

Dum spiro spero (While I breathe, I hope)

The rains came heavy, first slow, then fast
as Saturday slipped into darkness at last.
Then upon us from the Heavens did fall
such rain as none had ever seen,
Nor that we wished to see at all.

Darkness, rain, wind, and fright--
these were the Powers that ruled the night.
First off, then on, then off again went
the lights, the water, the hope we had,
Which caused us to pray and then to lament.

The sirens along with emergency lights
engendered hope, despite the sights.
But every place the eye could see
lay helpless as Nature did her work,
She from whose wrath all tried to flee.

The hours passed at languid pace--
angst, fatigue, and worry on our face.
Yet without a care or thought,
with duty-bound and genuine care,
Our First Responders the good fight fought.

We lost some souls; mothers wept,
but countless more in safety were kept.
Together we grasped the other's hand--
No "you," no "I," just one strong "us"--
And hoisted our neighbor back to firm land.

Sunday morning came; rivers rose
to such mighty levels as none could suppose.
Roads became rivers, Man's inventions meant naught,
with trucks tossed like bath toys,
Humility we were taught.

The waters, relentless, continued to rise--
 destruction seen by our very own eyes.
A dam breaks here, another breaks there;
 we watch and wait patiently,
Subsisting only on prayer.

Some dams failed; others held strong,
 but either way, sorrow was our song.
Until a friendly helping hand,
 with willing arms and kindest soul,
Softly spoke: "Don't worry, I'm here with you to stand."

The offer of hope and our neighbor's good deed
 is far more powerful than sorrow or greed.
For in giving we get, and in helping we grow,
 because when we unite,
That's when our true colors show.

We are the Palmetto State--South Carolina to you--
 and we bleed not just red, but white and blue.
Checkered though it may be, our past is rife with good deeds,
 between neighbors; between strangers,
For anyone in need.

The Great Flood has passed; let us bid it adieu,
 And let us gather together to start all anew.
While we wait to see the rivers' wrath,
 Let us not forget, together,
Our common path.

For "dum spiro spero" aren't just words on a seal,
 they're meaning is true; their lesson is real.
While we gather together to try and to cope,
 let's shout out as One:

While I breathe, I hope!

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