

## **'20/20' Interview Transcript: David Gonzales**

**INTERVIEWER**

[01:26:54:09] Right. Right. Okay, so you were heading out to Los Vegas...

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

Mm-hmm.

**INTERVIEWER**

...for a, a business trip, right?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

Yes.

**INTERVIEWER**

[01:26:57:03] To go to a convention?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

Mm-hmm.

**INTERVIEWER**

How long were you going to be there for?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01:26:59:26] Uh, I was going to be there for about three days.

**INTERVIEWER**

So you took a JetBlue flight?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

Yes.

**INTERVIEWER**

[01:27:02:10] Were you flying alone?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

Yes.

**INTERVIEWER**

So where you sitting?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01;27;08;02]

Uh, rows Two-C, uh, B and C, at the, the aisle seat and the middle. I always take two seats.

**INTERVIEWER**

Mm-hmm. So you were sitting there, was the flight, was the flight crowded?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

Yes. Yes.

**INTERVIEWER**

So...

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01;27;21;14]

It's a hundred and thirty people on that flight.

**INTERVIEWER**

It took off and everything was just fine? Did you notice anything amiss at the beginning of the flight?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01;27;28;05]

No, no. I actually joked around with the

pilot, um, but, on that.

**INTERVIEWER**

You actually spoke to the pilot. I mean...

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[OVERLAP] Yes. I, I always do.

**INTERVIEWER**

When you're getting on?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01:27:33:16]

Yeah, I—I'm here if you need me, you know, as a way of showing, uh, strength, you know. And, and I just took my seat, you know.

**INTERVIEWER**

[01:27:43:29]

You—um, here you offer your services because you're a corrections officer?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

Well, I retired from corrections and, and then, you know—it wasn't just that, it's, you're growing up in the tough part of Brooklyn and learning to defend yourself there and, you know, and in the security business you have to enter certain buildings that, um, you know, there's some activity going on that, that we're trying to stop.

[01:28:12:01] You know, so I, I need to walk into these environments and not be intimidated by what's going on but just make my presence felt, hey, I'm here to stop what you guys are doing.

**INTERVIEWER**

[01:28:19:28] So when you get on flights, you normally make it a point to pop your head in the cockpit and say, hey...

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

Yes.

**INTERVIEWER**

[01:28;24;07] ...I'm here, if you need any help, I'm on board.

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

Yeah. Yes.

**INTERVIEWER**

[01:28:29:23] And do you tell them where you're sitting?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

No, actually, I just—because at that time we're moving.

**INTERVIEWER**

Mm-hmm.

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01:28:34:23]

Uh, I just normally just pop in and just say hi. If you need help finding the plane, you know, I'm here, but it's all, you know, joking around with them.

**INTERVIEWER**

[01:28:43:29]

And how did the pilot seem to you when you joked with him?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

Uh, actually, he didn't even get—he didn't get it. He just—they were still playing around with their no more, take-off switches...

**INTERVIEWER**

Right.

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01:28:51:10]

...and, and I just, uh, the flight attendant just told me, uh, your seat is right here. So I just sat down.

**INTERVIEWER**

[01:29:00:23]

So the flight takes off, and everything was normal, smooth?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

Yes. Yeah, it was very smooth, uh, it was,

um, it, it was almost, uh, like if it was in autopilot. It was just normal and we—it was a brand-new aircraft. Um, they made it, they, they brought it to our attention and told us that it was, um, five days old...

**INTERVIEWER**

Mm.

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01;29;23;08]

So we were going to see free movies as a result of, of this particular flight, because the TV wasn't working. So we said, okay, we'll watch a movie instead. So—but it so happened the TV started working, so we're like, oh, okay, so now we get both, right?

[01:29:39:25] So, um, we, we, we just had fun, you know, just watching the TV.

**INTERVIEWER**

[01;29;42;16]

Was it a morning flight?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

Yes. It was, uh, seven o'clock in the morning.

