

Witness Statement

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On April 28 2016 I was on an airplane that lost power and had to make a forced landing. Prior to this flight I had made a solo parachute jump from this aircraft riding up in the front cockpit climbing out on the wing and exiting from there. Ray Lallo another experienced skydiver and I wanted to jump this plane together so we talked to Nathan Perlman the pilot about the possibility of riding up together.

After much discussion we practiced on the ground before making the decision to go ahead with the flight. We both had straps made of nylon webbing with thread through adaptors that we ran through our parachute harness and around the wing strut on the airplane. The pilot was very professional paying attention to all of the possible aspects of the flight including making sure that we were securely attached to the aircraft for taxi, takeoff and climb.

Takeoff roll seemed normal and we were airborne just over half way down the runway. As we climbed out the sound of the engine changed. Not being familiar with radial engines and being outside the aircraft on the exhaust side I wasn't sure if that was normal or not. Realizing that we were low over the trees I looked toward the other jumper and saw a look of concern on his face. At the same time we descended into the field and came to a stop. When the aircraft touched down I was facing forward and then pivoted on the strap to where I was facing backward toward the pilot. I felt the sudden stop but didn't really feel any stress on my body at all. None of us were injured during the landing.

Immediately on touchdown the pilot was flipping switches etc. in the cockpit and at the same time asking if we were ok. After making sure no one was injured I took my strap off and walked away from the aircraft. From the time the engine sound changed everything happened very fast, so fast that I didn't fully grasp what was happening until we were on the ground. I can't praise the pilot enough for how he handled the situation. He did an awesome job landing the plane where he did. Before and after the flight our safety was clearly his primary concern. When confronted with a loss of power he flew the plane to a safe landing. I firmly believe that if the ground was dry instead of muddy the aircraft would be totally intact.

If I can provide any more information please feel free to contact me.

William Hubbell

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