

# Story Behind A New Pair Of Hands Is One Of Courage, Will To Live

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NEW BEDFORD, Mass. (AP)—Lita Levine of Brooklyn, N.Y., bought a new pair of hands last week.

The story of Lita and her new hands began on the night of Aug. 15, 1958, Northeast Airlines Flight 258—two hours late out of New York because of bad weather—was coming in for a landing on tiny Nantucket Island, off the Massachusetts coast.

Lita, 23, a \$73-a-week cashier in a New York brokerage firm, starting a 10-day vacation, fastened her seat belt and smoothed her brown hair with slim, graceful fingers. She deferred reaching for her gloves. It didn't really matter. Soon Lita would not need gloves.

The big twin-engine Convair came down through heavy fog and struck the ground 300 yards short of the runway. It plowed a 500-foot swath through a field of scrub growth and pine trees, then burst into flames.

Twenty-four persons died in the crash. Of 10 survivors, two later died. Lita was one who lived.

"It happened so suddenly," she recalls. "It was as though it were in a dream, as though it were happening to someone else. One minute everything was fine. The next minute I was pinned under something—I didn't know what."

That something was an 800-pound engine.

"I knew I was badly hurt," explains Lita. "My arms were crossed in front of me and I could see my fingers burning and raw. Your mind sort of turns off at a time like that."

Lita lay on her back, her hair and head burned, her face and body black with oil and burns. She cried, "I can't see."

A man took a handkerchief and wiped her eyes and face.

"Please don't let me die," she cried and then, as pain swept her, "Kill me."

Thirty men lifting with ropes and hands at last lifted the engine and freed Lita. "We were given superhuman strength," one said afterward.

Lita lost consciousness. She awoke in the Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston.

"When I came to, I couldn't see anything. I thought I was blind. I remember screaming." A physician, understanding her panic, removed bandages momentarily giving Lita a brief blurred glimpse that reassured her.

Hospital records show Lita had second- and third-degree burns over 40 or 50 per cent of her body. Her arms and legs were charred, her fingers black. Her right eyelid was deeply burned and there was some impairment of vision. There was almost complete external destruction of both ears and extensive external skull injuries. Her left kneecap was fractured. She had numerous deep scoop-like cuts.

There were days and weeks under sedation. Her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Nathan Levine, were constantly at her bedside. There followed during the next two years 37 operations. Surgeons tried to save her fingers—and failed.

There came a victory when Lita stood on her good left leg. And, a month later, the worst blow when on Nov. 10, she learned her fingers were gone.

"At first I made myself believe it was a bad dream, that the fingers would grow back on again," she says.

The despairing girl, asking for death, said, "I won't accept it; I won't live without hands." Eighteen hours a day her mother fought a battle of the spirit. In between Lita's father took over, softly speaking hour after hour that she would be all right.

The parents' love won and Lita at last accepted the thought, "I did have a chance; I had to get better."

Doctors cut V-clefts between the stumps of her thumbs and middle fingers. With her maimed hands she could hold a cigarette, or a cup of coffee.

"At last, I could do some things for myself," she says.

On June 29 this year, after 101 weeks, she was discharged. But ahead lay more surgery. She had to have a new right eyelid and lashes. Her brown hair had been

### POLIO FIGURES

WASHINGTON (UPI)—The waning 1960 polio season produced 75 new cases last week, 13 less than in the previous week and 112 less than in the same week of 1959. At this time last year, a total of 7,853 cases had been reported compared to this year's total of 2,974 cases, the U.S. Public Health Service said Friday.

replaced with a wig. Her arms and legs were scarred. External portions of her skull, including her forehead, needed more surgery. Her nose had been re-made. One leg is permanently stiff.

A few weeks ago she was awarded a settlement of \$375,000 for her injuries.

Now she has plans. She will shop for drapes for the Boston apartment where she and her parents live while awaiting her further surgery. Maybe she

will paint. She was good in art while at school. She hopes to tour Europe for six months or so.

Her invested trust fund should care for her needs for life. But she hopes to work again in a brokerage house.

And now she has bought some new hands. She will wear rings on them. And gloves. She always liked gloves. She almost reached for her gloves—just before the crash.

Nigeria exports 100,000 tons of chocolate beans each year.

# Egg Purchasing Now Suspended

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Agriculture Department suspended Friday a program authorizing the purchase of eggs to bolster producer prices.

It said this action is being taken because of recent improvement in prices.

The agency had purchased 19,048,000 pounds of dried eggs this year at a cost of \$20,702,000.

The eggs are being donated to the school lunch program, needy persons and eligible public institutions.

Dr. Albert Hibbs, chief of JPL's division of space sciences, said the pin-head size micrometeorites appear to form a belt around the earth starting about 100 miles above the atmosphere and extend-

# Explorer I Satellite Finds Earth Is Orbiting By Millions Of Species

PASADENA, Calif. (UPI)—The Explorer I satellite has discovered that the earth literally has millions of tiny satellites in the form of cosmic dust particles, the Jet Propulsion Laboratory of the California Institute of Technology announced today.

The particles come in from outer space, are trapped by the atmosphere into elongated orbits and circle the earth for perhaps thousands of times, Hibbs said. Then they fall into the atmosphere and burn up, but are replaced by other incoming micrometeorites.

"A close examination of Explorer I data shows a strong change in the micrometeoritic counting rate recorded as the satellite changes altitude," Hibbs said. "This effect could be caused only by a cloud of micrometeorites in closed orbits around the earth."

The discovery was hailed by Hibbs as the second major accomplishment of Explorer I, launched Jan. 31, 1958, after its detection of the Van Allen radiation belts.

The mule is a cross between two types of animals.

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832-12-12 1/2	reg. 17.70 ro;	now 15.40
832-6-12 1/2	reg. 22.84 ro;	now 19.90
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939-12-12 1/2	reg. 20.00 ro;	now 17.40
1047-6-11	reg. 42.40 ro;	now 36.90

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12"-1-20	reg. 4.41;	now 3.35
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60"-1-20	reg. 19.68;	now 15.05
72"-1-20	reg. 23.58;	now 18.00

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1036-2-12 1/2	reg. 20.67;	now 17.00
1660-2-12 1/2	reg. 33.90;	now 27.85
1972-2-12 1/2	reg. 40.32;	now 33.15

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1936-1-14	reg. 25.66;	now 21.70
3160-1-14	reg. 41.15;	now 34.85

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6' r/d No. 62	reg. 51.80;	now 43.98
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8' r/d No. 82B	reg. 70.58;	now 59.82

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6'x2'x2' No. 226B	reg. 29.82;	now 25.30
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