

My name is Nathan Cruz ([REDACTED] CFI), a flight instructor at Upgrade, Inc. I have received a copy of the Compliance Philosophy and Airman Rights, or the Pilot's Bill of Rights.

On August seventeen I was conducting a training flight with an initial commercial Airplane Multi Engine Land student for the purpose of satisfying pre-requisites for the practical exam. At approximately ten pm, I decided to head back from Portland, Maine early due to weather approaching Groton from the West. The student and I had determined that if the weather was suitable upon return, we would continue to build nighttime in Groton to satisfy nighttime requirements. We had been receiving flight following from Providence and once we had the airport in sight, we decided to cancel flight following and proceed VFR as the weather was still VFR in Groton. Around approximately eleven pm, we began pattern work in Groton to practice landing and continue to build time. After a few laps in the pattern, my student was on the downwind with the gear down and flaps set to ten degrees abeam our touchdown point per recommended procedure and began his decent from traffic pattern altitude. As the student began to bank and turn into the base leg, I heard a sputter in an engine, and looked to make sure he had the proper control inputs in. Once an engine sputtered again and I felt the plane jerk, I stated, "my controls," and my student transferred the controls to me. From this point on I was the main manipulator of the flight controls. My initial reaction was to maintain control of the aircraft and ensure I was at the proper airspeed. I then began my emergency procedures. I pushed the mixtures, propellers, then throttle levers full forwards. I then retracted the ten degrees of flaps and reached for the gear handle. At this point, I made the decision that I was not going to retract the gear due to our proximity to the airport and our altitude. I then began to identify which engine was the problem and believe to have felt more rudder pressure with my left rudder. I then glanced down at the manifold pressure gauge and noticed that my left manifold pressure indicator seemed to be significantly higher than my right manifold pressure indicator. Due to the sound of both engines, I believed I was still getting power from both, but the right engine I had deemed had less output. I pitched the nose down to gain airspeed in attempt to use it to gain more altitude as I pitched the nose easily back up. When I noticed that our decent rate was still too high, I then feathered the right propeller to eliminate drag and cut off the right mixture to secure that engine. At this point, we were already to low, and I made the decision to not troubleshoot then engine and begin to look for a place to land. I knew that due to our approximate location in the pattern, if I turned left towards the runway and did not make it, I would potentially land on the railroad tracks. I deemed that not the right decision. With no good visual cues on where to land at night, I decided to head towards a dark area in hopes to avoid a residential area. I picked up a visual of a street and decided that would be my landing spot. At this time, my main priority was the fly the plane, and try to avoid any powerlines while I lined the aircraft up. I spotted lines on the right side of the road and maneuvered the aircraft as to land closer to the left side to minimize the chance of striking the power lines. I then began to flare, and at that point I struck something, and the impact caused me to lose any understanding of where I was until the plane came to rest. Realizing I was still conscious, I immediately screamed to my student to ask if he was okay, and he responded. He had already made his way to the back seat and was trying to get out the back. I told him to come back to the front and leave out my door which I had managed to get open. I got out and gave him room to leave the scene before me, then proceeded to follow him out of what I now understood was a home.

Nathan Cruz

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