a traditional grand American Victorian. Notice, well I mean, I'm sure you can't miss--

PILOT

The giant fireplace?

MISSES BRAND

The very same. Isn't it grand?

PILOT

Biggest I've ever seen for sure.  
And I've been to Xanadu.

MISSES BRAND

Isn't it, though. And this is a  
hall tree, incredibly decorative  
and USEFUL, one could hang their  
hat and coat here. Anything. Hat,  
coat, shawl, furs, minks, pearls,  
overcats, underhats. You could hang  
any accessory here.

PILOT

Could I hang my coat and goggles on  
it?

MISSES BRAND

My friend, there simply isn't any  
time. And notice the wooden  
banquettes on both sides of the  
fireplace. We also have thick  
cushions should anyone like to take  
a seat. Go ahead, sit.

PILOT

Aw, this feels so good after  
bicycle-plane-ing all the--

MISSES BRAND

Now don't get comfy, we are already  
behind on our tour. Come now, let's  
take a quick peek into our drawing  
room where we entertain our guests.

PILOT

Shouldn't there be guests here now,  
this is, after all, a historic  
party?

MISSES BRAND

They're all at the pool.

PILOT

Oh.

MISSES BRAND

Yup, they're all out there. We have  
renown pilots out there, guests  
like oh i don't know, Earl  
Daughtery E.R.

(MORE)

## MISSES BRAND (CONT'D)

Remlin, Neta Snook, and some actresses you'd see in the motion pictures have dropped in. Mary Miles Minter is out there, Ruth Roland is here somewhere. And then just everyday prominent members of society: Wally Timm, Leon Eliel, Peyton Gibson, A.H. Hays, Major Rudolph, Major Tinker, R.I Short, the list goes on. Yup. They're all out there at the pool, or they're gazing upon our reflecting pool, or playing tennis on our court, or lounging around Leslie's clubhouse. OR they could be at the greenhouse if they truly are looking for a good time. Possibly Leslie is boring them in his garage talking about automobiles, or boring them talking about air machines in his hangar. Yup. But they're most likely at the pool, or they're out trying Leslie's whiskey mash he made himself.

## PILOT

Welp this tour has been great. Lovely home and all, but I'm gonn--

## MISSES BRAND

Close your eyes.

## PILOT

Misses Brand, I don't care for magic tricks.

## MISSES BRAND

Oh, don't be silly. Close your eyes.

## PILOT

Okay, they're closed.

## MISSES BRAND

Keep them closed. Move your head up towards the ceiling.

## PILOT

Okay, I'm facing the ceiling.

## MISSES BRAND

Alright, open them.

PILOT

Oh wow, look at that.

MISSES BRAND

I bet you think you've died and gone to heaven. No no, it's just painted that way. Cherubs, pink roses, griffins, grapevines and other neat little decorative patterns. And the wall color is a pale blue to give it that feel of floating in the sky. Don't you feel like that?

PILOT

Yes, ma'am. I thought I was back on my plane. My legs certainly hurt just as much. I'm gonna take a seat for a moment.

MISSES BRAND

Oh before you do that, notice anything?

PILOT

Is that another fireplace?

MISSES BRAND

Indeed!

PILOT

What do these stairs lead to?

MISSES BRAND

Staff area. Oh excuse me, I forgot what year it was for a second. What I meant was, that spiral staircase leads to our master bedroom and bath. We had some, er, trouble, building an additional room out so we chose to ascend. Leslie, always a problem solver. Now before we go to my favorite room, let's walk past the best living room you'll ever see and head towards (relieved sigh) the dining room.

PILOT

Does the living room have chairs we can tour?

MISSES BRAND

Yes, but they're reserved at the moment.



They WALK.

PILOT

Good heavens, what's that?

MISSES BRAND

Oh that? It's a reproduction of a famous painting. Why?

PILOT

Perhaps I'm not as schooled in art history as I thought. I'm used to portraits of great men and fruit bowls. This painting which hangs in your lovely living room is of a woman holding a severed head.

MISSES BRAND

Oh pardon me, this is Judith with the Head of Holofernes. That head is Holofernes. That's Judith, she's holding the head. Doesn't this piece make you feel so empowered?

PILOT

Well, to be honest...

MISSES BRAND

Oh, stop rubbing your neck like that. Come come.

(Beat)

This is our dining room. Spacious, is it not? Yes, before you say anything, that is our third fireplace, but this one is more decorative than anything. See the carved wood and mirrored mantel with griffins carved into the piece. Oh, how I love griffins. And the tiles, so divine. This window here with a seat--

PILOT

Seat?

MISSES BRAND

Yes, seat. For sitting. Take a look at the window frame here and columns surrounding the seat. A masterpiece if I may say so. And of course above the window there is the magnificent scalloped arch window made with leaded-glass.

(MORE)

MISSES BRAND (CONT'D)

The arches are a visual motif we like to use here.

PILOT

I've noticed. It's quite striking.

MISSES BRAND

Indeed. And behind you we have the chandelier which I'm sure you saw and no doubt loved. So intricately designed. So unique and beautiful. It fits perfectly in our home.

PILOT

Truly. Looks heavy, can I touch it?

MISSES BRAND

I would rather you didn't, unless you plan on dusting it.

PILOT

I'll just hold off then.

MISSES BRAND

That's using your head. Now, let's see our favorite room. Leslie and I just adore this room. (walk walk walk) This is the patio. Isn't so beautiful? One could sit in this room for hours. It is the literal and figurative center of our home. Over there the clerestory windows let in natural light and fresh air. Our walls, ceiling and woodwork are all dark, which you know is the style of our time. But can't you just FEEL the room: the ferns and flowering plants, the wall tapestries, our rocking chairs, the beautiful bird cages for the feathered pets. And speaking of pets, we have our dogs Zira, Nancy and Bill Doran running around here somewhere. And of course, the moosehead on the wall.

PILOT

Where? Oh mercy, that is..a head of a moose. Big fella, isn't he?

MISSES BRAND

Truer words never spoken. Let's not waste too much time on that dreadful thing, ask me about the fountain.

PILOT

The fountain?

MISSES BRAND

Oh isn't it gorgeous? Any guest in our home is surrounded by wonder. The woodwork is a decorative masterpiece, the ceilings are a dream, we have a seat by the window so you can gaze at the landscape.

PILOT

That sounds heavenly.

MISSES BRAND

It is. Leslie even brought craftsmen straight from Italy to do the skilled work here at our home, AND we have Tiffany-leaded beveled glass windows which we had shipped from New York, same as the greenhouse. Oh you must be so impressed.

PILOT

I am, I've never been in such a beautiful home on the West Coast.

MISSES BRAND

You mean the world, right?

PILOT

Er, yes. The world. Let's hear more about the seat by the window in the dining room, the, uh, landscape and what not. (walk walk, they sit) Aw yes. The view. It feels good to SIT DOWN and enjoy the view. Yes yes. What a beautiful seat this is.

Heavy steps approach.

BUTLER

I'm gonna need you both of you to get out of those chairs this instant.

PILOT  
You're kidding me.

MISSES BRAND  
Pardon me?

BUTLER  
Oh, forgive me Misses Brand, with your back to me I didn't realize it was you. With so many guests here on the property, I find myself wrangling felines.

MISSES BRAND  
You're forgiven. Is there something you need?

BUTLER  
Misses Brand, lunch is about to be served and Mister Brand requests your company.

PILOT  
You have a butler?

MISSES BRAND  
Just for today. Come come, let's lunch. I'll introduce you to Leslie.

PILOT  
And Neta Snook?

MISSES BRAND  
Don't push it.

They stand and exit.

THE END