

AMERICAN LIFE IN POETRY

A FREE COLUMN FOR NEWSPAPERS BY TED KOOSER, POET LAUREATE OF THE UNITED STATES, 2004-2006
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BY TED KOOSER, U.S. POET LAUREATE, 2004-2006

I've read dozens of poems written about the events of September 11, 2001, but this one by Tony Gloeggler of New York City is the only one I've seen that addresses the good fortune of a survivor.

Five Years Later

My brother was on his way
to a dental appointment
when the second plane hit
four stories below the office
where he worked. He's never
said anything about the guy
who took football bets, how
he liked to watch his secretary
walk, the friends he ate lunch with,
all the funerals. Maybe, shamed
by his luck, he keeps quiet,
afraid someone might guess
how good he feels, breathing.

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