

## The World Trade Center as it Was, and a Warning for all Americans... It Could Have Been Us!

Words could never describe my feelings of sadness, anger and helplessness as I watched the devastating events of September 11, 2001 unfold on my TV, as they occurred in New York, at the Pentagon, and in Shanksville, PA... terrible news of unimagined proportion, perpetrated by unparalleled evil... a disaster that my mind still can't completely wrap around.

Yet my feelings, watching from the comfort of my home, could never compare to the horror and suffering of those who were there...

- thousands whose lives were snuffed out like a candle, including the brave police and emergency personnel that gave their lives trying rescue others...
- thousands more who will never see their loved ones again... never see their parents and grandparents, sons and daughters, brothers and sisters...
- and thousands who survived the ordeals, whose lives will be forever changed by the experience. My heart and prayers go out to all.

While trying to help my children understand the enormity of the tragedy, my son asked to see the pictures I had taken when we visited the World Trade Center during our family vacation two years ago, taken from the upper and lower observation decks of TOWER 2, which was the first tower to collapse. The pictures from my digital camera leapt onto our computer screen. We looked at them for a while in silence ... somehow the tragedy seemed even more real now, and strangely personal, as we tried to grasp that we had been standing where only air and angels are now...

One of the pictures was of TOWER 1, and I was explaining to my son how the top floor, directly across from us, wasn't really the top, pointing out nearly three more stories of space holding the heavy ventilation equipment... that would eventually add many more tons of debris when so many souls were buried in a tomb of concrete and steel.

Then I noticed the date the pictures were taken... September 11, 1999! Exactly two years to the day before these magnificent towers would be destroyed, along with so many lives! The eeriness hung there around us, like the clouds of smoke and dust that still hung over Manhattan.

I thought "It could have been us! If we had gone to New York this year, instead, it could have been us!"

But that type of thinking is wrong... dead wrong! It can still be us NEXT TIME! The next time terrorists strike at our country, it could be us, or our loved ones, or those that try to come to our rescue! It can and will happen again, until we, as a nation, stand together to combat terrorism.

We can't stay at home and cower in fear, always worrying that we may be a target at any moment. We'll continue to go to work wherever our jobs are, and to travel in airplanes. We can't allow terrorists to achieve their objectives - to disrupt our way of life by putting terror into our hearts and paralyzing our souls... if that happens, they win, and the word "freedom" will lose its meaning...

Another picture I had taken was a spectacular view of the rest of Manhattan Island, with the Empire State Building standing majestically over its smaller brethren. The view made us remember how high up 110 stories really is... far too high to fall from when a stricken skyscraper crumbles from beneath you... far too high to be when faceless, barbaric cowards attack defenseless, civilized human beings!

In the mean time, I wanted to share these photos with you, views from a place that exists in our memories as it was... and five stories of rubble as it is now.

Americans, my countrymen... we have been warned! They'll be back.

- Dennis Fain, September 11, 2001

[Link to my website [Tribute to the World Trade Center <http://fain.net/Attack\\_On\\_America>](http://fain.net/Attack_On_America) ]

