

1

"Happy birthday sweetie!" My mom exclaimed as I woke up. "I got you airplane tickets to Chile" dad shouted in my face. I just turned 13 years old, I lived in a poor country called Niger. "Yes!" I shouted. *I always wanted to see my family that lives in Chile!* I thought. But... my mom had to ruin it. "I know you always wanted to go. But we could only get tickets for one... and we picked you" my mom told me. Last time I flew in a plane I was 8, but that time I flew with my mom and dad. Now I am going alone. "The trip is 12 hours and 30 minutes" Dad pointed out. "Uh" I sighed "I know you wanted us to go with you, Catalina, but we can't afford other tickets." Mom cried as she sat next to me in my small but fluffy bed. "Your grandmother will be waiting for you in the airport in Chile in 2 days" Dad told me. "In 2 days, I leave!" I exclaimed "No. You'll be leaving in 1 day" Of course, I am going to my dream country alone. "Remember in Chile is summer, so don't pack winter clothes." Dad reminded me.

"Uh" I yawned as I stepped down of my bed. "Are you ready for your special day?" asked my dad as I entered the kitchen. "Kind of." I respond "I cannot wait to see our family. But... I do not want to leave you guys..." I told my parents. I toasted my bread, prepared tea and sat on a chair. "Oh sweetie" my mom said in her soft voice. My mom gave me a note with an address and it read "Grandma" at the top. She said I must keep it safe in case. "Get ready, Catalina" My dad exclaimed with excitement. I dunked my tea which felt like an eruption in my stomach and ate my bread fast and headed to my room.

"C'mon. We are leaving" My dad spouted. My mom helped me bring my luggage outside. We do not have a car, but we do have 3 bicycles for each one of us. With our bicycles it is going to take 45 minutes to get to the airport. The airport only has one runway. And there are only 30 workers working at a time. It takes a long time to get on the plane. My dad is a professional bike rider. He had been practicing for over 3 years. Now he can ride with only one hand, so with the other hand he carried my bags. We finally arrived at the airport. We are now saying goodbye to each other. "Goodbye my big girl" my mom said with a tear but also a smile. "We will miss you" Dad said with a smile. And just like that I left.

I could barely sleep the night before. I was too enthusiastic. So as soon as I hoped on, I fell asleep. "Hello passengers. This is your captain speaking. We interfered with some difficulties. The connections are not working because of the weather. Currently it is foggy, raining and there is a lightning storm. We are close to Chile, but we are going to try our hardest to land as close to Chile. We will be landing shortly" The captain announced through the speakers. I was so worried. I looked through the window. It was raining cats and dogs. My dream vacation was ruined. First, it was mom and dad not coming and now this. "Uh" I sighed. "This is your captain speaking." *More bad news* I thought. "We will be landing in Antartica" The captain announced "Antartica!" I cried in shock. "Please remain calm. Please sit with your seat belt fastened and cover your head Embrace yourself" the captain said in a trembling voice.

"Boom!" The plane crashed against the snow. "Ah!" a little girl screamed. "Aw!" I cried. The plane landed in the snow. Even though snow is soft, the crash felt hard. "Mamá?" A boy said in Spanish. I did not dare to get out from my seat until the captain said it was safe to get out. "we..e ha..a..ve la..an..dead in Ant... arct...ica... yoo..youu are... no...now... all...owed...tooooo...stan...stan... stand up..." the captain said through the speaker with a bad connection. "Aw!" I yelled as I tried to unbuckle my seatbelt. "Estás bien?" A lady asked me while holding a baby. I don't really speak Spanish, I know a few words, but I can't speak fluent Spanish. I knew she said, are you okay. I looked down, I saw my arm bleeding, then she looked at my arm. "Estás bien?" the mother repeated. I tried to move my arm, but it

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hurt too much so I gave up. "No" I told the mother. She ripped a part of her sweater. "Here." she said in an accident. *How did she know I didn't speak Spanish. Probably one of many mother's "super powers"* I thought. I rapped it around my arm and responded "thank you." She simply nodded. The wound didn't look that bad. I was sure I was going to be okay. I thought that even though I was not in Chile, this would be my only time being in Antartica. I looked across my window and almost felt the cold breeze rushing through my body. "Good evening passengers. I hope you are okay. I am glad to inform you there are no major injuries" the captain said standing from the front of the plane with no speaker. "Outside there are strong winds and heavy snow. We are going to stay here for the night. The crew will give you food and blankets. Don't be afraid to ask our crew members for anything." "Here" I heard a crew member say while she gave a blanket. *I should have been in Chile by now* I thought *oh no my grandma should be worried sick.* They handed me a blanket and a pillow. I rested my head on the pillow and fell in a deep sleep.

The next morning, I woke up in the plane with a shiver. I was wearing a short sleeve t-shirt and a sweater on top. Then I realized I had only packed summer clothes. In front of me I saw some crew members telling something to the passengers, but I could not tell what. When they finally got to me, they said "The captain is not in the plane. He is looking at the plane to bring it back in the air. You are welcome to go explore outside." *Why on earth would they think I want to go outside? I'm cold in the plane, I do not want to go outside.* I sat back and closed my eyes for a minute. Then, I looked through the window and saw some kids having a snowball fight. I changed my mind, stood up with my blanket and headed out where most of the people were. The fresh air filled my nose with a delightful feeling as I steeped outside. "Who is an engineer?" the captain asked. "Me!" a man responded. "Me as well!" A women added. "Well then, do you guys have experience with planes?" the captain asked. Only one of them raised their hand. "Me" the woman said. "Do you think you can repair this plane?" A man asked. "Well," The women said looking at the plane. "I could try." she said insecurely. "Yay!" shouted a group of people. I smiled with joy. "From now on listen to her." The captain announced to crowd. "What is your name?" the captain asked the lady. "Emma." She answered. A sudden wind came and blew my blanket away. "Buh" I froze. I ran, grabbed my blanket and got into the plane.

