



Remember Those We Lost By Krisztina Nagy

The bell rang sounding the end of 3rd period. I grabbed my gym cloths and started to walk to my next class. Everything seemed normal. It was just like any day in Edison High. The hallway was crowded, as usual. I navigated my way around groups of students and finally made it to room 125, Biology class. I took my notebook out ready to finish the notes from the day before. Something was different. The chatter subsided to a faint murmur as my Biology teacher entered the room.



Eyes watched and ears perked up, ready to listen, Silence. No one was prepared to hear what my teacher said next. Apparently, a plane had flown into the north tower of the World Trade Center. Shock came next. All I could think about was how our world as it existed at the present would never be the same. I wanted to think this was some kind of freak accident, but something gnawed at the back of my mind telling me this wasn't so. The room burst into chatter once again, this time muted by the Principal's voice on the loudspeaker. A second plane had flown into the south tower and another crashed into the Pentagon. Now I knew this was no accident.

The day crawled by. My mind drifted away; far away to a place filled with intangible thoughts. How would America respond to this attack? Who was responsible? Would the world ever be the same? No matter how I tried, I could not focus. Home seemed so enticing at the moment. My mind begged for more details. Something would not let me forget the day's events.

Only after I did this project did I find out what that something was. I could not accept the realization that so much property was destroyed and so many innocent lives were killed in a matter of minutes. Sharing this project with my school community helped me to see that others responded to the attack in much the same way I did. I was not alone. No one wanted to forget such a tragic event in American history, and World History. One response to my stamp reads, "The fact that a student took the time to create this piece touches me even more than the piece itself. The fact that almost eight months after the tragedy people are still doing things to honor the victims means so much to me." Sharing the stamp with my entire school ensured that not

everyone who responded would know me. Generally if you know the person, and like the person, you are more likely to respond favorably. If the person didn't know me, this wouldn't be a problem. They would more readily add constructive criticism in the response, which is essential. Some thought the focus of entire piece was lost due to the statue of liberty. Others thought the faces of the victims depicted in the towers were too depressing. Yes, seeing the faces is likely to evoke a sad response, but it is part of who we are now. The sadness is a part of us, and it is a strong motivator to take on projects like this one. The statue of liberty was added to symbolize that the events hit the heart of America and to show that even after the attack America is still strong and free.

It's not everyday that something so tragic can change the way people think and feel. Many have been motivated to be kinder to each other and tolerate one another. Creating the stamp made me think about how I am living my life. It's easy to take life for granted. You never think about the next day. The next day will be the same as today. That was not the case with the people who died in the World Trade Center collapse. They probably never thought about two planes flying through the towers. Many of the victims were young. They had so much left to do in their lives. I realize that life should not be taken for granted because you never know what will happen the next day. Each day must be lived to its fullest potential.

Another thing I learned is that relationships with other people should never be taken for granted. Many people lost friends and family on September 11th. They might feel guilty because they never got to tell their friend or family member how much he/she meant to them. Maybe an opportunity for friendship was lost. When an opportunity for anything comes up it should be grabbed. Never wait, because the next day might be too late.

Looking back, I also realize that creating projects like this one will help us to understand and promote tolerance of other cultures. As citizens, we should try to avoid judging others before we get to know them and realize that we have the same fears and questions about what happened. Although, we sometimes look different, we feel many of the same things. We also have the responsibility to teach others about what happened. This will ensure that September 11th will never be forgotten.