

WHAT'S LEFT

Hey Jules, it's Brian

I'm on a plane and it's hijacked

It doesn't look good

Live your life the best you can, and

know that I love you and, no matter what,

I'll see you again.

Honey

something terrible

is happening

I don't think

I'm going to make it

I love you.

Laurie, I love you

I'm in the Trade Center

The building was hit by something

I don't know

if I'm going to get out.

Lyzbeth, I love you a thousand times

I need you

to be happy.

Mommy, the building is on fire

I love you, Mommy.

99

Here is my 99-word piece. My colleague who is a poet, Janet R Kirchheimer, and I talked about the essay I was trying to write and nothing gelled until we listened to my chant of the final conversations from September 11. The melody is taken from the chanting of the biblical book of Lamentations traditionally read on the day when the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem is remembered. Janet and I worked together to transform this song into a poem.

Irwin Kula
rabbi and writer, president Clal,
the National Jewish Center for Learning and Leadership, New York

After working with Irwin Kula on his poem,
Janet Kirchheimer sent one of her own. LG

ASHES

Each day, Bill Butler comes,
searching for his son,
 'Where are you, boy?'
each day, ten hours,
one hundred and eighteen days
so far,
searching rubble that goes sixty feet below the earth
to bring his son home, bury him.

Where I search, there is no rubble,
only different layers of ash, bits of scattered bone,
 'Where are you, Oma,
near the barbed wire, ovens, chimneys?'
One day she came to me, told me to stop looking,
 'I'm not there anymore. I've escaped
into the air, into particles so small they can no longer
be seen by the living.'