

ENGLISH

THE ACCIDENTAL TOURIST

~Summary~

-by Bill Bryson

Forgetfulness of the Author

The narrator of the story states that he is not at all good at living in the real world. He wonders at how other people are able to do the things so easily which he is unable to perform. He has ended up being at the wrong place while searching for the washroom at a cinema or forgotten the number of his room several times when staying at a hotel.

Incident on a Big Trip with Family

Once the narrator and his family went to England on Easter. At the time of check-in at the airport, he remembered that he was a member of the airlines frequent flyer programme. When he tried to take his membership card out from his bag, he found that the zip of his handbag was jammed. He pulled the zip, harder and harder but it did not open. Finally, it opened and in the process, all the contents (newspaper cuttings, passport, magazines, etc) of the bag got spread everywhere on the floor in a very large area. He also injured his finger badly while opening the zip.

Incidents in the Aeroplane

The narrator always had mishappenings while travelling on an aeroplane. Once, he leaned to tie a shoelace and at the same time the passenger sitting ahead of him turned back his chair. Due to this, he got stuck in a miserable position and escaped from it with great difficulty. At another instance, he dropped soft drink twice on a lady sitting beside him. The lady looked at him with a stunned expression.

Narrator's Worst Experience on a Flight

Once, the narrator was writing his thoughts in a notebook on a flight. He was also sucking the other end of his pen from time to time. He started talking to an attractive lady seated on the next seat. When he went to the washroom, he saw that the pen had leaked and his mouth, chin, tongue, teeth and gums had got coloured navy blue.

Precautions Taken by his Wife

Knowing her husband's strange habits, the narrator's wife directs her children to help their father whenever they are travelling together. The narrator also does not eat or drink when travelling alone and sits quietly on his hands to keep them from flying mischievously.

Reason for not Gathering Flyer's Miles

The narrator used to fly around 100,000 miles a year but he hardly gathered over 200 air miles from 23 air lines. This was because he forgot to ask for the air miles or the airline staff did not record his airmiles.

Once while travelling to Australia, he hoped to get a lot of air miles but the clerk told him that he was not entitled. The ticket was in the name of B Bryson and card was having name W Bryson. Thus, he didn't get his air miles and wasn't able to fly to Bali first class.

Conclusion of The Accidental Tourist

The chapter – The Accidental Tourist teaches students that it is important to be organised and systematic in our lives, especially while travelling. We should be well-prepared otherwise we are likely to encounter unexpected mishaps like the author.