

Mystery Object Strikes United Airlines Jet Windshield at 36,000 Feet

It's the kind of story that sounds like a scene straight out of a sci-fi thriller. A United Airlines pilot flying a Boeing 737 at 36,000 feet was injured after a mystery object smashed through the plane's windshield and forced an emergency landing in Salt Lake City.

The shocking incident, as reported by the New York Post, raises serious questions about what exactly is happening in our skies and how close this flight came to disaster.



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According to the report, "Photos circulating online reportedly show the pilot's arms bleeding and bruised with injuries consistent with glass cuts." The cockpit itself wasn't spared either. Broken glass covered the dashboard and scorch marks were visible at the point of impact. Whatever struck the plane didn't just crack the glass, it left behind the kind of damage that suggests something powerful and fast.

United Flight 1093 was en route from Denver to Los Angeles when it was forced to divert. "On Thursday, United flight 1093 landed safely in Salt Lake City to address damage to its multilayered windshield," the airline said in a statement. "We arranged for another aircraft to take customers to Los Angeles later that day and our maintenance team is working to return the aircraft to service."



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Experts are baffled. Some online observers suggested the strike could have been "space debris or even a meteor," though others pointed to possible electrical malfunctions. But as the Post notes, "the scorch marks and the broken glass indicate the plane was likely hit by something." That "something" remains a mystery.

The Federal Aviation Administration has previously said the odds of a commercial passenger being seriously injured by space debris are "1 trillion to 1." Yet with NASA tracking more than 25,000 pieces of debris larger than four inches orbiting Earth, perhaps that trillion-to-one risk isn't as far-fetched as it once seemed.

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It's crazy to think how differently this could have ended. A Boeing 737 MAX 8 traveling at cruising altitude doesn't have room for error. The fact that the pilot was able to land safely despite his injuries is a testament to his training and composure.

Still, the thought that a mystery object possibly from space could strike a passenger jet at 36,000 feet is alarming. It reminds us that for all our advances in aviation technology there's still plenty above us that we don't fully control or understand.

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Thankfully, everyone on board made it home safely. But the next time a plane streaks silently across the night sky, it's worth remembering that space isn't as empty as we like to think.

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