"Yes, yes that's it" I heard Emma through the window cheering as she directed the passengers. "Emma, you might want to see this." A man told her. Emma followed the man somewhere to the back of the plane where I could not tell what they were saying. Emma came back in sight and said to the captain, "I don't think we will not be able to make this ship go up to the sky again." "Of course we will, as a team we can do anything" the captain announced. "Uh," Emma sighed "Ok..." "Do you hear that?" A passenger asked as he pointed to the sound. We all looked to where he was pointing.

It was a group of people in their snow mobile, and they were coming towards us. "Hello, my friends" A woman dressed in a red suit said in a pleasant way. "Hello," Emma told them in a suspicious form. "I see you have crashed against the snow. Is everyone okay?" The women asked. "Yes," Emma said. "How long have been out here?" Asked the women. "About a day." Emma replied. "We can bring you to the airport and see if the is any flight to, to where are you heading?" she asked again. "We are heading to Santiago de Chile." Emma responded. "Let's see what we have for Chile." The women announced. "That would be wonderful, uh." replied Emma. "You can call me Sarah. Me and my team are scientists researchers. You are lucky. We were just driving by, and we heard something, and it turns out it was you." The women said. "Come on. This way." she pointed to the snow mobiles. "What is going on here?" the captain asked before we left. "Hello, we are going to find a plane that leads to Chile." Sarah

explained. "No, no you are not. We are capable to do this alone, thank you." The captain commanded. Everyone looked at him. "Well, if you need us, feel free to ask for help. Here, have this walkie-talkie" she said as she left with her red uniform team.

"We do not need their help; we can do this" The captain gave a speech to about 20 angry faces. "But Emma said it was going to be impossible to make it fly again" complained a man in the back. "She said she thought so, not impossible." the captain pointed out. "Look, I know most of you are cold, hungry and angry and this looks hopeless, let's just see how much progress we make in 2 days and decide what to do then." The captain commented. *We don't even have enough food to last 2 days* I thought.

We have been here for 3 days. We are hungry and cold. For most of the time, I am inside, but occasionally I go outside to play. Today I saw most people gathered in a circle. I thought they were having a reunion discussing if we ask for help or not. I wanted to know what was happening, so I went outside. "We have done very little progress, I think we should ask for help." A woman said. "We have been working for days. My family is waiting for me in Chile. We need to go." I man said desperately. I could not help it, I had to tell my story. "I haven't seen my family for years. My mom and dad are waiting for me back in Niger, they couldn't afford other tickets, so now I'm alone. Supposedly I should come back to Niger tomorrow. I need to get on any plane." I told them. They looked at me for 2 seconds and then started talking about their own needs. "Okay, okay. Let me see what I could do." the captain announced. *Yes!* I thought.

"Hello, hello?" The captain asked through the walkie-talkie. "hello, do you hear me?" responded Sarah. "Yes, I hear you loud and clear." The captain told her. "We are hungry, tired, cold and my people need to get to Chile. Can you help us." Explained the captain. "Of course! I'll grab my snow mobile." Sarah told us. "That'll be great, but we are like 40 of us how are you going to take us there?" asked the captain. "Well," Sarah said in a voice that seemed like she had not realized that before. "I could bring my friends and thick worm blankets." She said as she handed up.

"Hello," Sarah said as she arrived. "Here," she told the captain while she gave him a big mountain of blankets. "Thank you." The captain said looking at the group in the bikes. "Wait, there is only like 10 of you." He pointed out. "Yes, here's the plan. My friends will bring groups of ten to the airport meanwhile I will stay here with you until everyone is in the airport." Sarah explained. The snow mobile was for two people. "Is there any families with kids?" Asked Sarah. I was surprised there was a lot of people rising their hand, more than 15. "Come, line up. Kids under 10 can and will sit with an adult." Sarah commanded. She directed them to a vehicle and took off. "Is anyone under the age of 18 flying alone?" Sarah asked. I raised my hand with 3 other people. She told us to stand in a line so we did as she said.

We took off with another group and in no time we were in the airport. It wasn't long until everyone arrived. "Is there a plane going to Santiago de Chile?" Asked the captain at the counter. "Yes, in one more hour. How many passengers?" the lady behind the counter asked him. He looked at Sarah. "They need a private plane to Chile." Sarah told her. Sarah told her something in private. Maybe the scientists can get special requests with the airlines. "Yes, of course, the flight is going to take 8 hours. At what time do you want the plane?" Asked the lady. "In 30 more minutes" replied the captain. We all cheered in joy.

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We got on the plane. In the plane I looked through the window and saw Sarah waving good bye to us. I could not help but notice that even though I wanted to go to Chile, even though I was cold, hungry, tired it was still pretty amazing how Antarctica was. We did not accomplish our, which was to make the plane fly again but at least we got on a plane and we are going to Santiago, Chile right now. I smiled at Sarah as we took off. *I can not wait to see grandma again. What if she is not waiting for me in Chile?* I thought and then realized in my pocket I had a card that said her address. We landed. And directly I went walking to see my family. I rang the doorbell of my grandma's house and there they were, my whole family waiting for me inside.

*Theme: Don't be afraid to ask for help.*