**INTERVIEWER**

So it's an early morning flight.

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

Yes.

**INTERVIEWER**

[01:29:50:05]

Uh, when the pilot came on for the, you know, announcements, after they take off, they usually say, you know, we're going to get up to cruising altitude, this is how long the flight is, et cetera. Did he sound normal?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01:29:57:02]

I, I didn't think that the, the pilot, the captain was the one that made the announcement, it was the copilot. He's the one that came out.

**INTERVIEWER**

[01:30:01:26]

Okay. So when was the first time you saw the pilot come out of the cockpit?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

The, the pilot, I—the first time I seen him was when the cockpit just, uh, door just opened. It just opened and then, uh, he came out and he tried to get to the bathroom, it looked like he had to really get to the bathroom. [01:30:26:03] But he

didn't notify the flight attendant where they normally barricade that area...

**INTERVIEWER**

Mm-hmm.

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01:30:30:20] ...now I'm like, well, wait a minute, this is a security breach. Cockpit door open, this guy's coming out, the copilot locked the door, and that's when I seen him trying to bra-, I see, trying to get into the bathroom.

**INTERVIEWER**

[01:30:42:10] The pilot trying to get into the bathroom.

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

Yes. While somebody else was in there.

**INTERVIEWER**

[01:30:47:08] Oh, so the door was locked.

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

Yes.

**INTERVIEWER**

At what point—and then what did the pilot do?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01:30:50:09] Well, the, the, there was a flight attendant there, and they, oh, look, there's somebody



there, why don't you go to the rear of the plane? So that's what happened, so I didn't think about it, I think that maybe he had to go to the bathroom. So I sat there and I just started watching TV.

**INTERVIEWER**

[01:31:05:25] So the pilot went past you toward the rear of the plane...

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

To the rear of the plane.

**INTERVIEWER**

[01:31:09:07] Was he saying anything?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

No, no.

**INTERVIEWER**

[01:31:10:25] Did anything about him, like, raise an alarm in your head?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

No, no.

**INTERVIEWER**

[01:31:15:06] So you weren't noticing anything. So when was the first time you noticed something wrong?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

On his way back.

**INTERVIEWER**

What was he doing?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01:31:19:06]

He was rushing down pretty fast, uh, uh, I think one of the stude-, uh, what was it, flight attendant was trying to hold him, but he was just—she had no control over him, so when she passed my seat, he gets into the, um, to, to...

**INTERVIEWER**

[OVERLAP] The galley area?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01:31:39:02]

...uh, to the galley area, trying to get into the cockpit. It—but there was a off-duty pilot there that I didn't see, because I was still watching the movie, that was notified that there was a problem with this particular pilot. So they put him into the, the, the cockpit. And my...

**INTERVIEWER**

They had done that already.

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01:31:55:28]

They had did that while he was in the back of the plane, and they changed the code on him so he couldn't get in.

**INTERVIEWER**

So what happened when the pilot tried to get back into the cockpit?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01:32:05:13]

He kicked the door. He's, he kicked the door and it almost buckled. I've never seen the door—I thought that that, this par-, these particular doors are so, um, steel-proof, uh, you can't break these doors. With another kick, that cockpit door would have opened. Would, would have buckled.

**INTERVIEWER**

[01:32:15:14]

Was the captain a big man?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

He was six-two, about two hundred and forty-five pounds, so I, I—he was a big guy, and then he, as soon as he started to kick the door, he says, let me in, look at the camera, it's me, let me in, this is, this is the time, this is where we take the plane down.

**INTERVIEWER**

[01:32:41:00]

This is where we take the plane down.

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

Yes.

**INTERVIEWER**

Did he say anything else?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01:32:44:13]

He says, yes, just throttle it down, just throw down. He, he wanted to get in there just to throttle the plane down.

