

# The Day the Buildings Fell Down

by Eddie Caplan



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The day the buildings fell down, everything was different.

It started at school. I was supposed to be the kickball pitcher, but before I had a chance to start pitching, a man interrupted Miss Finneran. She looked unhappy and then nobody played kickball.

And, long before it was time to go home, parents came and got their kids. My Daddy and Mommy came too. They were glad to see me, but they looked kind of sad. I was glad to see them too... I was almost the last to leave. Not the last, but almost the last.

Then, we had to walk home. It was a long way to walk, and I wanted to ride on the subway. But the subway wasn't working, so everybody was walking. And everybody was very quiet and the whole city was very, very, very, quiet.

Even when we got home, everything was different. It looked the same, but it felt different. And, I forgot to leave the kickball at school! I was still holding it! Mommy said that it was OK. She said that I could take it back to school when I go.

But I didn't go to school the next day.

Or the day after that.

Or even the day after that.

Instead, we all stayed home. I played kickball with Daddy, Mommy, and Waxer, our dog. I got to be the kickball pitcher, but it wasn't the same. Then I felt sad, too, like everybody else.

Daddy asked, "Did you hear something about airplanes crashing?"

I thought about that a long time. Daddy and Mommy waited.

"I heard something about buildings falling down," I said.

"Yes," Mommy said, "Airplanes crashed into them."

"Oh," I said, "Oh."

Waxer barked at me. I tossed him the kickball and he rolled around with it. After a while I asked, "Will planes crash into our building?"

Daddy said, "No. You are safe here with us. And at school with your teachers."

"And Waxer is safe with me!" I said. Mommy and Daddy smiled and laughed and hugged me, and Waxer jumped on top of us. I felt not-so-different anymore.

On Monday I went to school again. Daddy and Mommy drove me instead of the school bus. Daddy asked, "Are you worried about school?"

"Yes," I said, "Will Miss Finneran remember it's my turn to be the kickball pitcher?"

They thought about that a long time. I waited.

"We'll remind her," they said, "We'll remind her."

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