

APPENDIX C

The Ghost Pilot

Just before midnight on December 12, 1972, Eastern Airlines Flight 401 fell out of the sky. The airplane crashed in the Everglades area of Florida. Of the 176 people on board, 99 died, including the airplane's pilot, Bob Loft, and the flight engineer, Don Repo.

About three months after the crash, a high-ranking executive of Eastern Airlines boarded an aircraft for Miami, Florida. He spotted a man¹ in a pilot's uniform sitting alone in the first-class section and went to sit down beside him². The executive struck up a conversation with the captain³. After a few minutes he realized that he was talking to the pilot Bob Loft. Then the pilot faded away.

A week later, an Eastern Airlines pilot and two of his⁴ crew went into a staff room at John f. Kennedy Airport, in New York. They⁵ all saw Bob Loft in a chair. He talked to them for a while, then vanished. The men⁶ were so shocked that the airline had to cancel their flight.

Three weeks later, a passenger was sitting in the first-class section of a flight to Miami. She⁷ was worried about the man in an Eastern Airlines uniform sitting next to her. His face was white and he looked ill, so she called the flight attendant.

The flight attendant leaned down to speak to the man but he ignored her. Then, as she touched his⁸ arm, he slowly faded away, leaving only an empty seat.

When the plane landed in Miami, the passenger was taken to a hospital in a state of shock. Later, when she saw photographs, she⁹ identified the ghost as flight engineer Don Repo.

Over the next few months, more than ten flight attendants claimed to see Don Repo. The ghost¹⁰ seemed to appear more often on some aircraft than on others. Rumors began to spread that he appeared only on planes with replacement parts from the crashed Flight 401. It was usual practice in another plane if they passed strict safety tests.

The stories must have worried the bosses of Eastern Airlines. They ordered their¹¹ engineers to remove from their planes all equipment from the 401 wreck.

It seemed to work. When all of the parts from Flight 401 had been removed, Bob Loft and Don Repo left Eastern Airlines and their aircraft in peace. No one has seen their ghosts¹² since.

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