**INTERVIEWER**

At that point, what did you do?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01:32:47:17]

Well, I'm seeing this, and then the, uh, the two flight attendants that are there are trying to take—get him away from the cockpit door, and he ends up, now, at the side ex-, uh, exit door. [01:33:00:29] So now they're struggling with him, and then I see he tosses—he just tossed one flight attendant, and she hit, uh, her side. And she, she kind of went down, and I'm like, she's hurt. So I got up, and I'm, I'm afraid to even touch this pilot, because, you know,

these guys are protected by the federal government, you just don't touch a federal employee. [01:33:25:00] So she kind of whispered to me, help me. So to me, that was a code that I had to eliminate the situation now. So then he turned around and, um, he looks at me and I'm standing there. This is right by the exit door.

**INTERVIEWER**

Mm-hmm.

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01:33:40:21]

Uh, along with another flight attendant. So he goes, uh, I—so I actually tell him, what is your problem? He goes, you better start praying right now to Jesus Christ. I said, I said my prayers this morning. [01:33:59:3] He goes, well, you gotta pray, you gotta pray and, and, and now you got Israel and Ira-, and, uh, Iraq and Iran to deal with. And I said, oh, oh, really? I said, well, I'm going to take you to Iraq and Iran right now. And that's when I started to struggle with him. [01:34:08:11] And I put him in a particular chokehold, and he was down, and we were

just struggling there for a few minutes.

**INTERVIEWER**

[01:34:11:14]

You're six foot four inches tall.

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

Right.

**INTERVIEWER**

You weigh how much?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

Three-twenty-five.

**INTERVIEWER**

[01:34:19:22]

Three hundred and twenty-five pounds. So you had two inches and about seventy-five pounds on him.

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

Yes.

**INTERVIEWER**

How long did it take you to subdue him?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01:34:26:09]

I, I, I tell you, when you're struggling like that, and then you're fighting, and, and, you know, it, it felt good, good five, six minutes.

**INTERVIEWER**

Did anybody else come to help you?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01:34:34;26]

Nobody came. I was the first one that reacted to him at that door.

**INTERVIEWER**

But for how long did you struggle with the captain all by yourself?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

For about five or six minutes.

**INTERVIEWER**

[01:34:45:21]

And all the other passengers were doing what?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

Were still at their seats.

**INTERVIEWER**

[01:34:46:07]

And the two flight attendants—they were both women?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

Yeah, they were behind me at this point. They just...

**INTERVIEWER**

[OVERLAP] What were they doing?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01:34:53;21]

They were just back there. They just wanted to make sure that that door don't open up.

So I'm still struggling with him, but I only had a part of his neck, so I was applying pressure there. I couldn't get a full chokehold on the guy. Then, um, as I started to—as he started to throw me around, that's when this side opened up, and then I kind of told him goodnight, and just put him in a chokehold, and that's when I felt his knees buckle. [01:35:14:14] That's when I went, and then I came towards the aisle and laid him down, and I went to lay him down, that's when the other, uh, hero came in, and one guy came and pu-, took him on, um, big muscular guy, um, one of my competitors, um, his name is, um, I call him the Hawk for, uh...[01:35:38:27] But he helped me take him down from the left. Another guy came down too, on the right. Then I, I stood on top of him and I wanted to get his feet tied.

**INTERVIEWER**

Mm-hmm.

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01:35:40:09]

But he—the strap that they got, that they



gave me to put on him, he snapped those.

**INTERVIEWER**

You mean, the—they gave you some flex-ties, right?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

Flex-ties, yes.

**INTERVIEWER**

[01:35:57:19]

Which most par-, airplanes have.

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

Right. As I, so, uh, another hand-, another source of handcuffs. But he snapped them. So then I'm like, well, give me an extension to the seatbelt. I—because I, I use those.

**INTERVIEWER**

Mm-hmm.

