

Final Approach - Northwest Airlines Flight 650, Tragedy and Triumph

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✓ Verified Book of Final Approach - Northwest Airlines Flight 650, Tragedy and Triumph

## Summary:

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This is the story of the first airline pilot ever arrested and sent to prison for flying under the influence. He was fired by his airline, stripped of his FAA licenses, tried, convicted, and sent to Federal prison. This was a first. It had never occurred before. Lyle Prouse came from a WWII housing project in Kansas and an alcoholic family where both parents died as a result of alcoholism. He rose through the ranks of the United States Marine Corps from private to captain, from an infantryman to a fighter pilot. He made his way to the pinnacle of commercial aviation, airline captain...then lost it all. Today he is a recovering alcoholic with nearly twenty-two years sobriety. This story describes his rise from the ashes of complete destruction from which he was never to fly again. It is full of miracles which defy all manner of odds. In a long and arduous journey, he eventually regained his FAA licenses. He never fought his termination; he considered it fair and appropriate. Miraculously, after nearly four years, the President/CEO of his airline personally reinstated him to full flight status in spite of all the adverse publicity and embarrassment. In effect, the President/CEO gambled his own career by taking such a risk on a convicted felon and publicly acknowledged alcoholic pilot. In another stunning event, the judge who tried, sentenced, and sent him to prison watched his journey and reappeared eight years after the trial. He became the driving force behind a Presidential pardon although he'd never supported a petition for pardon in all his years on the bench. Lyle retired honorably as a 747 captain for the airline he'd so horribly embarrassed and disgraced. He lives with his wife of nearly forty-nine years and has five grandchildren. He continues to work with all the major airlines in their alcohol programs. He is also active in his Native American community, and he provides hope to those struggling with the disease of alcoholism, no matter who they are or where they are.

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