

Capsized

Alan squeezed past an elderly couple as he tried to hold on to his mother's hand. There was a large crowd trying to get onto the ferry. People were holding plastic bags and small hand luggage. Alan was pushed forward as he was walking along the narrow gangway that connected the jetty to the battered ferry.

Alan was unable to get a seat on the ferry. He stood on the deck with his mother, next to a young chubby girl. Putting down their luggage, they waited impatiently for the ferry to move off. Just then, the engine started and the ferry chugged slowly out to sea. The ride to the neighbouring island was supposed to be a short one. However, midway through the trip, the boat began to rock violently. Alan grabbed hold of his mother's arm with one hand and the rail with the other hand. At first, he tried to hold on to the luggage but as the water became rougher, the boat rocked so hard that luggage began sliding about. Alan let go of his luggage. Seeing his mother's panic-stricken look, Alan tried to console her by grinning at her and telling her that the trip was certainly not as monotonous as he had thought it would be. However, before she could answer him, an exceptionally huge wave crashed onto the ferry.

The ferry flipped to the right and remained where it was. People were screaming and children were crying. Then the ferry began to sink gradually into the dark murky water. Alan held on to his mother, burying his face in her body as he felt himself sliding downwards. When the first splashes of ice-cold water touched his legs, he pulled his mother towards him, afraid that he would lose her. All around them, people were being thrown into the water. It was clear that many had gone underwater for the shrill screams soon disappeared and only soft moans could be heard just a few minutes after the ferry capsized. Alan and his mother swam to a floating life buoy and held on to it. They knew that it would at least keep them alive until help arrived.

Less than an hour later, divers were combing the surrounding area for people. However, they did not manage to rescue all the passengers from the sea. Besides Alan and his mother, only twenty other passengers survived. There were one hundred and fifty passengers on the ferry. As Alan and his mother were taken to safety, they could not help wondering if the young girl next to them had survived.