

TWIN TOWERS LAST DIALOGUE

South Tower

*Sister, on the sea and all around
the day is resplendent...
but a lightning flash blinds me,
close by a rumbling resounds
and that din deafens me...
sister, I can see you hurt,
you have been hit...*



*Sister,
I see you lost in smoke
a black mantle weighs you down
tongues of fire surround you...*



North Tower



*Sister,
I feel confused
I feel torn asunder
I feel amputated...*



*Sister, I feel I'm burning
I feel people running about me
I feel people shouting about me
I am full of terror,
my sister...*

*Be strong, sister, stand erect!
I already hear sirens drawing near
I can see firemen coming up
we are high and safe
they will soon help you sister...*



*I stand erect and maybe
I'm beautiful still be sure I won't waver,
sister...
but now...
the terror comes back
I hear that noise again,
the rumble again
it sounds like a plane's
it sounds like a bomb...
and it is on you
it crashes onto you
and sets you on fire, sister...*

*I feel I'm splitting up
people fly about me
like glass splinters, like paper
ideas and smiles escape from me
words and dreams fly away
with grief, with grief
and pieces of heart
sister dear,
I feel I'm dying...*



*No, sister, don't collapse!
Let us keep together
let us resist together, for our sake
for the sake of the huge heart
of this city
for inside me the cries burn
for inside me the tears burn...*

*Sister, this useless hell
will have been a mistake
will have been madness...
for around me fly
scraps of life
while melts the steel
of good intentions...
I feel I'm fainting
I feel I'm falling
I feel like the Babel's tower...*



*My breath fails me
my strength fails me;
farewell, twin sister
I bear a load of tears
I bear a load of pride...*



*Sister,
we are not the tower of Babel
we are not a tomb
we are not the bomb;
feel, inside, what we are
we are the blood, the sweat
the labour of the world
we are...*



*I am collapsing sister;
erect falls
your twin
she bears a world
of sighs
she bears a world
of remembrances...*

*I shall see you again
beloved twin!
...we shall see you again
tower of hope!*



*Pietro Saglimbeni
September 2001*

(Translated from Italian by Prof. Claude D'Andrea)

Below is a letter of explanation of how the Twin Towers Last Dialogue came to be.

2 September 2002

As a former New Yorker, I want to share an expression of sympathy from a friend of mine in Italy. I was born in Verona, Italy and came to America with my parents, a brother and a sister when I was four years old and lived in New York City.

Periodically, I return to Italy to visit family and friends. My granddaughter Tara and I had just returned from S.Alessio, Sicily on September 10th, 2001 just prior to the tragedy of September 11th. Shortly thereafter, my family in Italy called me with their concerns for my safety and the safety of our family who still live and work in New York City. I called my good friend in Italy, Pietro Saglimbeni, to assure him that we were all safe.

In October I received a letter from his wife, Mariella, with a poem of sympathy that Pietro had written in Italian. He was so moved by the event. Subsequently, she sent me the enclosed translation in English. I have treasured this poem and thought perhaps I should share this expression of sympathy from someone other than a fellow American. I remember Pietro saying at the end of our conversation, "We are all Americans now".

Sincerely,

Tipi Minnehan