

# *The Tailspin*

*by Edward Field*

Going into a tailspin  
in those days meant curtains.  
No matter how hard you pulled back on the stick  
the nose of the plane wouldn't come up.

Spinning round, headed for a target of earth,  
the whine of death in the wing struts,  
instinct made you try to pull out of it that way, by force,  
and for years aviators spiraled down and crashed.

Who could have dreamed that the solution  
to this dreaded aeronautical problem  
was so simple?

Every student flier learns this nowadays:  
you move the joystick in the direction of the spin,  
and like a miracle the plane stops turning  
and you are in control again  
to pull the nose up out of the dive.

In panic we want to push the stick away from the spin,  
wrestle the plane out of it,  
but the trick is, as in everything,  
to go with the turning willingly,  
rather than fight—give in, go with it,  
and that way come out of your tailspin whole.

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