

## SEPTEMBER LEAVES

By Nancy Martz 9/11/2012

They cling to their branches in flaming colors like saffron, tea rose, vermillion, long enough for us to swoon--those glitzy autumn leaves that make September so enchanting. They do astonish, year after year, yet there is something else swirling white as bone, like macabre confetti sucked out of distant high windows. Every September we gaze in awe at a glowing kaleidoscope in groves of Aspen, Maple, or Ash, Hawthorn, Locust, Birch or Willow; yet somewhere in time, chalk white reams are torn apart, floating their slow motion dance, blown away from desks and files and printer trays and into the soaring open blue sky. Not red, orange, and yellow leaves from branches drying in the sun, not oxblood leaves bearing life veins like the lines in our palms, but strontium white layers of paper blown out of black gashes in towers on fire. Autumn days always promise somber winter skies to come with their own melancholy beauty, but once upon a time, clotting black billows born out of toxic jet fuel and melting steel and glass took breath away. Always the Aspen leaves twinkle citron in the sun and catch the delighted gazes of families in cars idling along the timberline, far from collapsing concrete and rebar

pulling life and breath down to Ground Zero. In the wind, are those the sounds of dying leaves breaking away from branches or the calls of souls far from rescue whispering to us, *never forget?*