

Illustrations by *Ted Wilbur*



## Gramps from Yesteryear

### Whoops!

Thirty-five minutes after being catapulted in an F11F Tiger from an attack carrier cruising off Okinawa, a fighter pilot experienced excessive engine vibrations, followed shortly by complete power failure. He was at an altitude of only 9,500 feet, so he quickly trimmed the aircraft to a nose-down position, wings level, speed 260 knots, and prepared for ejection.

The first pull of the face curtain fired the canopy, but not the seat. A good hard second pull fired the seat, to the pilot's relief, and from there on the automatic lap belts and barometric chute release functioned properly.

At 8,000 feet the pilot inflated his Mae West in preparation for a water landing and tried to pull himself up to sit in the sling of the chute, but found he was unable to do so. He oscillated gently as he floated down. The inner parts of his thighs seemed extremely sore, so he released his leg straps to relieve the pain. Immediately, to his horror, he slid down in the harness, the chest strap coming up to his chin and finally catching on his NOSE!

With new-found strength, he seized the chest strap with both hands, pulled it back down to chest level, and maintained this hold until hitting the water some 6,000 feet later.

The pilot collapsed his chute with difficulty after being dragged 300 feet over the extremely rough water, and inflated his pararaft, retaining the chute as a sea anchor. For the next hour and a half he had a rough time, being tumbled into the water periodically and having great

difficulty keeping the raft upright and pointed into the oncoming waves.

Flares contained in the survival kit were rusted together, but one did work. He was finally able to attract the attention of a searching destroyer, which threw him a line and hauled him aboard.



**Grampaw Pettibone says:**

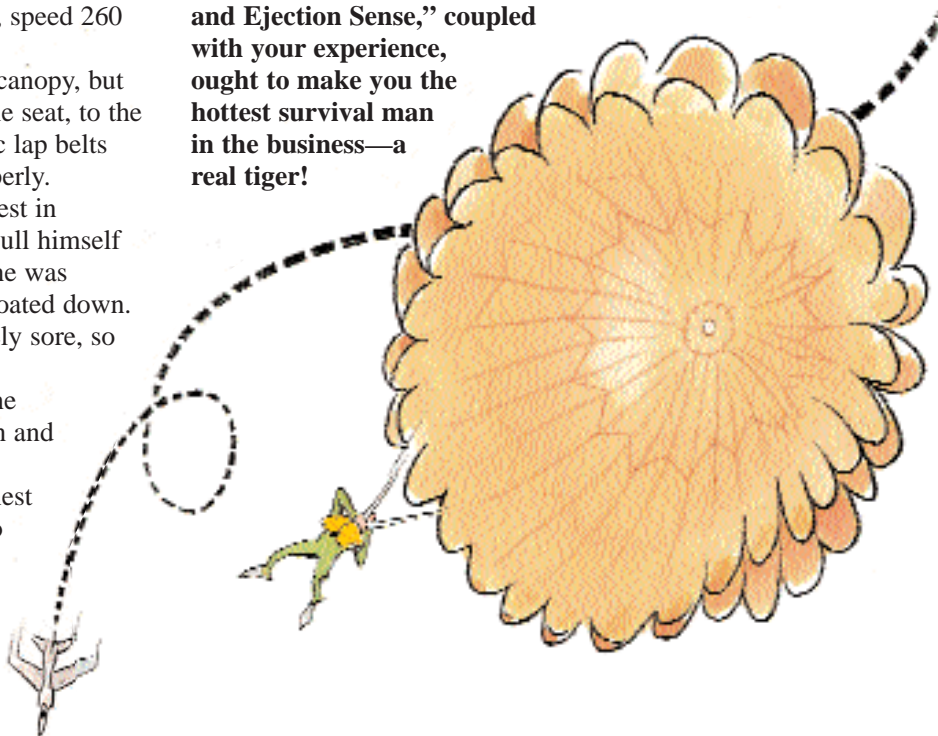
**Whew! What a hairy experience! A few more like this and you'll be strikin' for Ole Gramps' job. It's been said that "if it isn't fatal, Gramps has done it," but this is a new one on me.**

**A few quick comments:**

**1. When you gotta eject, if the aircraft is under control, zoom off the excess speed or at least try to get it level. No use losin' valuable altitude while you're pullin' the curtain.**

