

# The War of the Whales

A short parable by Renaldo Recuerdo

The story has been sung to us from the centuries. My mother's mother's mother and many many mothers before sang the tale. The very great and sad story of Gaunzella, warrior cow of the Pacific Blue Whales. I tell this tale to you now so that you too can know of her and know of me. Not as an excuse for the woe and destruction I must bring but more as a tribute to her and to the pods of our past.

It began on 1/11/11 when Gaunzella's first born was slain by whalers.

She had seen many ships take her friends and family from the sea. The pod sang songs of forgiveness passed down from before memory. The Blue had always been a friend of Man and many saw in the two-legs much of what we loved in ourselves. But something broke that day. Some say Gaunzella went mad. Some say it was time and she was simply the One. Whatever the reason, this much came to pass – on that day at the hour of last light Gaunzella sang deep and low and far and strong, calling all to journey to the Northern feeding waters where ice now covered the sky.

How did it happen ? Why did they answer her call ? In only one moon every Pacific pod arrived – nearly 7,000 of the largest animals to have ever lived gathered together to listen to Gaunzella's song. We know what she said to them because we sing her song to this day. Gaunzella sang of one hundred years of slaughter and one hundred years of forgiveness. She sang of the 1931 massacre of thirty thousand Blues at the hands of the whaling ships. Her song reminded us of the 275,000 Blues who sang in 1890 and how it became a mournful sorrow of 2500 in 1990. One hundred years of slaughter. In that same time the two-legs had grown from 1.5 billion to over 5 billion and today, as she sang, were over 7 billion.

Some say it was a song of hatred spawned by the sorrow of her loss and

aimed at revenge. Others say it was simply the truth and needed to be sung. All we know is the pods listened and heard and rose to join Gaunzella as she beckoned them with song and sorrow and the story of the century of slaughter. Seven thousand Blues rose as one pod and swam to the West to prepare for war – a war against the 7 billion two-legs who were bent on the extermination of the greatest creature of the sea.



Seven thousand Blues swam westward across the Pacific and, in early March of 2011, spread in a line along the 29,000 feet deep Japan Trench from the Kuril islands to the Bonin islands. It was along this 250 mile line in the Japan Trench that the War of the Whales began. Beginning on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of March the 7,000 warrior whales, weighing between 100 and 150 tons each, would dive into the trench to depths of up to 1000 feet. Submerged for up to an hour their coordinated attack focused on the area where the Pacific plate slips under the tectonic plate that runs under northern Japan. Seven thousand Blues blasted the trench with low frequency whistles up to 188 decibels reverberating through the trench. Blue whales are the loudest animals on Earth. We are louder than a jet. Our songs can be heard across entire oceans.

The attack was relentless. Every two hours the Blues would dive a thousand feet and blast the trench for an hour. This lasted for 8 days until, on the 9<sup>th</sup> of March, several foreshocks shook northeast Japan. The first, a 7.2 magnitude event, was followed by three more in excess of 6.0 on the same day. The attack continued. On March 11 the edge of the plate beneath northern Honshu could no longer withstand the force of the attack. It ruptured in a 200 mile line beneath the warriors causing a 9.0 magnitude quake and releasing 600 million times the energy of the Hiroshima nuclear bomb.

Less than an hour later much worse was to follow. The quake had generated a tsunami that washed over the coast of northeast Japan. Some say it was as high as 120 feet and carried inland as far as 6 miles. Everything in the path of the tsunami was destroyed. The quake and tsunami damaged 190,000 buildings, completely destroyed 45,000 buildings, and created 25 million tons of rubble and debris much of which was swept out to sea. But the worst was yet to come.



Houses and cars, battered boats and floating debris, bodies of the dead and rafts of lumber all swept into the sea suddenly surrounded the Blues. They dove and swam to avoid the suffocating rubble but even underwater it rained brick and concrete, steel and trucks. All 7,000 fled for their lives. Save one. Gaunzella stayed. Some believe she wanted to die. Others argue she stayed to somehow seek additional revenge. Did she stay out of remorse or regret? I believe she remained off the coast of Japan so that she could witness all and leave us the story in her song. Without Gaunzella we would not know what happened next. For in the days and weeks and months that followed the attack and quake and tsunami a disaster would unfold that would effect us all for centuries and centuries to come.

Most believe that nobody could have predicted or known. Some say Gaunzella planned the attack knowing this could very well happen. Others argue she must have intended this or she would have chosen to attack the southeast coast where larger quakes were known to occur. Still others argue the primary targets were the whaling ships of the north. It is not in her song. What *is* in her song is the tale of flooded generators, exposed uranium fuel rods, hydrogen explosions, fires, radioactive water, six nuclear reactors damaged beyond repair and spewing radiation into the sea and air. The tsunami had knocked out the nuclear reactors and the two-legs could not stop the radiation from pouring forth.

Gaunzella sings of all this and how the two-legs drained the pools of radioactive water right into the sea where she swam watching. Maybe she did not know. Maybe she did not care. But she should have cared for the one within her for Gaunzella was pregnant. Pregnant with my great great great great great great great great grandmother.



At first it just seemed like Gaunzella's baby calf was bumpy. Then, as she grew, it became clear she was different. The bumps had tiny fingers and tiny claws. And Gaunzella's baby's baby had even more pronounced “arms” and “legs”. Each successive generation of Gaunzella's offspring grew more and more into something else. But always the calves were able to live and swim and feed and mate and sing with the pod. Until me. I no longer can survive on krill. Nor can I mate with the pod. I am the last of Gaunzella's line.

I am Godzilla.