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01:36:11:03]

Gimme that, and let me tie his legs. So at that time the—one of the flight attendants that was there gave it to the guy that was behind me. I guess he was somewhere back there, I didn't even see him, he goes, I got his legs, I got his legs. I said, good. He has his arm, then we had him controlled. So then, I'm, now I'm facing a hundred and

thirty people just going crazy. [01:36:33:04]  
So I'm, like, get, get the word out that we got  
this under control. Just tell them to relax,  
stay at their seats, we got it under control,  
we're going to land this plane. But I couldn't  
get it to as far back to the ending of the  
plane. [01:36:42:25] So it was a, a nice  
gentlemen, he says, David, I'll take care of it.  
My name started to get out, because there  
was a few people that knew me...

**INTERVIEWER**

Mm-hmm.

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01:36:53:20] ...from the industry, and said, David, I, I'll  
get it. I'll go out there. And we had calmed  
everybody down at the time...

**INTERVIEWER**

What was everybody doing on the, on the  
plane? I mean, I, I can, I can imagine how  
alarming that must have been. We've seen  
the cell phone video...

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

Mm-hmm.

**INTERVIEWER**

[01;37;06;17]

People seem to be out of their seats and, and panicking?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

Yeah, they were. We—that was the comfort that I wanted to bring back to them, and say, hey, we have it under control. There's no need to react this way. You know, it's, it's, it's a crowd control type of thing at this point...

**INTERVIEWER**

[01;37;19;03]

Were people shouting?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01;37;20;28]

Everybody was shouting. They were screaming. And you, you can hear them phones. It's, they—you know, they saw—you're talking about a bomb. He's talking about Israel, Iraq, you know, so, you, you know, the first reaction is, is there a bomb in this plane? You know, so—but at no time did he say that. It's just the people overreacting. [01;37;42:02] Okay, so then we have other people that try to come in, once we have him, and, you know, they,

they're there, just trying to see what they can do...

**INTERVIEWER**

Mm-hmm.

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01:37:50;13]

...but, you know, you read the papers today, and they're like, yeah, we were the one that took him down, we were the ones that chokehold him, and we did this, and—and, and that's the sad part. Because there's other heroes there that helped me take him down that, that should be, you know—those are my heroes, which I know a few already.

**INTERVIEWER**

[01:38:10:00]

What—you knew how to apply the chokehold, and you knew to try and tie him up, first with the flex-, flex-ties and then with the seatbelt extenders, because of your experience as a corrections officer?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01:38:21:00]

No, it was because a lot of times I used to, um, I, I worked the nightclub business...

**INTERVIEWER**

Mm.

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

...many years ago.

**INTERVIEWER**

Really?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01:38:27:20]

Yes. So when we—one of my, uh, expertise was when there was, it was a fight was to avoid it from spreading, because now you have, you—it, before you had, you had a saloon fight.

**INTERVIEWER**

Mm-hmm.

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01:38:39:15]

You isolate the incident, the situation, you bring it outside.

**INTERVIEWER**

Mm-hmm.

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01;38;41;07]

And then we'll—you, you dismantle it outside and let the people continue to have their fun. If you don't have that control, you're, you're, you're—you might as well just hang it up, because the whole, the whole place is going down.

**INTERVIEWER**

How, uh, how hard did the captain fight you when you tried to restrain him?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01;38;58;15]

He fought, he's a strong man. When he told me to pray, his eyeballs and his face, um, was—his eyeballs appeared to be out of his, out of his eyes, and...

**INTERVIEWER**

Was he sweaty?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01;39;07;18]

I don't think he was sweaty, I think he was just in such a anger—he has this, this rage, and an anger in him, and you better pray, and his eyeballs are, are almost popping out of his face. [01:39:23:23] I'm, like, Jesus Christ, this guy is nuts, you know, so, um, then, then, when, when, that's when I said I—you know, he says, you have to pray, and, you know, we got into that altercation.

**INTERVIEWER**

[01;39;33;23]

So the whole time you were struggling with him, did he continue to shout about Iran and Iraq?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01;39;37;24]

[OVERLAP] No, no, because he—I had his, he was grasped, he was gasping for air...