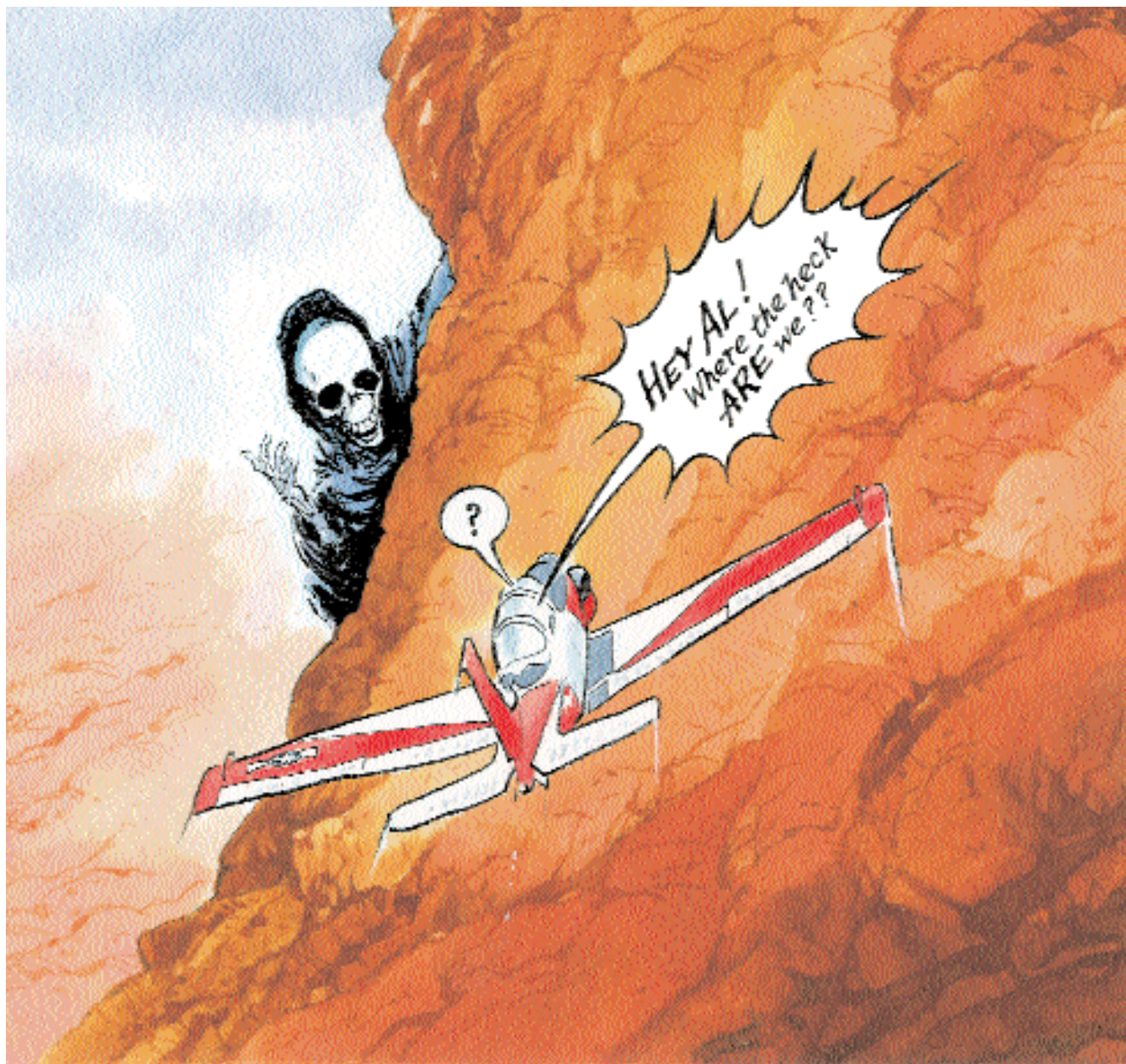
**2. If you'd had a tight chest strap (and I'll bet you really wear it cinched up now), the Mae West inflation woulda turned you purple.**

**3. Lucky you had a long nose. After you get through beatin' up the parachute riggers for the rusty flares you found in your kit, a review of "Bail Out and Ejection Sense," coupled with your experience, ought to make you the hottest survival man in the business—a real tiger!**



**LT 'BIGGO' BRAKE, LAST OF THE FEW NASAL AVIATORS, INVENTS THE NOTABLE SNOOT CHUTE.**





AL is in BLUNDERLAND.....

## Trouble in a Turbo-Mentor

A pilot was on a routine flight ferrying a passenger in a T-34C from one West Coast air station to another. The Turbo-Mentor departed under a visual flight rules tower-to-tower clearance. Once airborne, the pilot canceled his clearance with the departure air station tower and leveled at 2,500 feet. He then turned north, and eight miles from the base turned east toward a canyon area. The tops of the surrounding ridgeline and peaks in the canyon were obscured by clouds. The overcast bottom was touching the canyon walls.

The T-34C continued in a northeast direction into the canyon, now under instrument meteorological conditions. Shortly thereafter, the pilot commenced a level, reverse

turn at 20–25 degrees angle of bank to exit the canyon. Instead, the Turbo-Mentor struck the north canyon wall. Both occupants were killed, the aircraft destroyed.



**Grampaw Pettibone says:**

**A canyon catastrophe! Over the years Ole Gramps has reviewed more than a few such accidents. In most encounters between canyons and flying machines, the canyons win. Complacency reared its ugly head prior to the sortie when weather conditions weren't carefully considered. Then the pilot misjudged the distance to the canyon wall in the turn, with fatal consequences. 'Nuff said!**