

Stories of a Stricken City, and a Grieving Land; The Biker and the Flag

Sept. 14, 2001

To the Editor:

I was waiting for the bus on East 57th Street on Wednesday evening, the day after the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. The city was eerily quiet, and I could find no reason to smile as I stood alone thinking of all that had happened to America in a few short hours.

Then I heard the rumble of a motorcycle approaching the intersection at Park Avenue. The rider was cloaked in a black leather jacket and full face helmet, a phantom of sorts on the deserted street. On the rear of his motorcycle hung two tiny American flags, the kind that one buys at a Memorial Day parade. Each glowed a faint red from the taillight that shone between them.

As he waited for the traffic light to change, the rider reached behind his back and carefully straightened out the Stars and Stripes on each of those tiny American flags. Then he revved the engine and sped off. It was at that moment I realized that yes, America will prevail.

ALISON GRAMBS

New York, Sept. 12, 2001
