

We Woke,
Chris Hazeltine

We woke
in the morning, we woke up
to the Dow up 49 percent, to hurricanes in Florida, to Minute-Maid Orange Juice
and then

cut to smoke from the tower

a plane – *maybe, we're not sure at this moment, it's unconfirmed* – hit the tower
the tower is on fire

and we thought, how horrible
-- like a disaster movie with really good special effects –

how horrible

...and we continued brushing our teeth
...and we continued getting ready
for our day

cut to a second plane

hitting the second tower
like a kidney punch

and we dropped to our knees

and we could not breathe
and we could not breathe
and we could not breathe

struggling to rise, struggling to comprehend
struggling

with the resolution of a falling man
with the sacrifice of a red bandana
with the searching photos fixed to walls and kiosks
-- *have you seen him? he is a courier at the Pentagon*
-- *have you see her? she is a trader on the 83rd floor*
-- *have you seen them? they are passengers G7 and G8 on the plane*

please tell me
please let me know
please ... if anything...

struggling with is and with was, while caked with smoke and dust and jet fuel
struggling

to hear in the muffled silence of after
to see beyond the rain of paper and shards

then, gracefully, we are helped to our feet by

a man named Stuart
a woman named Giovanna
a mother named Siew-nya
a pilot named Jason
a vice-president named Gayle
a priest named Mychal
an administrative assistant named Farah
a firefighter named Anthony
a senior project manager named Yudh
a food-service administrator named Maxima
a sound engineer named Jonathan
a securities lawyer named Joanne
a security guard named Titus
a claims adjuster named Nereida
a flight captain named John
an assistant general manager named Christine
a commodities broker named Edward
a payroll worker named Adianes
a Brinks guard named Joseph
an accountant named Nichola
a banquet cook named Abdoul
a planning manager named Tara
and soon-to-be parents named Rahma and Michael

with the caustic taste of mourning in our mouths
pulled up by the shadowy hands of is...and was
we look into the smoke
we look toward the cockpit door
we look over a grass field

and we ask *what do we do, now?*
and they say

you move
you move, now
you move, now, into the silence of time's memory

and you speak for us loudly