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"THE PLAN OF THE MASTER WEAVER"

*My Life is but a weaving
between my Lord and me;
I cannot choose the colors
He worketh steadily.*

*Oft times He weaveth sorrow
And I, in foolish pride,
Forget He sees the upper,
And I the under side.*

*Not til the loom is silent
And the shuttles cease to fly,
Shall God unroll the canvas
And explain the reason why.*

*The dark threads are as needful
In the Weaver's skillful hand,
As the threads of gold and silver
In the pattern He has planned.*

*He knows, He loves, He cares,
Nothing this truth can dim,
He gives His very best to those
Who leave the choice with Him.*

Author Unknown

*When God is going to do
something wonderful,
He always starts
with a hardship;*

*When God is going to do
something amazing, He
starts with an impossibility.*

Anne Lamott

Introduction

Twenty-three stories, one theme

BY JEANETTE CHAFFEE

WENDY TOLD ME: “THESE STORIES ARE AMAZING! YOU’VE got to put them in a book.” My response was skeptical. I’ve been interviewing influential people for more than thirty years, but without plans to put them in a book.

I prayed and felt my friend was right. I hauled out dozens of cassette tapes, CDs, and storage boxes of transcriptions. As I studied the interviews, I discovered that, though I hadn’t chosen any particular topic, the Master Author had. All of them faced impossible situations, including my own experience with terrorism. The theme became clear: *What’s one of the most difficult experiences you’ve faced and how did God help you survive?*

Inspired, I began working this material into stories and conducting fresh interviews. I was continually struck with God’s calming presence in horrific situations. What an incredible gift! The title *Extravagant Graces* came to me – and never let go.

Last year, a new question popped into my mind: what would the children—now adults—say about their family featured in *Extravagant Graces*? So I asked them. You'll read their stunning answers in Part Two.

Jeanette Chaffee

**Tualatin, Oregon
August 2014**



JEANETTE CHAFFEE

While on TWA Flight 840, **JEANETTE CHAFFEE** survived the midair explosion of a terrorist bomb less than fourteen feet away from her. She has appeared on *CBS Evening News with Dan Rather*, *20/20*, *The 700 Club*, and other television and radio shows. Jeanette has been quoted in *USA Today*, the *New York Times*, and *Newsweek*. She's authored diverse national magazine articles and is recognized as a gifted communicator. Jeanette hosted *Reflections*, a weekly radio show that aired in cities from South Carolina to the Arctic Circle.

*You hold my life and
breath and eternal future
in Your loving hands.*

Max Lucado

Terror in the Sky

Suspended midair between life and death

April 2, 1986: *What began as an ordinary travel day turned into sheer terror flying at seventeen thousand feet...*

BY JEANETTE CHAFFEE

I WAS JOLTED AWAKE BY AN EAR-SPLITTING, THUNDEROUS BOOM. It felt like a gun had been shot inches from my head. The plane lurched wildly. Swirling debris smothered me as smoke filled the cabin. Oxygen masks dropped. I yanked at mine—it wouldn't budge! Fear seized me. I told myself: *Don't panic. Look at how others have pulled their masks down. You can do this.*

Twenty-four hours earlier I'd been in Salem, Oregon, preparing for my trip to Greece and Turkey to purchase jewelry for my collectibles business. I wasn't even supposed to be on TWA 840. I'd changed my schedule when the travel agent found me an earlier flight—what could be wrong with starting my trip sooner?

At 4:30 a.m. on Tuesday, April 1, 1986, my brother-in-law dropped me off at the airport in Salem. Before I got out of the car, we prayed and I told him I'd be back in a few days.

Fifteen exhausting hours later, I arrived in Rome, Italy. Then I boarded the short leg to Athens. In the aisle seat of my row was an older Greek woman. She asked me in English, "Am I in 8C?"

Since I was in 8A by the window, I assured her she was in the correct place. The plane was filling up, but thankfully no one took the seat between us.

Lunch was chicken salad. We both ate, and then I stuffed a pillow against my window and drifted off to sleep.

We never spoke again.

The burnt smell reminded me of Fourth of July fireworks. My ears still rang from the tremendous explosion. The overhead bins had opened, and the lights were off.

I was now wide awake.

What happened? Where are we?

I saw an American man across the aisle with his oxygen mask on. Since mine wouldn't release, I jerked on the one above the empty seat next to me. It came down. Desperately, I stretched the elastic string over my head.

Comforted that at least I had the mask on, I turned to my window. I was stunned to see the tops of mountains *far* below. I had never felt so helpless.

I prayed: "Jesus, only You can help. Nobody even knows we're in trouble. Please, don't let us die."

Trying to get my bearings, I turned to my right. I saw blue sky through a nine-by-three-foot gaping hole in the side of the plane. To my horror, I realized the three rows of seats near the massive opening were now empty.

I hadn't heard a scream.

I was less than fourteen feet away.

The wind was rushing through the cabin, airplane insulation billowing. From the ceiling and the exposed panels around the rupture, dangled wires and tubes.

Mr. Taylor, a flight attendant, rushed down the aisle carrying a fire extinguisher. He passed me, but quickly realized that he shouldn't risk being sucked out. He retreated back to first class.

Another attendant came to my row. Desperately clutching the aisle seats, she stared at the empty space where seat 10F had been. She yelled, "Was anyone sitting there?"

"Don't you have a passenger list?" I shouted.

"Not onboard," she replied.

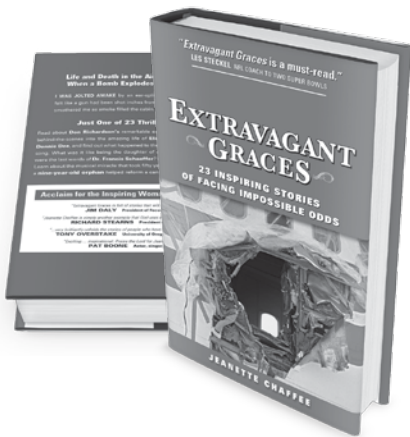
Flight attendant Cindy Purdy, only on the job for three weeks, came down the aisle and walked past the hole. I wondered why she dared.

A moment later, members of the crew were laying an elderly American woman across the seats in front of me. Her back was a mass of blood.



TWA Flight 840 after landing safely in Athens. Jeanette was sitting just two rows away from the terrorist bomb.

Extravagant Graces makes a great gift!

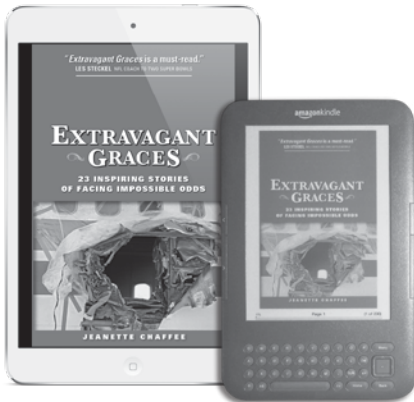
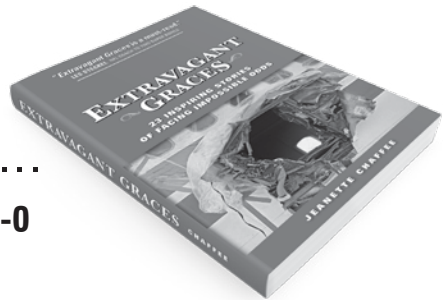


Extravagant Graces is a book that changes lives. Nowhere else can you read these remarkable stories. The hardback edition is a keepsake you'll treasure forever, and it is a gift anyone will appreciate.

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