

Boxing Day 2004

Families celebrate Christmas, children playing on the sand,
A couple on their honeymoon, walk together hand in hand.
Many still in bed, recovering from the night before,
All blissfully unaware of the swiftly oncoming roar.
The sea suddenly recedes; people step closer to stare,
A sight not seen before, a phenomenon extremely rare.
Some start to run; some don't have a chance,
Never again to laugh, love, smile or dance.

An oncoming force, like the breaking of a dam,
Compassionate to no one, no matter how hard they swam.
Screams heard over the roar, the crashing of metal and bamboo,
Devastation all around, waves of water rushing through.
Then injured people half naked, wondering in a daze,
Confused, lost and disorientated in so many ways.
People on collapsing roofs or clutching to trees,
For a split second all is silent except for the breeze.

The despair of a mother whose baby was ripped from her arms,
Her husband berates her for not saving her from harm.
A man searches for his partner, calling out her name,
The name Gloria echoes round the island and will never sound the same.
A woman's hope is dashed at the news that her husband's body has been found,
She lets out a wail, as her knees drop to the ground.
A child stumbles alone on a debris littered street,
His parents are missing, he has one flip flop on his feet.

A child mourns the loss of her doll, she just won't accept another,
Next to her, her father mourns the loss of her mother.
3 Kittens huddle together, bedraggled and wet,
Their little minds wondering if this is as good as life gets.
Metal juts out, as far as the eye can see,
Like a war torn village full of debris.
They say a dog doesn't deserve his spot up high,
But he has battled to survive and is as deserving of his space in the dry.

A situation you never dreamed you'd face,
Surrounded by blood, death & human waste.
People injured beyond repair,
But to cry out in pain they wouldn't dare.
An invisible agreement to all stay strong,
May be just shock, but a bravery that's almost wrong.
An admiration shines through our eyes,
They are experiencing pain, I don't think I could disguise.

A body on the sand, washed up by the shore,
To the death toll just a number, with a spirit no more
Body bags pile up to be taken away,
Never to see the sun come up, on a brand new day.
24 hours surrounded by courage, human nature at it's best.
People pulling together when put to the test.
The locals help the tourists and treat them as their own,
With acts of generosity, immune to the fact they have lost their homes.

In the Aftermath people gave, generosity shined through,
But it's affected lives forever and there's still so much to do.
The locals didn't have insurance, they couldn't move away,
They have had to piece together their lives, day by day.
There are still parents to be counselled for survivor's guilt,
An infrastructure to repair and more schools to be built
So for the hundreds of thousands of victims of Boxing Day 2004
Please put your hands in your pockets, just once more.