One More Wish Granted

NASREEN TAHER



Quite often, when I feel that I have not achieved much in life and I desire for more, then I buckle up my thoughts and say to myself that things could have been different, I should just be happy that I am alive. . .a single event could have changed everything that day!

It was the December 26, 1985.We were returning to Dhaka from Michigan on board a Boeing 707, the best of its kind. My parents, my sister and myself consisted of our family, and for this reason we took the middle four seats so that we could all be together. The journey began smoothly enough flying high has never been one of my passionate hobbies. As we went higher and higher, 50000ft or so, a quite uncomfortable feeling overshadowed my thoughts. I had this feeling of impending doom. However, I tried to take my thoughts off it. I consoled myself by trying to remember that when I was younger, I too had a dream of becoming an airline pilot...but unfortunately, I failed to have perfect vision during my eye-test for possessing the flying license. Then again I thanked my stars for saving the ill-fated would-be-passengers flying with a pilot having eye problems. A sudden feeling of going down some few feet brought me back to reality from the memory lane. Once again! And again ! The aircraft was going down. Everything seemed too quiet. A voice from the cockpit reached my ears "Our hydraulic pressure is lost and therefore we are facing technical difficulties." It was enough for me, My father looked at all three of us and signalled to pray. "Only He knows best"--- pointing towards the heavens for the Almighty.

Suddenly, the aircraft was going down in double and triple speed. Each split of a second brought the thought of Death closer and made our heartbeats go faster. The captain's voice of trying his utmost to reach Heathrow by "belly-landing" made us terror-stricken. The power of Death seemed to engulf our hearts and soul. All passengers were looking at each other --- the first time, in amazement, I felt that I saw a racial harmony in the eyes of everyone, everyone seemed to be related to everyone else, if anything untoward incident took place, then everyone would come to the other's help, regardless of race or religion.

"Oh my God!" my father panicked. We are nose-diving towards the Atlantic, "can you see the moonlight clearly in the water?" He asked my mother. Reactions were immediately felt. My hands sweated like never before. My body felt lifeless and light, my head felt empty. It was as if I was borrowing someone else's body and filling in my soul.

I dared to crane my neck from the middle seat and guess what? We could actually see the Atlantic dangerously close to the aircraft!

I was having illusions of Death hastening on a chariot towards our aircraft. The captain's announcement seemed to bubble through my ears as if coming from a hollow tube and all I could hear was that a second engine had started...

Miraculously we landed safely at Heathrow at the end of the journey. The convoy of ambulances moving parallel to our aircraft reminded me that we survived.

As we walked through immigration, I felt so triumphant for the first time that we had all confronted death and realised that the littleness of man's power compared to the supreme existence of God.

One more wish of living through this life had been granted from the Heavens. One more wish to live and tell the world what it is like to face Death and yet come back to life has been granted!