

TAKEOFF

Passengers on a small commuter plane are waiting for the flight to leave.

They're getting a little impatient, but the airport staff has assured them that the pilots will be there soon, and the flight can take off immediately after that. The entrance opens, and two men walk up the aisle, dressed in pilots' uniforms--both are wearing dark glasses, one is using a seeing-eye dog, and the other is tapping his way up the aisle with a cane.

Nervous laughter spreads through the cabin; but the men enter the cockpit, the door closes, and the engines start up. The passengers begin glancing nervously around, searching for some sign that this is just a little practical joke.

None is forthcoming. The plane moves faster and faster down the runway, and people at the windows realize that they're headed straight for the water at the edge of the airport territory. As it begins to look as though the plane will never take off, that it will plow into the water, panicked screams fill the cabin--but at that moment, the plane lifts smoothly into the air.

The passengers relax and laugh a little sheepishly, and soon they have all retreated into their magazines, secure in the knowledge that the plane is in good hands.

Up in the cockpit, the copilot turns to the pilot and says, "You know, Bob, one of these days, they're going to scream too late, and we're all gonna die."