THE PERFECT STORM DEVELOPS



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Three different weather systems collided between the 28th of October and the 2nd of November - in 1991 - to produce what meteorologists called a "perfect storm." Graphic online, courtesy AccuWeather.

On October 23, 1991, Billy Tyne and his crew (Michael "Bugsy" Moran, Dale "Murph" Murphy, Alfred Pierre, David Sullivan and Bobby Shatford) set their longline for what they hoped would be the best catch of the trip. (The links take you on board the *Andrea Gail* the year before she was lost. The fish hold is empty in the picture.)

It was the last full moon of the fishing season, and the men would soon be steaming home to Gloucester.

As the *Andrea Gail* headed home, most of the other boats in the fleet were hundreds of miles east - still fishing. When Billy radioed the Canadian Coast Guard the afternoon of October 27th, to let them know his boat was inside Canada's territorial waters, he didn't know a huge storm was brewing south of him. (The link takes you inside the pilot house of the *Andrea Gail*.) He didn't know until he received the first fax, later that night.

What Billy didn't know was that Hurricane Grace, forming off Bermuda on the 27th of October, had turned northeast. Follow this link to NOAA's first satellite picture of the "Perfect Storm Event." The GOES-7 satellite, on October 26th at 1601 UTC (1101 EST), showed it. The satellite shows the *Andrea Gail* had clear weather at the time of the picture.

In one of the rarest meteorological events of the century, three separate weather systems were on a "perfectly" aligned collision course. A Great Lakes storm system (moving east), a Canadian cold front (moving south) and Hurricane Grace (moving northeast) were all headed for the North Atlantic. Along the way, the storm would create monster seas, batter ships, and cause coastal flooding on the eastern U.S. seaboard.

Soon after Billy Tyne and Linda Greenlaw received their weather fax, the night of October 27th, they talked about what it meant. It didn't look good. On the other hand, the GOES-7 satellite picture from the morning of the 27th confirms the *Andrea Gail* still had clear weather at that time. Billy must have thought they could ride out a tough storm. He'd done it before.

But this massive developing tropical cyclone was not a tough storm. It was a monster. By the morning of October 28th (follow the link to the in-sequence satellite image), it was heading straight toward Billy Tyne and his crew. By 11:00 EST, the *Andrea Gail* no longer had clear skies.

She would never see clear skies again.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:
http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/THE-PERFECT-STORM-DEVELOPS-Perfect-Storm-The

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:
http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/THE-PERFECT-STORM-DEVELOPS-Perfect-Storm-The

Media Stream



Billy Tyne - Captain of the Andrea Gail

Photo online, courtesy United States Coast Guard.
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Bobby Shatford - Crew of the Andrea Gail

Quoted passage from *The Perfect Storm* by Sebastian Junger, online courtesy Google Books.
Photo, online courtesy U.S. Coast Guard.
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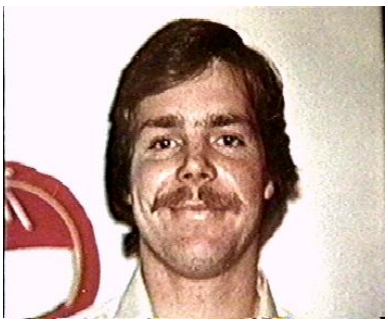
The Perfect Storm - Dale "Murph" Murphy

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Alfred Pierre

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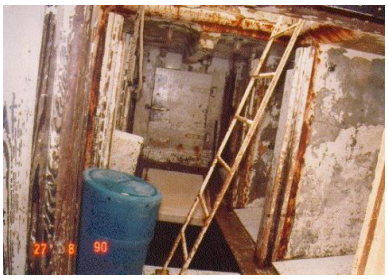
David Sullivan

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Michael ("Bugsy") Moran

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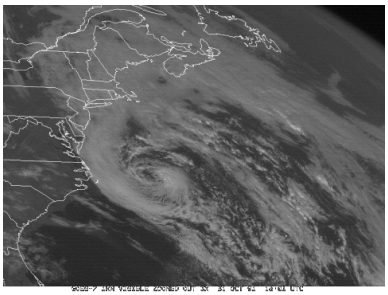
Andrea Gail - Refrigerated Storage Area

Image online, courtesy United States Coast Guard.
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Andrea Gail - Pilot House

Photo online, courtesy United States Coast Guard.
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Converging Storms - Satellite Photo

Image online, courtesy the noaa.gov website.
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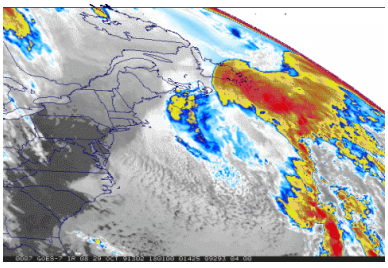
Perfect Storm Event - First Satellite Picture

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Perfect Storm Event - Morning of October 27

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Perfect Storm Event - Morning of October 28

Image online, courtesy noaa.gov website.
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