

September eleventh two thousand and one,  
It arrived at midnight and had just begun.  
For so many souls who had been asleep,  
Destiny had an appointment to keep.

As the dark night cleared for a darker day,  
Terrorists invaded the U.S.A.  
They split into groups to certain airports,  
To skyjack aircraft with their cohorts.

Their looks weren't profiled or suspected,  
Nor their box cutter knives detected.  
Minor weapons to achieve four hijacks,  
And one step closer to their major attacks.

Their onslaught of terror would soon unfold,  
Using planes as missiles that they controlled.  
Each passenger and crew on each hijacked plane,  
Took to the skies with their lives on the wane.

The skyjackers knew their course of directions,  
And time drew near to attack those sections.  
New York, Virginia, and possibly D.C.,  
Barbaric acts of sheer lunacy.

Air traffic control picked up a transmission,  
Voices from aircraft that aroused suspicion.  
Responding quickly and fervently working,  
Tracking the skies where danger was lurking.

A low-flying plane was on course to enter,  
New York City toward the World Trade Center.  
Hovering over the sky-lined city,  
Ready to strike and destroy without pity.

It's jet engines roared with an earth shaking sound  
As startled eyes stared, looking up from the ground.  
Closer and closer the airliner sped,  
Its target the north tower straight dead ahead.

What thoughts flashed before those near their demise?  
Their last look at life through terrified eyes.  
Death was airborne approaching the tower,  
A clear Tuesday morning... zero hour.

It was 8:46 AM... contact...  
Flight 11 burst into flames on impact.  
Glass and debris blew out onto streets,  
Spewed in the air trickled charred paper sheets.

South tower onlookers reached home by phone,  
To assure those concerned their safety be known.  
Closing in fast just above Hudson River,  
Flight one seven five came next to deliver.

Imagine the shock to those who saw,  
A second plane coming and gasped in awe.  
Horrified faces and then... without warning,  
The plane struck at three passed nine in the morning.

It ripped through the skin of the south tower wall,  
Exploding an orange-red fireball,  
Claiming the lives of all passengers and crew,  
And those in its path inside tower two.

The twin towers blazed as smoke billowed out,  
Forming clouds in the sky for miles about.  
Satellites in space caught images below,  
As if earth were bleeding from each mighty blow.

Those with access to a television screen  
Witnessed events as *never* before seen.  
At 9:37 the next assault came,  
Blasting through the Pentagon's west side frame.

Flight 77 was gone in a flash,  
As the death toll rose from the fire and ash.  
It hit like a missile, then vaporized,  
Though most lost were found who fell victimized.

Since the walls of the Pentagon had been hit,  
Nowhere seemed safe... if mad men got to it.  
Wall Street workers up and left jobs behind,  
Fearing attacks of the very same kind.

9-1-1 calls lit up across the boards,  
Water vessels near aided oncoming hoards.  
Firefighters, police and E.M.S. crews,  
Raced through the streets with no time to lose.

Dispatch radios, sirens and air horns blared,  
Residents nearby stood crying and scared.  
Those in the towers faced their worst nightmares,  
Searching for exits, elevators and stairs.

Survivors above flames reached windows and waved,  
Hoping for rescue... but couldn't be saved.  
Some chose to leap to a fate down below,  
A couple held hands... and then... let go.

Those below flames reached stairwells and fled,  
Helping each other as more joined ahead.  
Fumes of jet fuel spread rapidly around,  
Water pipes burst flooding floors near the ground.

Firemen rushed in, up the stairs in full gear,  
Struggling through hazards to persevere.  
Many from the towers had made it outside,  
But then were instructed to go back inside.

Announcements returning to work were made,  
Though majority left... many had stayed.  
What happened next was beyond comprehension,  
Hard to believe... even harder to mention.

At 9:59 the south tower rumbled,  
Screeching in a veil of smoke... then crumbled.  
Down with all lives trapped inside who perished,  
Family members and dear ones cherished.

Yet above and away in a distant sky,  
The last hijacked plane was still flying high.  
Flight 93 continued as planned,  
'Til passengers decided to take a stand.

With a do or die choice to take back control,  
Their courage answered to the call, "Lets Roll."  
Some phoned their loved ones to say good-bye,  
Then the lines went silent... the plane left the sky.

At 10:03 in Shanksville, Pa.,  
Their journey ended... where their memory lay.  
The White House could have been next to be hit,  
But those brave passengers prevented it.

More horror followed at 10:29,  
The north tower fell from Manhattan's skyline.  
One hundred ten stories dropped floor by floor,  
'Til the World Trade Center... was no more.

Years of building from the ground toward the sky,  
Down in ten seconds piled ten stories high.  
From their crushing descent rose thick clouds of smoke,  
Enveloping all in its path like a cloak.

Widespread fallout from each towers crash,  
Left streets and sidewalks in layers of ash.  
The downtown area went dark throughout,  
As dust covered faces walked blindly about.

The space where the towers once stood became void,  
Eerie and desolate where they lay destroyed.  
From the smoldering ruins after their fall,  
Stood one towers stark, steel skeletal wall.

Jagged remnants so hauntingly profound,  
Much reminiscent of a battleground.  
Broken and bent from all that once stood,  
Now sacred ground of those gone for good.

Mayor Giuliani was beside his grief,  
Beholding the aftermath in disbelief.  
The city shut down all transportation,  
Phone transmissions lost communication.

Entertainment venues came to a halt,  
A high alert followed the mass assault.  
The FAA pulled all planes from the sky,  
Grounding aircraft 'til *all* ceased to fly.

NORADS jets scrambled to terminate,  
But the damage was done... they arrived too late.  
The Brooklyn Bridge swarmed with throngs who fled,  
As U.S. jetfighters swooped overhead.

Searching the skies as those searched Ground Zero,  
Americans all... each one a true hero.  
Hospitals waited at their beck-and-call,  
Waiting for survivors... if any at all.

K-9's were part of the rescue teams,  
Digging through soot and molten steel beams.  
Vets were on hand to treat the injured and burned,  
Some dogs never slept... some never returned.

A multitude of beeps rang from the rubble,  
Signals from firemen trapped and in trouble.  
Fire Chaplin Michael Judge met his death,  
Giving last rites 'til he gave his last breath.

Perhaps he was chosen to lead the way,  
For all those who perished this fateful day.  
Lost to cold blooded acts of insanity,  
Man's inhumanity on humanity.

Evil displayed its cruel ugly face,  
In an uglier form of the human race.  
Leaving those affected in a vale of tears,  
Mournful images to endure for years.

I, like so many, cried through this day,  
And went to my priest at church to pray.  
Early evening fell... as did tower seven,  
The last catastrophe of 9/11.

America's darkest day became night,  
As the world wept with vigils of candlelight.  
President Bush spoke at 8:30 P.M.,  
Addressing the nation and consoling them.

Many were waiting by their phone and the door,  
For those who would never come home anymore.  
Not since Pearl Harbor has the U.S. grieved so,  
This time America's own soil took the blow.

Had we foreseen the writing on the wall,  
Those pictured missing wouldn't be there at all.  
There's no greater loss then a son or daughter,  
Nor words to sooth all who lost in this slaughter.

This grave tragic day, "we will never forget,"  
One that all terrorists should live to regret.  
Let us wave our flags of the nation we hail,  
We are America... and we shall prevail.

With a grieving heart, our eagle stopped flying,  
...and joined the Statue of Liberty crying,  
September Eleventh Two Thousand and One,  
Is also the day... I lost my own son.

-Steven Cafiero Sr.