

9/11 MEMORIAL & MUSEUM

AUDIO TRANSCRIPT

Adrienne Walsh

You could see Manhattan and then not see Manhattan, and all of a sudden I looked up and there was just this explosion of confetti in the air. And I thought that was the strangest sight I had ever seen because, you know, confetti—certainly if there was a parade or something that you would have known of, but there was nothing I knew of. I thought, "That's bizarre." It was a tremendous amount of paper. And I couldn't see anything else because at this point, I had inched behind a loft building again, and of course, the radio came on and interrupted and said that there had been reports of a plane going into the Trade Center. And as we inched along again, I could see then three floors of fire in the Trade Center. And I thought to myself, "That's really bad." Because it's a self-contained building and fire—it should be fire on one floor, not fire on many floors. If you have fire on many floors, that's a serious, serious, serious problem.

When you got to City Hall, I was riding on the outside of the rig.

[1:02]

And I remember when you got to City Hall, the—it's almost as if you entered—it's almost as if it was a curtain, and you walked into a curtain. The sky disappeared. There was air and bright light on this side, and there was just gray dust that you could barely see on this side. It was just like walking through a theatrical curtain. There's this six inches of dust on the ground. We parked right across from the plaza. And I remember getting out, I had no mask, because our rig was already down there, our guys were already down there. So I went to the back of the rig to try to see if there was another mask, another air-pak for me. And I remember going around to the rig, around the backside of the rig, and as I got to the backside of the rig, I looked up, and I don't know why I looked up, because I didn't hear anything.

[2:00]

But I saw what I can only describe as almost like a tornado hurtling at me. Just this cloud of dust that had to be over 100 feet in the air, and it was literally circling, and it was just bearing down. I mean, I'd never seen anything like that and anything move

9/11 MEMORIAL & MUSEUM

AUDIO TRANSCRIPT

as fast as that, and I turned around and I yelled, "Run, run Cap, run!" 'Cause the captain was behind me. And he looked up—we all took off down the block, and I thought—I honestly thought in the midst of all that, "If this is going to come down and it's going to fall all at once as a building—if I beat the cloud, I'll beat the building." And I said to myself as I turned and started to run, "I'm not gonna beat this cloud. It's just moving too fast."

[3:00]

I remember making it through the cloud, and I remember walking, trying to walk through this—the amount of debris—it's unfathomable. And I remember drawing a line in the middle of my brain and putting those that I thought were dead on one side and those that I thought had a chance on the other.

[3:21]