



**Kate Bosch**

**Student, Class of 2005**

**Contacted by Abby Lustig  
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*Katherine Bosch was born on January 13, 1987. From 2001 to 2005, Kate attended Staples High School, where her mother worked (and continues to work) as a nurse. Kate then studied Scenic Art as an undergraduate at Emerson College. She is currently a graduate student at Salem State University and lives in Salem, Massachusetts.*

***What class were you in when you heard the news? How did you find out?***

I remember growing up and my parents and grandparents talking about how they would never be able to forget where they were when John F. Kennedy was shot; this is probably not unlike that. On the morning of September 11th I was in Mr. Roth's Acting I class. Back then, that class was held in the old black box theater in the Four Building. Even though it was on the edge of the cafeteria, the black box was pretty isolated from the rest of the school and all its windows were blacked out. We actually had a substitute that day and we sat in the dark and watched *The Crucible* that morning with the sub, and I can remember our class probably could have cared less about the movie. But when that class ended and we walked out of the room, I can remember knowing instantly that something was wrong. However, I don't remember hearing about what happened. Someone must have told me in the hallway on my way to my next class, but I couldn't tell you who told me or what they said. I do know, after finding out, I ran down to my mother's office to see if she knew anything.

***What was the school day like after the word spread?***

Looking back at that school day, I think we all just sort of went through the motions. The bell would ring and we would go to the next class. The bell would ring again and we'd go to lunch. It was school, but it wasn't school. We spent Mr. Mott's Western Humanities class listening to CBS News on a tiny clock radio. I don't think any of us spoke, we just listened. I think some students were upset that we weren't being sent home early. But sending students home to empty houses, where their parents might not be home for hours (or if they were in the city that day....there was footage of people walking over bridges just trying to get out of New York), that wouldn't have been right. I don't remember if any or all the after school activities were canceled though. I played on the field hockey team, but don't think we went to practice that day.

***How did 9/11 affect the rest of school year?***

I think high school is a time for many students, when they begin to become aware and try to make sense of the larger world that they are apart of. We really were no different. But maybe after 9/11, the world we were trying to make sense of, felt very different from the world we

thought we were apart of on September 10th. And that probably made a lot of people everywhere, feel off balance.

I had only been at Staples for a few weeks before 9/11 happened. I'm sure my school year was affected, because we were all affected, but everything was new to begin with. I don't think I had a real expectation yet for what my school year was supposed to be like. And afterwards, in classes we talked about what is right and what is wrong, and the space that's in between. That sometimes, something that's right to you, will be wrong to someone else. I'm certain we would have talked about those things anyways, we just probably spoke about them in a different context.

***Before 9/11, what had you learned about terrorism in school?***

I remember, starting in middle school, we had an ongoing assignment dealing with current events. Students would bring in stories from the news and we would talk about what was going on in the world. Sometimes, someone would bring in a story on terrorism. But it seemed kind of understood that that was the sort of thing that happened elsewhere.

***How do you think the students in your grade reacted?***

I remember pockets of people sitting in the hallways comforting one another that day. I think we were all pretty confused. For what was maybe the first time, we were being shown (in a very big way) that there will be times when no one knows what is happening or why. Some of us were probably angry, some of us were probably sad, and some of us were probably very scared. Some of us were probably feeling everything and nothing all at the same time.

***Once the information started to get passed around, the principal ordered the computers to be taken offline and the TV's to be shut down. Do you think that was a good idea?***

At the time, I remember feeling conflicted. Probably like most of people, I wanted to know what was going on. Someone must have known why this happened, be able to give me answers, and help me feel better about this. But at the time, no one really had any answers. Because who would? Something unthinkable happened.

I was in Boston the day of the bombings in 2013. And in the days leading up to the capture of Tsarnaev, I thought a lot about 9/11 and actually about how Staples decided to shut down the TVs and Internet that day. The city of Boston was in lockdown, and it was even easier to feel the need to sit in front of the computer or a TV and watch the same footage play over and over again as tiny bits of information began to piece together what was happening a few miles away. But knowing my experience with the media's coverage of 9/11, I tried very hard not to let that feeling incapacitate me. In Boston, the media worked hard over the course of that week to find answers, but they frequently reported misinformation. So I think I tried to remember to take in everything with a grain of salt, and step away when I knew it was no longer healthy to just sit and watch.

***Did you have a cell phone? Did you contact anyone after you learned about the attacks?***

I did not have a cell phone at the time. That must seem kind of strange now, but high school students with cell phones were still a little rare my freshman year at Staples. But I remember hearing it being difficult to make a phone call, because all the lines were just so jammed with people trying to find out if their families were okay.

*Would your life or the life of anyone you know be different today had the attacks not happened?*

I'm sure that my life would be different, but I have no idea how. I know members of my graduating class joined different branches of the military after finishing high school. Perhaps September 11th could have been one of many reasons that weighed on their decision. But no one is just one thing; we are all a culmination of experiences that affect the choices we make. I went to arts school for my undergrad. Maybe if September 11th hadn't happened I wouldn't have felt as strongly about taking the chances I have. Maybe I would have chosen to study something more practical-sounding than Scenic Art. But maybe not. I've read our generation seems to make choices towards happiness more often than success even though, those two things frequently overlap. It'd be interesting to know if September 11th has had a hand in that. If there's been a shift in priorities partly caused by that event.

*Is there anything else you would like to add?*

I think it's pretty great you're compiling all this information. When I was home a few weeks ago, my family and I went to Westport's Memorial Day parade. I can remember being a little kid, sitting on the stone wall outside Christ and Holy Trinity and watching my grandfather march with the World War II veterans. But this past year, there were so very few veterans left to march. The public library had a float that said "Thank you for your stories" written across it. After September 11th, people often spoke about how this would now be taught in schools, how 9/11 would be in our history textbooks from this day forward. After we started talking for your project, it occurred to me that like the World War II vets, one day there won't be anyone left that was around when 9/11 happened. So I guess I'm glad that you're taking a little time now to make note of some of our stories, too.