

RED SKY AT MORNING

by Joan Black

Just another ordinary Tuesday morning – the only note on my calendar read 6:15a.m. – Jayne Oregon.

So I picked up my friend and we headed for the airport driving directly into the sun as it rose over the Sandias. The sky was bathed in pearly-pink light that gradually deepened to peach to red to flame orange streaked with gold, silhouetting the mountain that rises above Albuquerque, giving credence to the reason why New Mexico claimed to be The Land of Enchantment. Did I say it aloud, just think it, or was it one of those hazy instances of a niggle at the back of the brain? "Red Sky at Morning ... Shepherds Warning" but the thought was lost as we commented on the awesome beauty. I dropped Jayne off at Departures and headed home, planning to spend the day working in my garden – but first, a leisurely cup of coffee and read the paper. Must have been halfway through the second cup when the phone rang. "Goooodmor" I started, but was interrupted by my son. "Mom, do you have the TV on?" I started to remind him that I did not turn on the idiot box until the evening news at 5 o'clock but again he cut me off. "Turn on the TV – I'll call you later" and he hung up. "Well, what was that all about?" I wondered but made the effort to hunt down the remote. A picture of an old movie showing a plane crashing into a tall building filled the screen. I flipped channels – funny – same movie, flipped again, "Darn it! How could all the channels be showing the same old movie?" Then I recognized the voice of Dick Kniffing the local News Anchor and well, we are all too familiar with what happened next.

For nine years we have replayed the scenes on the anniversary of that terrible day. For nine years the families and friends of those who perished have been reminded by editors, Commentators and eye witnesses of what happened in New York, Washington and Pennsylvania. For nine years we have acknowledged the bravery of the first responders. A sad day for all of us, but surely excruciating for those who lost a loved one. Many of us know from personal experience how meaningful can be the date of our loss as it comes around each year, but we deal with it, each in our own quiet way. It is a private thing. Because the 10th anniversary is, somehow, special, yesterday there were enhanced ceremonies with many dignitaries and thousands of people paying their respects. Of course we shall never forget, but maybe now is the time to move on, to not make the mistake of over-hype. The final stage of grief is acceptance and renewal. On this day, in the years to come, maybe we should look back less, look ahead more, and erect a different kind of memorial by participating in an event aimed at making the world a more compassionate, safer place. A world where we can appreciate those glorious Red Skies at Morning, and not dread that they might be a Warning.