

unless there is an electrical failure (I have had that in another plane), but that wouldn't cause the plane to stop flying.

I dunno, maybe something like this ... ?

"Again, he wiped the back of his hand across the stubble that had grown bothersome on his chin, pressed his head forward towards the windscreen so he could get a better look at the lowering clouds. He has flown in weather worse than this, he tells himself. Takes another sip of the acrid coffee in his traveling cup, not because he needs it but because it's still there. Nasty stuff, but it reminds him of the better times when that damned dog was still alive. Wisps of ragged clouds flash over and under the wingtips as the ceilings continue to lower the further he flies up the valley. Temps are hovering just above freezing which is his bigger concern. And he presses on.

"A cautious man and a practical man he continues his scan of the instrument panel in the methodical way that the old geezer pounded into his head those many years ago. God, he hated that guy but a fine pilot he was. And smart, but you had to watch carefully for those moments of truth amongst the grumbling and head-slaps and colorful language. A slight needle tick caught his attention on the last pass across the aging instruments but it wasn't until a few minutes later that he started piecing together the disparate bits of info that were staring him in the face - suction was low, lower than it should have been at these settings, and things just didn't feel right with the artificial horizon. There were some ice crystals at the top of the windscreen, perhaps the venturi was starting it ice over, too?

"Another wisp of cloud flashed by, he was in and out of it in a second. The ceilings were definitely dropping. The practical and cautious man sized up the situation and the math wasn't good: the weather was deteriorating and while he was instrument-certified he had no business taking a seventy-year-old plane into the freezing clouds with questionable instruments. Better to sort this out on the ground than in the air. He scratched his chin with the back of his hand once again, then pulled back the power and entered a descending turn to the left, back towards the sandbar he had just overflowed.

"The wheels kissed the strewn rocks making up the majority of the sandbar and he executed the same beautiful landing he has done in hundreds of other locations on hundreds of other days before, because that's just the way he did things.

"And it would have been the perfect landing, were it not for the moose that stepped out of the treeline and stumbled in his way ..."

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Blue Skies and Tailwinds

By Marty and Zach Miles

Check back next month for more exciting news and information!

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