**INTERVIEWER**

[OVERLAP] Mm-hmm.

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01;39;39;17]

...because you, at that point, you, you can hear him choking.

**INTERVIEWER**

Mm-hmm.

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01;39;44;06]

You know, I didn't want him to—I didn't want to strangle the guy...

**INTERVIEWER**

Mm-hmm.

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01;39;48;13]

I just wanted to put him to sleep. I just wanted to put enough pressure on him that I knew that once I get him where I need him to be, I've done this before, and—especially in the club business, I know that once he falls on the floor, he's useless. He's not going to be able to gain that strength back.

**INTERVIEWER**

Mm-hmm.

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01;40;06;21]

I—you know, especially when now I got help now.

**INTERVIEWER**

Mm-hmm.

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01;40;11;02]

You know, it's—it was at that door that I needed it. Not on the floor.

**INTERVIEWER**

Are you surprised—I mean, we all wonder what we would do, uh, when confronted with an emergency like this. Are you surprised that more people didn't immediately jump up the way you did, to help you in those first few moments?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01;40;29;06]

You know, it's amazing, um, you would think the American people would, would, would not tolerate this. My—my goal is to get the message out, we're all Americans, let's stick together, let's, let's, let's not take votes, let's just react accordingly.



[01:40:44:20] I, the—that's why it's important that, you know, personally, I think that things need to be put in place—for example, the flight attendants. They couldn't handle this situation. Do they have any security training how to take down a guy this size instead of getting the passengers involved? You know, these, these, these particular pilots...

**INTERVIEWER**

[01:41:06:17] Yeah, but these are two women. I mean, you can't ex-...

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

There was a, there was a gentleman there too. There was three of them.

**INTERVIEWER**

Mm.

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01:41:12:19] So, you know, he's at the back of the plane, and I'm—the other two female flight attendants, they were in the front, the women. He could have easily come to the front and helped out, you know. A situation like that, you drop what you're doing, and

you, you gotta, you gotta try to solve the problem and avoid it from spreading.

[01:41:30:13] That's rule number one, you gotta stop it from, from spreading out, because now you're going to injure other people.

**INTERVIEWER**

[01:41:36:04] Do you think that the other passengers were afraid?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01:41:41:08] You know, I—and that's where I, um, I, I broke down on one of the TV shows, because I seen, um...

**INTERVIEWER**

[01:41:56:09] It's okay. You can—it's, it's—it was an intense experience. You saw what?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01:42:03:24] I saw a lot of fear. You know, in that hall.

**INTERVIEWER**

In the fellow passengers.

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

Yeah. They were—uh, those people were afraid. They were—one guy came up to me and said, I had a flash of my, um, my

daughter. I thought I wasn't going to see her again. I have five kids, so—I didn't have a chance to even think of my own. I'm trying to help out. [01:42:29:15] As an American citizen, try to bring calming to these hundred and thirty people that are, are, are frantic. How do you encourage them that we have it under control? How do you, you know, it's, it's hard, when you look at somebody in the eye, and they're holding onto each other. [01:42:43:08] And they're, they're praying. How do you get those people to believe in you? [01:42:53:12] You know, I'm on the floor. Most of the video you see on YouTube, you just see me on top of this guy. I was not—I was afraid if he would have gotten up, he would have been hurt, because at that point, I had no choice, because he, he may come back from being rested.

**INTERVIEWER**

Mm-hmm.

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01:43:09:09]

You know, I'm not rested yet. I'm just still

sitting on this guy on an awkward position.  
It...

**INTERVIEWER**

How long did you sit on him?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01:43:11:19] Until the plane landed.

**INTERVIEWER**

You stayed on him until the plane landed?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01:43:18:03] [OVERLAP] Yeah. Yes. Among other, uh, people that had him down on the floor. We, we landed this plane just as we were on that video.

