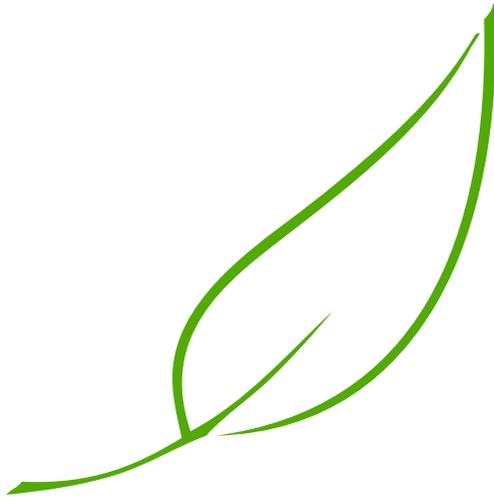


# UP, UP AND GONE

by Ken Bradbury



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*Scene: The cockpit of a plane with two pilot seats. (1m, 2f)*  
*Captain Turbine; Gringood, flight attendant; Needley, passenger*

**CAPTAIN TURBINE:** (*into the microphone*) Good morning and welcome to Bare Bones United, the cheapest airline flying.

Looks like we'll have a full flight this morning so if you could make room on your lap for an extra passenger or two, we'd appreciate it. Sorry folks ... that's what keeps the prices so low at Bare Bones United. And for those of you who'll have to stand today, don't worry ... it's just a short flight between Bollingberg and Whifflehousen. If you are standing, feel free to grab onto anyone large.

**GRINGOOD:** (*a flight attendant, entering*) All passengers aboard,

Captain.

**CAPTAIN TURBINE:** Good. That makes it easier. I hate it when they come running down the runway as we're taking off. Bad for our image.

**GRINGOOD:** I'll make the announcement. (*grabbing an imaginary microphone from the ceiling of the cockpit*) Welcome aboard Bare Bones United. I'm your head flight attendant, Emma Gringood. The captain has asked that you please observe the fasten seatbelts sign as we take off. Thanks for flying Bare Bones.

**CAPTAIN TURBINE:** You do that so well.

**GRINGOOD:** There's not much to say. The airline has cut out meals, drinks, pillows, and parachutes. What is there to announce?

**CAPTAIN TURBINE:** And I think it's a great move to have them bring their own chairs and seatbelts. Saves bucks.

**GRINGOOD:** You don't have to deal with the passengers. They think we're cheapskates.

**CAPTAIN TURBINE:** We are. That's why we're still flying.

**GRINGOOD:** Where's the co-pilot?

**CAPTAIN TURBINE:** Too expensive. All they do is sit there saying, "Roger that, Captain. Roger that." Well, let's give it some gas and see if we can get off the ground this time.

**GRINGOOD:** This time?

**CAPTAIN TURBINE:** Last week they tried cutting out the fuel to

save costs. Embarrassing. The passengers had to push the plane back to the terminal.

**NEEDLEY:** (*offstage*) Hey! I need some help!

**GRINGOOD:** Guess I'd better go.

**CAPTAIN TURBINE:** Prepare for takeoff!

**GRINGOOD:** Any suggestions?

**CAPTAIN TURBINE:** Prayer would be good.

**NEEDLEY:** (*offstage*) Can I get some service back here?

**GRINGOOD:** Gotta go. (*exits.*)

**CAPTAIN TURBINE:** (*grabbing the microphone*) This is Captain

Turbine again. Looks like we've got the okay for takeoff.

Brace yourselves ... this usually works.

**NEEDLEY:** (*offstage*) The plane's moving!

**CAPTAIN TURBINE:** Yep. That's how we get it up in the air. (*moves the throttle forward*) Hang on, everybody. I did this once before and it came out great!

**NEEDLEY:** (*offstage*) We're going up!

**CAPTAIN TURBINE:** That's the plan! (*a pause, then*) Wow. It worked. We're flying. Cool!

**GRINGOOD:** (*entering*) This is a rowdy bunch today. They've never flown Bare Bones before.

**CAPTAIN TURBINE:** Me either. Just got the job yesterday.

**GRINGOOD:** What?

**CAPTAIN TURBINE:** Don't worry. I've got the instruction manual right ... (*searches a bit*) ... right ... Hmm.

Must have left it at the hotel. Too late now. We're flying, baby!

**NEEDLEY:** (*offstage*) Can somebody help me?

**GRINGOOD:** I can't calm that lady down.

**CAPTAIN TURBINE:** Look up there in the medicine cabinet.

**GRINGOOD:** (*searching the overhead compartment*) What am I

looking for?

**CAPTAIN TURBINE:** Sleeping pills. Tranquilizers. Best investment this cheapskate airline every made. Just put one in a glass of water and she'll be out 'til we land.

**NEEDLEY:** (*bursting into cockpit*) Can you hear me back there?

**CAPTAIN TURBINE:** They can hear you in Pittsburg. What's the

problem?

**NEEDLEY:** This airline is a joke! No food, no drinks ... and only one restroom! Do you realize you have passengers who don't even have a seat?

**CAPTAIN TURBINE:** Picky, picky, picky. Hey, Gringood ... since this is such a great passenger, why don't you break the rules and give her a cocktail.

