



# Last Man Down: A Firefighter's Story of Survival and Escape from the World Trade Center

*By Richard Picciotto, Daniel Paisner*

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On September 11, 2001, FDNY Battalion Chief Richard "Pitch" Picciotto answered the call heard around the world. In minutes he was at Ground Zero of the worst terrorist attack on American soil, as the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center began to burn—and then to buckle. A veteran of the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center, Picciotto was eerily familiar with the inside of the North Tower. And it was there that he concentrated his rescue efforts. It was in its smoky stairwells where he heard and felt the South Tower collapse. Where he made the call for firemen and rescue workers to evacuate, while he stayed behind with a skeleton team of men to help evacuate a group of disabled and infirm civilians. And it was in the rubble of the North Tower where Picciotto found himself buried—for more than four hours after the building's collapse.

This is the harrowing true story of a true American hero, a man who thought nothing of himself—and gave nearly everything for others during one of New York City's—and the country's—darkest hours.

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### Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

When the north tower of the World Trade Center collapsed on September 11, Picciotto, an FDNY battalion commander, was inside it, on a stairwell between the sixth and seventh floors, along with a handful of rescue personnel and one "civilian." This outspoken account tells of that indelible day, and it will shake and inspire readers to the core. The book starts by listing the 343 firefighters who died from the attacks, setting an appropriately grave tone to what follows, which begins as the author heads to work at Engine Co. 76 and Ladder Co. 22 on Manhattan's Upper West Side. Then comes a call on the intercom, and soon he is racing down to the World Trade Center. Arriving, he dodges falling bodies, runs inside and upstairs with a battalion not his own. Early in the book, this straightforward accounting is intercut with flash-forwards to 9:59 a.m., when Picciotto, on the 35th floor of the north tower, experiences the collapse of the south tower not visually, but aurally and in his body ("the building was shaking like an earthquake... but it was the rumble that struck me still with fear. The sheer volume of it. The way it coursed right through me... like a thousand runaway trains speeding toward me"). Picciotto, writing with Paisner (coauthor of autobiographies by Montel Williams and George Pataki, among others), pulls no punches, naming those who hindered his work and those who helped, taking numerous swipes at what he sees as a fire department bureaucracy whose money pinching puts firefighters at risk. This mouthiness can grate, but it certainly gives the flavor of a man and a department whose heroism became clear to all that day. It's Picciotto and his comrades' courage and willingness to sacrifice that every reader will remember, and honor, upon closing this gritty, heartfelt remembrance of a day of infamy and profound humanity.

From [Booklist](#)

This gripping, first-person account of a 9-11 survivor provides a firefighter's view of the World Trade Center catastrophe. An invaluable eyewitness to history as well as a professional just doing his job, Battalion Commander Richard Picciotto was inside the North Tower when it collapsed. Determined to be the last man down, Picciotto coordinated the rescue effort of several dozen incapacitated civilians. Stranded on the landing between the sixth and seventh floors when the building came tumbling down around and on top of him, Chief "Pitch," a small band of fellow firefighters, and one grandmotherly civilian improbably survived the collapse in a small vacuum created by the placement of the twisted debris. Collaborator Paisner, a best-selling biographer, allows Pitch to tell his harrowing story in his own no-nonsense voice. Picciotto bluntly castigates the departmental administrators responsible for the cost-cutting and ultimately life-threatening measures that left the leadership ranks depleted and the men on the line seriously underequipped. Certain to be a best-seller, this inspirational account serves as a tribute to all the firefighters and rescue personnel who unquestioningly put their lives on the line that day. *Margaret Flanagan*  
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Review

"Picciotto's account is one survivor's remarkable story... Its strength is its tone: conversational, free of literary pretense... The book is both grim and inspiring." —**USA Today**

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**Danny Exum:**

Have you spare time for just a day? What do you do when you have much more or little spare time? Yep, you can choose the suitable activity intended for spend your time. Any person spent all their spare time to take a walk, shopping, or went to the actual Mall. How about open as well as read a book entitled Last Man Down: A Firefighter's Story of Survival and Escape from the World Trade Center? Maybe it is to get best activity for you. You already know beside you can spend your time along with your favorite's book, you can wiser than before. Do you agree with it is opinion or you have various other opinion?

**Kathleen Edwards:**

The book Last Man Down: A Firefighter's Story of Survival and Escape from the World Trade Center has a lot of knowledge on it. So when you check out this book you can get a lot of benefit. The book was published by the very famous author. This articles author makes some research just before write this book. That book very easy to read you may get the point easily after perusing this book.

**Michelle Jennings:**

People live in this new day of lifestyle always aim to and must have the free time or they will get great deal of stress from both lifestyle and work. So , when we ask do people have spare time, we will say absolutely yes. People is human not a robot. Then we consult again, what kind of activity do you have when the spare time coming to you actually of course your answer can unlimited right. Then do you try this one, reading ebooks. It can be your alternative inside spending your spare time, the particular book you have read will be Last Man Down: A Firefighter's Story of Survival and Escape from the World Trade Center.

**Doris McNeal:**

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