



Flight 232: A Story of Disaster and Survival

By Laurence Gonzales

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Flight 232: A Story of Disaster and Survival By Laurence Gonzales

“A richly detailed story that is equal parts heartbreaking, inspiring . . . and full of fascinating science . . . masterful.”?San Francisco Chronicle

As hundreds of rescue workers waited on the ground, United Airlines Flight 232 wallowed drunkenly over the bluffs northwest of Sioux City. The plane slammed onto the runway and burst into a vast fireball. The rescuers didn't move at first: nobody could possibly survive that crash. And then people began emerging from the summer corn that lined the runways. Miraculously, 184 of 296 passengers lived.

No one has ever attempted the complete reconstruction of a crash of this magnitude. Drawing on interviews with hundreds of survivors, crew, and airport and rescue personnel, Laurence Gonzales, a commercial pilot himself, captures, minute by minute, the harrowing journey of pilots flying a plane with no controls and flight attendants keeping their calm in the face of certain death. He plumbs the hearts and minds of passengers as they pray, bargain with God, plot their strategies for survival, and sacrifice themselves to save others.

Ultimately he takes us, step by step, through the gripping scientific detective work in super-secret labs to dive into the heart of a flaw smaller than a grain of rice that shows what brought the aircraft down.

An unforgettable drama of the triumph of heroism over tragedy and human ingenuity over technological breakdown, *Flight 232* is a masterpiece in the tradition of the greatest aviation stories ever told.

8 pages of illustrations

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

An Amazon Best Book of the Month, July 2014: Twenty five years ago this month, a United Airlines flight from Denver to Chicago burst into a fireball and crashed in a cornfield outside of Sioux City, Iowa. It was one of the worst plane disasters in history--but it could have been worse. Of the 296 people on board, 184 survived. In his very long and gripping *Flight 232: A Story of Disaster and Survival*, journalist Laurence Gonzales takes us through the moments before and after the crash (as best remembered by those survivors and observers on the ground). He also goes back through records, scientific documents, and his own experience as a pilot and aviation reporter to piece together what went wrong with the jetliner that was as majestic (and, ultimately, doomed) as the Titanic. (The last third of the narrative delves into the tiny, microscopic flaw that likely brought the plane down.) As you might expect, there was plenty of terror on Flight 232, but what is surprising is how much inspiring behavior Gonzales discovered there as well--flight attendants who truly did put the passengers' needs first, crew members whose quick thinking probably made the crash less devastating than it would have been, not to mention the plain dumb luck in evidence, as well--at least one woman moved out of first class at the last minute. Her original seat was eviscerated; she survived. This is a hard book to read because it addresses some of our worst fears and some we'd never even thought of (apparently, the blue water in the toilets on planes can leak out, freeze and get stuck, as ice, to the outside of the plane). But it is also a story of survival, a tale of science, of heroism and of faith. --Sara Nelson

From [Booklist](#)

Gonzales (*Surviving Survival*, 2012) revisits the crash of United Flight 232 in this gripping narrative that includes numerous survivor accounts as well as insight from those in the Sioux City control tower, rescue personnel, and specialists who worked for months to determine the cause. In particular, the survivor stories recounted here in painstaking detail remain no less riveting now than when they were reported 25 years ago. Through numerous interviews and research, Gonzales places readers as close to the accident as possible, from the cockpit to the main cabin, revealing the catastrophic failure of the single part that destroyed not only one of the three engines but, more critically, the entire hydraulic system. There are heroes aplenty, from those who did their jobs beyond all measure to the many who lent a lifesaving hand at risk of their own survival. Emotion rather than thoughtful post-crash analysis carries the book, but Gonzales does make clear how the lack of seat requirements for infants and children, which remains the same today, cost lives. A powerful, unforgettable look at a devastating accident. --Colleen Mondor

Review

"Painstakingly researched... A white knuckle read, so vividly detailed that it's like watching an accident in slow-motion and being unable to look away." (Jennifer Latson - Boston Globe)

"The definitive account . . . *Flight 232* stands alone: for its absolutely riveting depiction of the flight's last minutes and the horrendous aftermath; for its vivid and sympathetic portraits of many of those aboard the plane, the crew most particularly; and for its meticulous inquiry into the mechanical failure." (Jonathan Yardley - Washington Post)

"Astonishingly in-depth... Gonzales covers extensive territory, much of it with...obsessive detail and aplomb." (Carson Vaughan - Chicago Tribune)

“This might just be the best aviation book you’ll read this year.” (Jets)

“Intense, gripping, alive with knowledge and compassion, *Flight 232* is a new masterpiece of calamity and courage.” (Richard Rhodes, Pulitzer Prize–winning author of *The Making of the Atomic Bomb*)

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Jennifer Randolph:

Book is to be different for each grade. Book for children until finally adult are different content. As we know that book is very important normally. The book *Flight 232: A Story of Disaster and Survival* had been making you to know about other knowledge and of course you can take more information. It is extremely advantages for you. The guide *Flight 232: A Story of Disaster and Survival* is not only giving you considerably more new information but also to get your friend when you sense bored. You can spend your time to read your e-book. Try to make relationship together with the book *Flight 232: A Story of Disaster and Survival*. You never truly feel lose out for everything when you read some books.

David Saenz:

Do you one among people who can't read pleasant if the sentence chained from the straightway, hold on guys this kind of aren't like that. This *Flight 232: A Story of Disaster and Survival* book is readable by simply you who hate the straight word style. You will find the facts here are arrange for enjoyable studying experience without leaving perhaps decrease the knowledge that want to give to you. The writer associated with *Flight 232: A Story of Disaster and Survival* content conveys prospect easily to understand by many people. The printed and e-book are not different in the information but it just different by means of it. So , do you continue to thinking *Flight 232: A Story of Disaster and Survival* is not loveable to be your top listing reading book?

Dennis Sellers:

Reading a e-book tends to be new life style on this era globalization. With examining you can get a lot of information that could give you benefit in your life. Together with book everyone in this world can share their idea. Ebooks can also inspire a lot of people. A great deal of author can inspire their very own reader with their story or even their experience. Not only the storyplot that share in the textbooks. But also they write about the knowledge about something that you need illustration. How to get the good score toefl, or how to teach children, there are many kinds of book that you can get now. The authors these days always try to improve their ability in writing, they also doing some study before they write to their book. One of them is this *Flight 232: A Story of Disaster and Survival*.

Loretta Pena:

The book with title *Flight 232: A Story of Disaster and Survival* has a lot of information that you can find out it. You can get a lot of profit after read this book. That book exist new understanding the information that

exist in this e-book represented the condition of the world today. That is important to you to learn how the improvement of the world. This particular book will bring you in new era of the globalization. You can read the e-book on your smart phone, so you can read the item anywhere you want.

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