

The morning of 9/11/01, they closed the campus at San Diego State University for the first time since the Vietnam War. I sat on a bench near a strategic exit and watched and listened to thousands of students as they tried to create some meaning out of what had just happened. The personal narratives were almost as confusing and as eclectic as the geopolitical circumstances behind the attacks. This was my response. I wrote it in 20 minutes and never edited it, changed it, or published it.

9:11

By Scott Tinley

Blood doesn't drip, it just reigns, signs and symbols mixed with falling glass, falling markets and falling planes.

Guided missiles dressed in Brooks Brothers so fine, future commodities brokers, the greatest exporter of arms on the planet taken down by blades used to open our mail order packages ordered online; maybe a new leather man's tool, a cd-rom game.

Coward is the wrong term—misguided, well-funded, asshole fools who enjoy dying for a God that may only differ from yours and mine in name, forever in time.

The Crusades, the Inquisition, traveling missionerys displacing indigenous culture's ideals with their own. But that was not God's message, all that suffering the result of your own seeds that were sewn.

And tell me Misterys McNa-Missenger-HaigKoff and others: how do you sleep at night? Because my kids can't anymore, for fear that the land of the free and the home of the brave has been taken by force, from across the sea.

Does your slumberous night dull those acts of aggression, the ones never played out live at five, far from the source, packaged, sold and PR-polished like the men you work for, backed by the secret might, by real live Stallones of Delta Force? Is collateralization only acceptable when it is buried within the morass of multi-layered companies?

And you Muhammad Ignorance, you were blown here in some jet stream of your feigned folly, only to be judged, not by the Allah you seek but by the scripture of humanity.

Yeah, money doesn't drip, it reigns, signs and symbols mixed with falling glass, falling markets and falling planes.

Foreign interests and the price of freedom lie juxtaposed up against the fingerless children blown, living in the camps, victims traded for oil, for gas, for favors received, given to the men in the shadows, the ones who will never fight or die for what they want or what they need. It can always be paid for by the blood of others, anonymous bullets and grenades thrown.

Get a deep tan, Add an EI to your name, get on America's Most Wanted. Retribution, recourse, reload. Run Muslim, run. George says you must die, dead or alive. And yes, you must pay for the tears, the bloody bits of mortar and stucco that fall from New York's Sky.

Look, over there, a quiet smoking pile of rubble is inspected by yet another weary, faceless hero, looking for a sign of life in this heap of death we have been crossed with while America's spirit and resolve are re-valued, in terms the young have yet to witness, what generation ME has yet to feel, to smell or to be.

A cop stands all day, trying to keep out the capitalists who comb the permeating wreckage in search of fallen paper memos dated 9/11 to be hocked on E-bay. He looks skyward for a moment and wonders what sin was committed by the man who spanned the former towers on a tightrope stretched high above, wondering if he will write more traffic tickets to Middle Eastern looking men. But he is pulled from his thoughts by the screech of a sea gull, morphed into a single white dove.

The news doesn't drip, it reigns, signs and symbols mixed with falling glass, falling markets and falling planes.

We breathe the reports, the sound-bit commentary standing sentinel to our media machine, 20 million chirping baby birds waiting for Big Brother's commodified worm of information. We take it together, we'll give it together.

But for a moment, Mr. Rather, Mr. Guillian and friends rise to the standards of everyday fireman and get close, but no more.

"Not in our backyards Abdul", someone cries. "Try and hide in the caves we built for you when the Russians picked up their balls and

bat and went home? Watch us plug those holes with laser guided bottle rockets, teach you a lesson, evening the score."

Level Afghanistan? Sorry guys. Someone already beat us to that punch. Smoke you out? Few are ready for more death in numbers of any size.

You are a faceless enemy that goes by the name of intolerance, willing to die for your cause while we demand that 7-11's stay open 24 hours.

But that was before the towers of Babylon were torpedoed by terror, shocking us out of a decade of decadence, Towers of glass, mirrors to show us our complacent enemy.

We have met them, and they are us. Up and down it reflects in a Pogoian reality. So hard to take out with a sniper's bullet, to distinguish between courage and coward, sometimes the difference only being a step to the side.

The mult-national dead, lying heavy and strewn among the melted U.S. steel, Japanese copy machines and German light fixtures; they didn't deserve your zealous crimes against the ideologies of a few. For you it may be routine, but death can never be justified, qualified or rectified. Yeah, motherfucker. I read the Koran too.

Ignorance doesn't drip, it reigns, signs and symbols mixed with falling glass, falling markets, falling planes.

They're wrong, we're right. Degrees of terrorism? Yeah right—like degrees of pregnancy. Unanswerable questions prolonged by guns and bombs, the show of stupidity, of stereotype, missiles and might. Is not the nature of bright sunlight to eventually cast long shadows? If you drop a rock or a plane in the middle of a lake, do not the ripples extend all the way to the shore? How many rocks will we throw at each other before the lake is filled, before the only smell in the air is that of shattered concrete dust, sights of rebar twisting and turning in the smoky sky like so many serpents once used to support our shelters? Tell me, just so I know: How many more?

What prophet said that the love OF God and FOR God resides in a gap, the broken space made explicit by the sin of the other side?

Did he write in both Arabic and English, the language of ancient lore?

America has not been violated so much as the world has been raped, again and again by every race, every color and every creed in the name of who, what and why for? Agony, anger and angst come face to face with the truth. What have we learned since Adam and Eve? Only that violence never wins, never reigns, never drips, but forever bleeds.