**INTERVIEWER**

And, and did he continue to struggle once he was on the floor?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01:43:33:01] No, no. When he got up, when we helped him up, he—his first words were, we did it, we did it. And we were...

**INTERVIEWER**

The pi-, the captain said this?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01:43:37:11] The captain said that. He woke up, and he

says, we did it, we did it, like if—like if he was in some sort of Heaven or something, I don't know. I, I got the impression that by him saying that, that we did it, we crashed this plane, you know, and he's now, somewhere. [01:43:58:26] So when we were handing him over to the cops, to the, uh, federal police officers, he just passed out again, and that was the last time I, I saw him.

**INTERVIEWER**

[01:44:08:07] When you saw him, when you were struggling with him and, and, and he was telling you to say your prayers, and...

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

Mm-hmm.

**INTERVIEWER**

[01:44:14:07] ...and talking about Iran and Iraq and Israel, did he look like he was under the influence of something?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01;44;19;24] There was no alcohol in this gentleman.

**INTERVIEWER**

But I mean, he, could he, you know, people

can sometimes look like they're, they've taken a drug.

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[OVERLAP] I was real...

**INTERVIEWER**

[01:44:27:25] If they're shaky, or if they're sweaty, or if they're—did he look...

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

No. Just, he...

**INTERVIEWER**

[OVERLAP] Did he look unstable?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01:44:33:00] He was unstable. He was very unstable. He, um, he was very angry. He was very angry, he was at, at the point that, you know, he had lost it.

**INTERVIEWER**

[01:44:46:22] Do you think he was angry because he couldn't get back into the cockpit?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

Oh, no, his intention once he got into that pilot was to take the plane down. So whatever, whatever happened on the way back from that bathroom, that was the

motive.

**INTERVIEWER**

Why do you think that?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01:45:01:06]

Because that's what he says. Let me in, let me in, and he kicks the door, he says, this is where we take it down. So just throttle it down, he said, and the copilot, just throttle it down. You know, I'm like, you gotta be out of your mind. You know, there's families here. You have people going to Vegas. They haven't—it's a convention going on.

[01:45:19:01] You know, so that, that to me was, was the clue that came to my head, um, that something's not right, and then when one, when they were trying to pull him away from the cockpit, when he swung that, that flight attendant over, and she was complaining about her chest and her, her side, I knew then that she had...

**INTERVIEWER**

Did she fall?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01:45:36:23]

She fell to the corner. I mean, when I seen

her, she was on the corner, but, you know,  
I, I knew that was only one flight  
attendant...

**INTERVIEWER**

But was she on the ground?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01:45:48:02] I don't know if she was on the ground. I  
think she was leaning more from the pain...

**INTERVIEWER**

Mm-hmm.

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01:45:53:02] ...that she endured from the, the, the actual,  
uh, when she was thrown.

**INTERVIEWER**

Mm-hmm.

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01;45;54;20] Uh, but then you have the other flight  
attendant trying to handle this guy, and it  
was only going to be a matter of time.

**INTERVIEWER**

And it was another woman...

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

It was another woman.



**INTERVIEWER**

Was she petite? Was she medium...

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01:46:07:18]

She was petite.

**INTERVIEWER**

So no match for a six-foot-two...

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

No match for her.

**INTERVIEWER**

You know, stu-, for the pilot.

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01;46;15;07]

[OVERLAP] She was, She was not going to handle him. That's why when I got up, when I seen, uh, ho-, I believe her name was Natalie, when I seen her, and she, we made eye contact, she kind of whispered to me, help me. And that's all I needed. Because now I had every right to defend her and the crew...

**INTERVIEWER**

Mm-hmm.

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01:46:38:17]

...now I can put my hands on this guy. I just didn't want to touch the captain

because of whatever legal issue I would have to face. I just wanted to make sure that I was given the authorization to help and contain this individual. That was all.

