



## **Control Panic on Planes**

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Time moves in reverse. When you were a child in the back seat of your car traveling along the M1. You watch the wheels of other cars moving along beside you, so fast they appear to be moving backwards. This is what the rain was doing outside. Falling so fast and so hard it was moving back up from once it came. What goes up must come down.

A cattle-prod jabs my neck sending a electrical pulse to my brain telling me to turn round. Free will is dead. I fling round. The uncoiling of a spring in a toy I owned once. In the event of a loss of cabin pressure an oxygen mask will fall from the console above you. Place the mask over your nose and mouth and pull the elastic around the back of your head. The air hostess demonstrates in perfect time with the disembodied voice. I give her the attention she deserves, not that anyone else is. The man next to me was talking to me. I didn't like people who I didn't know talking to me. Stranger-Danger.

"Move over please"

I moved body up out of my chair as the man next to me shuffled out his seat. He passed close to me. Trapped. Me and the seat behind him like the closing walls in the Indiana Jones movie. He pulled a thin bag from the over head locker. Once outside the aircraft pull on the tabs to inflate the life-jacket. Use the attached tube to top up the air, as required. The jacket is fitted with a light and whistle for attracting attention. He wasn't paying attention. What had I missed. If we land in a jungle and your not killed instantly, follow the river downstream? The man next to me opens his laptop and turns it on. A chiming tone. Is he writing a letter? I tap his shoulder.

"The exit chutes inflate automatically when the exits are opened" I inform him.

He looks at me half confused half a emotion I can't describe or don't know. He turns away and starts typing again. I pull out the laminated Safety Information card from a net attached to the back of the seat in-front of me.

Our airplane begins to taxi to the runway.

I look to my left. Past the man who would more than likely die if we crashed. The window was crying. Yellow lights on the runway like stars on a black canvas sky. We stop, the calm before the storm. The engines change pitch from a lazy drone to a roar of wild beasts. We start moving into deep space, stars whizz by. Most the lights flick off. Pupils open like the aperture of a camera. A trick. The lights flick on seconds after. Blinding light rushes in to fill the void. The front of the plane tilts up and drags the rest of us with it. My ears pop, no noise can get in. I swallow, noise rushes in to fill the void.

Ping, The seat-belt sign turns off. A woman jumps up and runs to the toilet at the front of the plane. Her copy of 'Control Panic on Planes' falls to the floor. I stand up and push past the girl to the right of me. I stand in the aisle and look left and then right. Right. I walk taking small steps and placing my hands on the chairs to keep balance. 7. Right, 7 chairs, right. The exit was as the air hostess had said. A lever in the upright position. If it were pulled at 45 degrees the door would fall off like a faulty gate in a field in Devon.

I pushed back past the girl and sat between her and the man. I feel as if I was meant to be conserving with them. Ok then points of topic...

"What are you writing?"

"A book."

Good, books I know.

"Really, your a writer. What are you writing about"

"Can't tell you."

He wasn't making this easy for me.

"Ok, what have you written before."

"I write children's fiction. Stories about dragons and knights and princesses in towers."

"Might I have heard of you?"

"Yes, I'm James Harris."

James Harris. I first thought of 'Thomas the Tank Engine' no idea why that was by Wilbert Awdry. There was a Train called James in one of the books. Oh, J. Harris, God, James Harris.

"Your that James Harris author of the 'The Rose stone'."

"Yep, thats me."

Someone at the front stood up. He was from somewhere in the middle east. Huge amounts of clothing hung off him.

"Listen up and nobody will get hurt!"

Right, 7 chairs, Right, 45 degrees pull. Jump.



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