

## FOR THE CHILDREN OF THE WORLD TRADE CENTER VICTIMS

**BJ Ward**

Nothing could have prepared you –

Note: Every poem I have ever written  
is not as important as this one.

Note: This poem says nothing important.

Clarification of last note:

This poem cannot save 4,000 lives.

Note: This poem is attempting to pull your father  
out of the rubble, still living and glowing  
and enjoying football on Sunday.

Note: This poem is trying to reach your mother  
in her business skirt, and get her home  
to Ridgewood where she can change  
to her robe and sip Chamomile tea  
as she looks through the bay window at the old,  
untouched New York city skyline.

Note: This poem is aiming its guns at the sky  
to shoot down the terrorists and might  
hit God if He let this happen.

Note: This poem is trying to turn  
that blooming of orange and black  
of the impact into nothing  
more than a sudden tiger-lily  
whose petals your mother and father  
could use as parachutes, float down  
to the streets below, a million  
dandelion seeds drifting off  
to the untrafficked sky above them.

Note: This poem is still doing nothing.

Note: Somewhere in this poem there may be people alive  
and I'm trying like mad to reach them.

Note: I need to get back to writing the poem to reach them  
instead of dwelling on these matters, but how

can any of us get back to writing poems?

Note: The sound of this poem: the sound  
of a scream in 200 different languages  
that outshouts the sounds of sirens and  
airliners and glass shattering and  
concrete crumbling as steel is bending and  
the orchestral tympani of our American hearts  
when the second plane hit.

Note: The sound of a scream in 200 languages  
is the same sound.  
It is the sound of a scream.

Note: In New Jersey over the next four days,  
over thirty people asked me  
if I knew anyone in the catastrophe.

*Yes, I said.*

*I knew every single one of them.*