

Typhoon Haiyan



It began with a whiff of a distant breeze.

Old Paco Salvador knew what that meant.

He'd been on the Phillipine shores all his life.

He'd lost three children and his last wife.

Paco felt the change in wind

The sudden power of a wind within.

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That inner strength to a subtle gust
Told Paco Salvador he was fucked.
The way it plays with old salts of the earth
Is that they know when things change for the worst.
A cut in the breeze on an ocean shore
Told old Paco the breeze soon would be more.
But old guys like Paco don't panic at all.
He'd been through all this many times before.
His wife was crushed in last week's earthquake.
And his three kids died a more ghastly fate.
Isabel drowned from a boat offshore.
Francesca got hit by a neighborhood truck.
And little Franco had a fever that didn't stop.
So Paco stood on his Phillipine shore
Feeling the change in wind and knowing there's more.
Standing there alone, looking at the vast ocean
The endless waves pounding in
What could Paco Salvador do?
So Paco turned around
He had things to do before Haiyan hit ground.
He wanted to run, but his legs couldn't walk.
So he paced slowly and planned as he took
A last look at his home, his people, his place

That he knew in a few hours the wind would erase.

Paco walked slowly, but with strength.

He told all who he saw that chaos was close.

He walked to the home of his sister and said:

"I'm taking you away from here or else you're dead."

But Paco's sister doubted her brother.

She said: "we are fine here. How are you?"

"I am. I am." Said Paco: "trying to save you."

But Paco's sister didn't feel the whispers of the wind.

So she said: "It's ok Pac. We'll be fine.

I love you my fisherman brother."

So Paco said: "if you don't mind

Me and your son should go to the hills.

It's been a long time since we were there."

But she said: "no, he has school to do."

So Paco stood shortly, then kissed her goodbye.

Long years at sea teach many things.

For Paco that was a simple quietness.

A peace of sorts.

So Paco just walked away knowing bad things were soon.

Then the winds got worse and worser.

Paco walked away, as others looked up.

To see a howl and rage only nature can do.

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Paco walked away. He knew the result.

Hours of wind and rain killed many of his people.

Dogs were splattered against walls.

Women were torn in two.

Children were dead, or barely alive.

Yet Paco survived, somehow, somewhere.

So he stepped out into calamity.

After the winds had killed their mess.

And Paco looked at the chaos

And started to bury his friends.

He stopped many times to look

At people still living and those already dead.

That's when Paco lifted his head

To the skies, his arms raised as he cried:

"You bastard up there. Why should I try

To believe in you, when this is life?

Why should I care that you are there, or not?

You made this happen, it seems to me."

Then Paco stopped for a moment to see

A young girl who limped up the road where Paco stood.

She raised her eyes to an angry man.

To a soul caught between God and Man.

That little girl went closer and said:

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"I'm alone. I'm afraid. My family is dead.

Can you help me?" She said.

Then everything changed that day for Paco Salvador.

He saw it all in a moment.

What it all meant, he wasn't sure.

But from all that death, all that life

Paco Salvador saw and said something great:

"I am a small man in a small place.

I've lost my wife, my children, my family, my life.

But wait.

There's a small child who needs my help.

That's what I'll do.

God is great."

So old Paco Salvador carried on

Caring for people

And believing in his God within.

But he never stopped sniffing the wind.

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