

Richard Lawson

the stage is my world
and the world is my stage

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The plane started taxiing down the runway.

My Inner Voice

Come on damn it!!! We need more speed!!!
You're not going fast enough!!

I started rocking in my seat as if I was trying to help the plane gain momentum. I have flown enough to know what the sensation of appropriate speed should feel like.

When we got to v-1 (the point of no return) and the nose lifted, I was gritting my teeth. The plane lifted off the ground and began to slowly climb. As the plane was climbing, the plane began to roll to the left as if it was trying to make a hard left hand turn. But the roll was too hard a left to be natural and I knew at that moment that we were going down.

An incredible calm came over me. I guess I got what I wished for. I stayed in present time from this point on. Everything happened in super slow motion... Frame by eternal frame.

The pilot tried to abort the flight by bringing the nose back down, but we were at a strange angle. The tail of the plane was much lower than the nose and the plane was descending at about two o'clock to the runway.

All of a sudden the night sky outside my window lit up a beautiful bright orange. It was like the most incredible sunset I have ever seen. Something had evidently exploded. Little did I know that it was the left wing of the plane that had struck a weather tower. My former seat number 6A happened to be right there by the wing.

The plane hit the ground with a violent impact and for a short while, we were on the wildest roller coaster ride you could ever imagine. I could hear the sound of grinding, ripping, tearing metal underneath me. I looked out the window and watched the terrain fly by. I was totally calm...totally in present time.

I suddenly realized that the truth and the knowledge that I spiritually possessed, didn't match the power and influence of the inextricable fate of my

group... so I was destined to live out the latter. What a pity. It didn't have to be this way. I could have changed the course of this destiny. I could have changed the inextricable fate of the fifty-six people on that flight.

We started cart-wheeling down the edge of the runway. I didn't lose track of time, but I lost track of space. The next thing of which I became aware, was that I couldn't see and I had the sensation of being upside down. It took me a minute to realize that I was under water and I couldn't move. My face was pressed against the wall of the plane. There seemed to be something on top of me. I tried to move and couldn't. A part of me thought,

Me

I've been in a plane crash...I can't
believe it... Not me.

My Inner Voice

Oh please, give me a break, the audacity
of that thought is revolting...it was like
Hardy saying to Laurel, "Look what a fine
mess you got me in now." You're laying up
here sucking bay water because you didn't
want to rock the boat. Well guess what pal,
the boat sank and it just happens to be laying
on top of your big ass.'

While I lay there contemplating the remainder of my destiny, I made a bizarre observation. The sound of the plane being moved about by the tide, over the rocks on the floor of the bay, sounded exactly like the sound effects I saw in a World War II movie where a submarine was sitting on the floor of the ocean, hiding from the Japanese. That shit tripped me out because the sounds I was hearing were so accurate. I gained a renewed respect for the sound effects people in show business.

Inner Voice

Come on man, quit fucking around... think!

The first thought that came to mind, was that the people that loved me would eventually feel my spirit, and I wouldn't want them to feel my spirit struggling, so I decided to be calm and just accept this fate of death by lack of courage. In my stillness, I had a non-stressful, almost peaceful look at the other side. I had totally relaxed to the idea of dying. So, I just waited for it to happen.