**GRINGOOD:** Cocktail?

**CAPTAIN TURBINE:** The cocktail I just told you how to mix.

**GRINGOOD:** Oh! Oh, yes! (*to Needley*) Just have a seat and I'll bring you something special.

**NEEDLEY:** I have three screaming children sitting behind me.

**CAPTAIN TURBINE:** Make that four cocktails!

**GRINGOOD:** Yes, Captain! (*to Needley*) If you'd just have a seat, I think I can make everything just fine.

**NEEDLEY:** Hurry! I'm going crazy back there! (*exits.*)

**CAPTAIN TURBINE:** Hey, fix me a cup of coffee before you go. I haven't slept in three days.

**GRINGOOD:** What?

**CAPTAIN TURBINE:** Another cost cutting measure. They only let us sleep twice a week. Coffee?

**GRINGOOD:** You got it. (*pushes a couple of buttons.*)

**NEEDLEY:** (*offstage*) I'm waiting!

**GRINGOOD:** I've got to get that lady to shut up. She'll have everyone nervous.

**NEEDLEY:** My coffee?

**GRINGOOD:** It's almost ready. (*Gringood exits.*)

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**CAPTAIN TURBINE:** (*into the microphone*) Welcome aboard Bare Bones United. This is Captain Turbine again and we'll be cruising at ... (*peers at the controls*) ... an altitude of ... uh ... (*squinting*) ... Well, it'll be really high ... above most of the buildings ... the short ones, anyway. Your flight attendant will be passing among you with ... uh ... nothing. But she's really nice.

**NEEDLEY:** (*offstage*) Where's my drink?

**GRINGOOD:** (*offstage*) I'm coming! I'm coming!

**CAPTAIN TURBINE:** The weather forecast for the flight is ... uh ... (*squints but can't read the dial. rolls down an imaginary window handle, licks finger and sticks it out*) Pretty nice. A little windy. (*withdraws hand and rolls up window*)

**GRINGOOD:** (*entering*) She's going nuts!

**CAPTAIN TURBINE:** I think she was like that when she got on. Take her a drink of the la-la juice.

**NEEDLEY:** (*offstage*) I'm waiting!

**GRINGOOD:** Oh, dear.

**CAPTAIN TURBINE:** Hurry up.

**GRINGOOD:** (*scrambling with the cups*) I'm hurrying.

**NEEDLEY:** (*sticking her head in*) Where's that drink?

**GRINGOOD:** (*grabbing a cup quickly and pushing it toward Needley*) Here ... drink this ... quick.

**NEEDLEY:** (*grabbing the cup and exiting*) It's about time.

**GRINGOOD:** I better go check on the passengers.

**CAPTAIN TURBINE:** Good. I think I'll fly the plane. (*Gringood exits as Turbine reaches for the remaining cup and takes a sip*) Weak. I hate weak coffee. (*takes another drink*) They could at least afford decent coffee.

**GRINGOOD:** (*entering*) How long 'til we land?

**CAPTAIN TURBINE:** No idea.

**GRINGOOD:** What?

**CAPTAIN TURBINE:** Depends on whether I can find the airport. Sometimes they hide it in ... (*yawns*) ... the strangest places. I think I turn left at Steak and Shake. (*takes another sip*) This coffee is awful. (*yawns*)

**GRINGOOD:** You don't look good.

**CAPTAIN TURBINE:** Do I criticize you?

**GRINGOOD:** Are you okay?

**CAPTAIN TURBINE:** Of course not. I work for Bare Bones United. (*yawns*) Boy ... long night ... long three nights. More coffee. (*takes another sip*) (*yawns*) A lot more coffee. (*gulps it down*)

**GRINGOOD:** Oh, no!

**CAPTAIN TURBINE:** You're tellin' me. It tastes awful.

**GRINGOOD:** Wrong cup!

**CAPTAIN TURBINE:** No, it's the coffee. The cup's fine.

**GRINGOOD:** You've got the wrong cup. You've got the sleeping medicine!

**CAPTAIN TURBINE:** That's ridiculous. I'd be crazy to drink ...

*(but he passes out and immediately begins snoring)*

**GRINGOOD:** Oh, no! Oh, no! (*grabs the microphone*) Excuse me ... does anyone know how to ... (*stops, covers the microphone with her hand*). Wait a minute. I can't tell them that. (*looks out the front of the cockpit*) We're losing altitude! (*jumps into the lap of the sleeping Captain*) How do you fly this thing?

**NEEDLEY:** (*sticking her head in*) Hey, that's great coffee! (*sees Gringood sitting on the Captain's lap*) Oh, sorry. (*exits*)

**GRINGOOD:** Don't go! Help! (*jumps up and begins slapping the*

*Captain*) Wake up! Wake up!

**CAPTAIN TURBINE:** (*waking ... barely*) What ...? You don't like my flying? You crazy?

**GRINGOOD:** You were sleeping! You've got a hundred passengers back there, you're the only pilot and you were sound asleep!

**CAPTAIN TURBINE:** Don't be crazy! That'd be a stupid thing to ... (*and he is out cold again*)

**GRINGOOD:** No! No! (*jumps back onto the Captain's lap and grabs the controls*) Pull up! Pull up!

**NEEDLEY:** (*sticking head in again*) Hey, the plane seems to



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