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## TRUE NORTH FOR THE TYRO

A friend said I'd never really see Alaska unless I was game enough to fly with a bush pilot. He introduced me to one named Grimby. Soon I was in the makeshift back seat of a biplane that looked like an early Wright brothers reject.

I was along for the view. The official passenger was a Mr. Clark who was going to join a pipeline survey team on the coast.

"Tighten your seat belts, we're goin' up fast," said Grimby. "We got us a williwaw, a sudden weird wind off the Aleutians. Full of silt and seal hair and rutting moose musk. One thing about a williwaw, you can take off downwind with just enough power to rise vertical like them fancy VTOL aircraft. A smidgen of runway is plenty-- which is good, seein' it's turned to slop we need to get shed of in a hurry." His next remark was: "Your innards'll catch up with you in a minute." He glanced at Mr. Clark, back at me, then stared at Clark.

"Uh--oughta be a bag in the door pocket," Grimby said to him.

We soon leveled out over a snowfield filled with as many shades of blue as a painter's palette. "It's more beautiful than I imagined," I exclaimed aloud.

"You ain't flown in a bitty bird before, eh?"

"No, we were always too high to appreciate the scenery."

"Yeah well, this little ole gal shows you ever'thing. Never had a

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