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The Crash Heard Around the Country

Fighting to keep my eyes open in Tuesday morning's Religion class, I am startled by the voice of my principle on the loud speaker.

"Pardon the interruption to all classes. Can I please have everyone's attention for a moment?" The class grew quiet and all that could be heard was echoing "Shhhhs!" from down the hall.

"It is with my deepest sorrows to inform you that at 8:46 a.m. a plane crashed into the World Trade Centers. Shortly after, another plane crashed into the second tower. There is no evidence of the cause of these crashes yet. Teachers, if you would like to turn the televisions on in your rooms to stay updated you may do so at this time."

The classroom remained silent. Father McLaverty walked over to the television and turned on channel 3. I sat there stunned while trying to absorb what just happened. One girl burst into tears and ran out of the room. The rest of the classroom was frantically texting friends and family to make sure everyone was safe. It did not take me too long to realize that the majority of my family works in NYC. Panic hit me and I immediately called my mom. She answered right away, however she was unable to get in contact with anyone from my family since all the lines were jammed up. She told me not to worry yet and to go back to class. As I walked down the hallway back to my classroom I could see the horror on everyone's faces and could not help but wonder if my family was okay. I took my seat and listened to the different conversations that were going on around the room. It seemed as though everyone knew someone who worked in The Towers or NYC.

No one was able to get in contact with their loved ones so, at that time, all we could do was sit and wait.

Thirty minutes until the meeting with my boss and I am no where near ready, great. Okay, as long as I know the material my boss shouldn't be *too* mad if my presentation isn't totally finished.

“Hey Sandy, did that guy from...”

*CRASHHHHH!* All of a sudden I am interrupted by the loudest sound I have ever heard in my life, followed by screaming and smoke coming from all directions. My office quickly glances around at each other and takes off. We run out of our department and down the hall. None of the elevators are working so massive amounts of people are being herded like cattle down the stairwell. All I can hear is screaming and crying resonating throughout the building. What the hell is going on? What was that crash? Why is there smoke all over the place? Is the building on fire? I don't know the answers to any of these questions but, I know I have to get out of this building immediately.

*CRASHHHHH!...*

I woke myself up having a coughing fit. Where am I? My body is numb. I can't see anything. I try to look around for other people but, the smoke is too thick I can barely see my own hand in front of my face. I try to think back to the last thing I remember doing. Oh yeah! I was trying to get down the stairs, then I heard a loud crash, and now I am here. I start to feel around me but, from what I could tell I was just surrounded in rubble. I think I'm still in one piece but my legs are stuck under something. I can't get up; whatever is on top of me is too heavy. I can't even move it off of my legs is too damn heavy! I heard someone cry out in pain.

“Hello...? Can anyone hear me?” No one responded. All I can do is sit and wait.

“Alright men, what’s everyone got?” Everyone throws down their cards and starts looking around to see what everyone else threw down.

“Ha! Pocket aces. Looks like I win, again!” All the guys groan as I pull the pile of chips over to my corner of the table. Finally, I’m having a good day! I can bring money home to my wife instead of telling her I lost another 30 bucks at work.

*Beep! Beep! Beep! Beep!* Everyone’s pagers start going off and shortly after the house siren starts sounding. We all jump out of our seats and quickly get into uniform. Once we’re dressed we run out to the trucks and are on our way. Our captain told us to head to the Twin Towers and that we would find out more information once we got there. It is close to impossible to get down the streets since there is so much traffic. It’s taking us nearly 20 minutes to get there; on a normal day it would have taken five. The whole city is filled with smoke and it is hard to even see the cars in front of us. Everyone is taking guesses about what could have possibly happened but, we won’t know for sure until we arrive. As we get closer to the buildings we can start to make out their shapes but wait. The towers were no longer the tallest buildings in NYC! What the hell happened here? Finally we get as close to the buildings as possible and run out of the truck. There are people running around and screaming all over the place. I look up at the buildings and honestly cannot believe my eyes. A plane crashed right into the World Trade Center. The building is in flames and, by the looks of it, many of the floors had collapsed on top of each other.

We regroup and decide to find someone in charge. There is so much going on no one knows where to start. We are told to hang tight for a couple minutes until they decide where to put us. At this moment, all we can do is sit and wait.

“I spy something with my little eye something that is blue!”

“Ummm... the sky?”

“Good job sweetie!”

“Mommyyy! That was an easy one, give me a harder one.”

This is going to be the longest plane ride ever. It's Chole's first time on a plane and she does not sit well for long periods of time. Unfortunately for me this is a 7 hour flight. My husband is on an extended business trip in America. I keep trying to play games with her but she gets bored easily. Oh thank God here comes the food cart.

“Hi ladies, can I get you a beverage or a snack?”

“Sure. Pretzels and a bottle of water for my daughter and, a cranberry and vodka for myself, please.”

All of a sudden a man stands up and starts screaming in a foreign language. No one can make out what he is saying but everyone starts screaming. I turn around and I see a man holding bombs yelling words I can not understand. Oh my God, Chloe. I look at her and she has tears streaming down her face. I unbuckle her seat belt and hold her in my arms as tight as possible. There is nothing I can do right now. I'm 25,000 feet in the air and have no where to go. Oh shit. There are two more men. What is going on right now! The stewardesses try to run to the front cabin but the men won't allow them to pass.

“Who are those people, mommy?” my Chole cries to me.

“I don't know baby, I don't know. Everything is going to be fine.”

I just sit here and pray. There is nothing else in the world for me to do right now. I hold my daughter in my arms. There is nothing else for us to do but, sit and wait.