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Stories

September 12, 2001

New York City

Louie Cacchioli, 51, is a firefighter assigned to Engine 47 in Harlem.

We were the first ones in the second tower after the plane struck. I was taking firefighters up in the elevator to the 24th floor to get in position to evacuate workers. On the last trip up a bomb went off. We think there was bombs set in the building. I had just asked another firefighter to stay with me, which was a good thing because we were trapped inside the elevator and he had the tools to get out.

There were probably 500 people trapped in the stairwell. It was mass chaos. The power went out. It was dark. Everybody was screaming. We had oxygen masks and we were giving people oxygen. Some of us made it out and some of us didn't. I know of at least 30 firefighters who are still missing. This

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is my 20th year. I am seriously considering retiring. This might have done it.

Carl Cunneff, 36, *an oil broker who works at the World Financial Center, located across the street from the WTC.*

I was taking cover beneath the overhang of a building when I saw this big booklet fall from the sky and land on the sidewalk. I picked it up. It was a spreadsheet book with the name Cantor Fitzgerald. It's a financial company where some of my friends work on the 102nd floor. I thought, "That floor must be gone."

Police guided us across the West Side Highway, then we heard a loud roar and looked up to see a second jet headed right for the south tower. We heard the engines speed up as it turned sideways and hit the corner of the building head on. It looked like it melted into a fireball. We thought there might be other planes. So we all started running toward the Hudson River to the ferry service to New Jersey. The ferry was packed with people crying and hugging one another, not knowing if their coworkers were dead or alive.

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