**INTERVIEWER**

[01:46:39:14]

When you finally landed and the pilot was taken into custody, what did the other passengers and flight attendants say to you?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

Well, first of all, they—I sat back down in my seat, I was tired now, um, I, uh, I just sat there, and then they say, hey, we're going to pull into the American Airlines terminal, and we're going to take statements from everybody. [01:47:17:00] And once we got the statement, I, I, I don't drink, I just went there for a soda and then, uh, most of the people that knew me says Dave, you know, can we buy you a beer, can we take a picture with you? You know, it's because of you that we're here. [01:47:23:09] Um, and I said, look, I don't drink, and he goes, well, you gotta drink this one beer because I, I can see my daughter now, you know...

**INTERVIEWER**

Mm-hmm.

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01:47:36;27]

...so it was touching to me. I, I drank the beer, then more people bought more beer and before you know it, it was a six-pack...

**INTERVIEWER**

[CHUCKLES]

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01:47:43;26]

...so I'm like, how do I go up—excuse me, I, my phone is ringing. So I took off, and I went over to a, a seating area by myself...

**INTERVIEWER**

Mm-hmm.

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01:47:52:08]

...then one gentleman came up to me and said hey, you know, they're interviewing people but I don't know what happened, really, I come and tell you, they want to talk to you. So would you go talk to them? I said, I don't have a problem telling what happened. [01:48:08:07] So when I went to talk to them, um, I guess by that time they knew who I was, and by the time we all got

back, about three hours later, another JetBlue airline came in, took us, and flew us to Vegas. It's like an eleven-hour flight.

**INTERVIEWER**

[01:48:24:05]

Eleven hours to Vegas...

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

Right.

**INTERVIEWER**

...that you won't forget.

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01:48:27:09]

That—I probably won't fly again, you know, um, but my biggest concern is, is that we got to Vegas. Then there's all the cameras there again, and who's David Gonzalez. And I'm trying to dodge my way along from all these cameras because I've had enough, I'm exhausted, and I was up at four o'clock in the morning just to be at you, at the airport...

**INTERVIEWER**

Right.

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01;48;49;03]

...so, you know, it, it's been, it's been a—very difficult on me ever since that event.

**INTERVIEWER**

I, I—what are the lasting repercussions of, of something like this? I'm, I mean, do you—you just mentioned, uh, I don't want to ever fly again. I mean, is that true? You had to fly home.

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01;49;04;05]

I, I flew home, and it's funny, because I had a lot of encouragement, there was guys there that were saying, Dave, man, I'm so happy you're on this flight. You know, I said, hey, I'll do it again, you know. [01;49;13;09] But, you know, you always have that, you know, you always have that fear of what if? You know, we're not talking a passenger. We're talking about a pilot. A pilot that, that, that's trained to fly this plane. That...

**INTERVIEWER**

[01;49;29;02]

A pilot who is at the controls of the plane.

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

At the controls.

**INTERVIEWER**

At a certain a point.

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01:49:32:08]

[OVERLAP] That, that's, that has the lives of a hundred and thirty people at his hands. It's not like I—if it was a passenger it wouldn't have been a big thing, but to fight a federal employee, that, that, that was tough.

**INTERVIEWER**

What, what do you wonder about screening when it comes to these pilots and what they might—what drugs they might be taking, what their mental stability might be?

[01:49:58:17] I mean, we, we know that a lot of these people are under a lot of stress.

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01:50:02:10]

That's correct. At the end of the day, these, the, these pilots, they have families like us. What psychological treatments are they being put through? What kind of, uh, testing are they doing? Not just physically, but mentally? What, how, how you qualify them as, as a, as, as if he's okay to fly the plane? What—you know, Congress needs to get involved. This—you know, there's gotta be more politicians to set standards to get them

to get to qualify. [01:50:31:26] Because at the end of the day, he may have a bad day coming into work, and now he's angry because somebody cut him off. I mean, we get this all the time, we, we, the silliest accidents, you hear people getting killed. It's an issue. It's an issue that, that it's going to continue to happen if the FDA, the TSA and Congress don't get involved and start screening these pilots, uh, uh, on the one-on-one, on, you know, uh, more often.

