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Forever Undone [poem]

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11 Forever Undone

Kate Abell

*If I live to be 100 I'll never forget the sound of the
Diamondback's rattle as it split the desert night.*

So I wrote a year—or twenty—ago.
In truth I can no longer remember the sound.
Or rather, it has been drowned out
by the aftershocks of worlds colliding.

What will I never forget?
The shape of the giant plane preserved as it plowed
through the 83rd floor of the second tower.
It jolts me anew whenever I look up at the silhouette of a jet overhead.

What will I always remember?
The wave of fear that coursed through my body when it hit me
that Jamie was within falling distance of the towers.
I feel it whenever he jumps too high on the trampoline or his roller
blades.

What will I always carry with me?
The curve of Jane's father's back as he held his two motherless children
while the minister invoked an afterlife in which I don't believe.
I see that same curve when I pass men and women contemplating
another empty night alone on the streets.

What will always be at the back of my mind?
The sight of a tower, built on bedrock, housing thousands of people,
collapsing in a minute.
I think of it whenever something seems forever.

Like my memories of what I'll never forget.