



BIG FLIES – SAMPLE

THOSE DAYS

Lester looked at his watch; the second hand ticked left to right until it joined the minute hand and pushed it to 8 PM straight up. He shoved open the rear door of the Boeing 727-100 aircraft. The night air was cold, he knew it would be, and the wind and rain smacked him in the face. He was alone, looking out, and then down toward the ground that he knew was some 10,000 feet below. The pilot, co-pilot, flight engineer and one stewardess were, as instructed by him, in the cockpit with the door closed.

Lester had allowed everyone else, including the other 36 passengers aboard Northwest Orient Airlines flight 305 off the plane after they landed then taxied to a remote spot at the Seattle-Tacoma Airport. The jet had been refueled, Lester's demands met (\$200,000 dollars in "negotiable American currency" and four parachutes), and the five people left on board took off for Mexico just before 7:40 PM.

While waiting for his ransom Lester outlined his southerly flight plan to the pilot and crew with explicit instructions to fly the plane no higher than 10,000 feet, at the minimum speed possible to avoid stalling. Lester also demanded the wing flaps be lowered to 15 degrees, the cabin remain unpressurized, the landing gear locked in the takeoff/landing position, and the rear exit door open with its stairs extended.

"All doable," the pilot, nameplate reading "Scott" pinned to his shirt, had responded knowing the "nut case" making demands claimed to have a bomb within his attaché case. He hadn't seen it, but the stewardess had, describing it as "brown". The pilot decided the threat was credible. He told the hijacker, under the specific configuration Lester requested, the plane would only be able to fly about 1,000 miles so they would have to land at least once to refuel again. After several minutes they all agreed the place to do that should be the airport in Reno, Nevada. Lester did his best to conceal a wry smile when the city he knew so well was mentioned. In reality he couldn't care less where these people thought the plane should refuel. He'd be long gone by then.

"Doable," the captain repeated, "except for the aft door remaining open with the stairs extended. HQ says it's too risky to fly this thing that way."

Knowing the pilot and the bozos at "HQ" were full of crap Lester shrugged his shoulders,

"Okay," he said simply then added, "I know for a fact that's not the case, but fine." He was well aware that he could open the door and deploy the stairs himself once they were up in the air. Like most everything in Lester David's life, he knew what he was doing because he had read, studied, practiced, and then committed to memory, everything he needed to know about making a briefcase look like a bomb, writing a ransom note, and first hijacking, then jumping from a passenger plane.

“Everything alright back there?” Scott’s voice called over the intercom. Lester stared at it and said nothing, “We’ve been alerted up here to an air pressure change in the cabin. Do you require assistance?”

Never trust a man with two first names Lester had quickly thought upon seeing the nameplate for the first time, “Just fly the plane,” he barked back curtly.

During the entire process Lester was dressed neatly in a dark suit, white dress shirt, a skinny black necktie fastened by a mother of pearl pin, loafers and a lightweight, black raincoat. He added a pair of dark sunglasses to conceal his eyes and make it harder for the folks he came across to identify him later. Once alone, and after taking off from the Sea-Tac Airport, he shed the clip on tie and the mother of pearl tie clip, both of which had been worn hundreds of times by his dear old dad, and left them on seat 18C. He then unwrapped one of the four parachutes, cut the shroud lines from its canopy, and left it, along with another, unopened chute.

He had then secured the remaining two parachutes to his back and strapped the 10,000, \$20 bills to his chest. He made his way back to the opened door and the wind and the rain. Lester David looked at his watch one more time, one second it read 8:13, the next second he jumped.

End of sample of Big Flies

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