



The Betty Letters

My Dear Grandchild,

Oh! What a pity it is that Oasis Hongkong Airlines Ltd () could not make the grade! It was owned, or controlled by, a very religious, US dollar billionaire, you know. He is the Very Reverend Raymond Lee Cho Min (). Gone but not forgotten, as the saying goes. I cannot help but ponder whether or not the God of the Very Reverend Raymond Lee Cho Min was trying to send a message to the Good Man. That message must have been along the lines: 'Do not covet riches and glory, but Worship only One God and do his bidding ... I am that God ... And I am a jealous God. Take not the name of your God in vain!' Of course, it was not I who wrote those words, but the world's worst known navigator: Moses the Egyptian, about whom, it is said, he spent some 42 years, trying to find his way out of the Eastern Desert, along with some riffraff that he picked up along the way, the riffraff, being former slaves of Egypt. I suppose the name of the airline, Oasis Hongkong, had no religious connotation when it was first chosen because only in the desert does one find oases. What is troubling me about the demise of this airline are not the billions of dollars, lost by the Very Reverend Raymond Lee Cho Min, but the hundreds of millions of dollars that have been lost by Hongkong people who purchased tickets on the airline, when it was flying, only to discover that they cannot, now, get refunds on their tickets – because the cash cupboard is bare. In fact, as history has proved, the cash cupboard was bare at the time that the tickets were issued. It is known that there were, at least, 22,000 people in Hongkong who purchased tickets on Oasis Hongkong Airlines. The amount of money that these people lashed out was about \$HK250 million, records indicate. Gone but not forgotten. Now, here's a thought: At the time that those 22,000 tickets were issued, did Senior Management of Oasis Hongkong Airlines know that it could not honour its commitment to those 22,000 ticketholders? You know, in some jurisdictions, to obtain credit by deception is considered a criminal offence. I am not suggesting that the Very Reverend Raymond Lee Cho Min perpetrated any wrongdoing, far from it, because I am sure that he had nothing to do with the demise of the airline in which he owned the lion's share of the equity. However, somebody must have known that the airline was about to go down the tubes at the time that that \$HK250 million was taken into the coffers and tickets were issued for future flights – which were, as it turned out, non-existent – to those 22,000 prospective travellers. Would it be correct to suggest that it appeared to be incumbent on whomsoever knew of the true financial situation at this airline to blow the whistle in order to stop the financial bleeding and not to obtain further credit – the sale of tickets to prospective passengers – in the certain knowledge that those future commitments were unlikely, ever, to be honoured? Certainly, in the US, there would have been a great number of people, standing in line, outside solicitors' doors, raising the question: Is there no legal redress that may be obtained? Good God! What a situation! Jam for the legal profession of the US.

So you see, My Dear Grandchild, in the words of William Shakespeare, in the play, Julius Caesar:

*'Truly, Sir, all that I live by, is the awl: I meddle
with no tradesman's matters, nor woman's matters, but
withal, I am indeed, Sir, a surgeon to old shoes; when
they are in great danger, I recover them.'*

In the case of the Very Reverend Raymond Lee Cho Min, for what reason was he dabbling in commerce, in 'tradesman's matters'? For what reason did he not stick to giving sermons in his Church and offering solace to the good Christian faithful? Once he was very rich, by his own admission. Now, he is still rich, but not as rich as when he helped to fund Oasis Hongkong Airline. You see: The Lord Giveth; The Lord Taketh Away. It is a lesson for us, all.

Talk to you, next week,

Chief Lady

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