**INTERVIEWER**

[01:50:59:20]

You think pilots should be screened more often...

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[OVERLAP] Oh, most definitely.

**INTERVIEWER**

...for mental stability.

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01:51:03:10]

I think they should be screened before they get on the plane. I...

**INTERVIEWER**

Every time?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01:51:07:08]

I would imagine so. I say, you, you're sure charging, uh, uh, for, uh, for twenty-five dollars for a bag, an additional bag of, of, of cargo, take off some of that proceeds. Hire a psychiatrist, just to have them a couple of questions. Two or three questions. How was your night? Where were you last night? [01:51:22:07] They have every right to ask those questions. Taking some of the fundings that they're taking from us, and use some of those proceeds to qualify them. [01:51:33:13] In addition to their yearly physical, um, you know, and whatever mental test they have to go through, but Congress has to get involved. The politicians at TSA. If they don't do nothing, this is going to happen again.

**INTERVIEWER**

[01:51:45:10]

We now know from affidavits that have been given that the captain inside the cockpit was saying a lot of erratic things, um, after the plane took off. Um, that he at one point told air traffic control to be quiet, uh, that he



turned the monitors off from air traffic control and tried to dim some of them—the, the, the monitors within the cockpit, sufficiently alarming the copilot that he was able to call for the backup pilot and, and quickly think to change the lock on the cockpit door. [01:52:19:29 ] What, what does that say to you, and how does that make you feel as a, as a member of the flying public, to know that he was behaving like that inside the cockpit, at the controls of this plane that you were a passenger on?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01:52:33:27]

Right. I—uh, again, and we're, we're talking about the captain, right?

**INTERVIEWER**

Mm-hmm.

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01:52:36:27]

Yeah, I—you know what, this is why the screening is so important. If we, if—you're going to see more of this. These guys are human beings just like all of us. At the end of the day, the, there, there's a six-month's evaluation period. I think that's the—that's

what's been out there, that that's all they get. [01:52:56:04] This guy could have trauma throughout a year, and now it's just, just surfaced again. You know, you need to qualify these guys. These guys mentac-, mentally, physically, they have to be stable enough to fly these planes. [01:53:14:11] My hero in this plane is the copilot. He's the one that radioed in for help, and to me, you know what, I, I tip my hat off to the guy. But he left that cockpit open for too, a little too long, and that was a security breach. [01:53:28:07] This is why, if there's no standards, there's no exercises on how to handle these situations, somebody's going to get in there and is going to take this plane down. It could have been a group effort of guys that wanted to take this flight. [01:53:38:21] This is flight one-nine-one, you know, it could have easily turned out to be nine-one-one, you know, that's, that's the image—why do we need to use these numbers? Why can't we use oh-five-four? Why three-one-one, uh, four-one-one? Let's

isolate those numbers out of the aircraft.

**INTERVIEWER**

[01:53:58:20]

What do you think should happen to Captain Osmond?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

You know what, first he should—he needs to be evaluated. He needs to be evaluated if he hasn't already. He may have had already some sort of evaluation.

**INTERVIEWER**

[01:54:10:22]

Well, he's being evaluated right now, but do you think he belongs in a hospital, do you think he belongs in prison, do you think he just belongs at home without a job?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

He...

**INTERVIEWER**

[01:54:20:03]

Should he ever be allowed to fly a plane again?

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[01;54;21;09]

He should never be allowed to fly again. He should not be allowed to fly again, as far as I'm concerned. He needs to find another career. Flying is not—it's going to be in

his—shouldn't be in his resume anymore.

**INTERVIEWER**

I can't imagine it will be, after this incident.

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

It shouldn't be.

**INTERVIEWER**

[01:54:36:03]

All right. Well, thank you for your quick response on the plane that day.

**DAVID GONZALEZ**

[OVERLAP] Thank you, thank you for having me here.