

Henry Jones had already been to a flying school and had become a pilot, and now he had joined a company and was learning to fly a passenger aeroplane at night. The captain of the plane was George Allen, who had been flying for many years and was a very good pilot. The company which owned the plane was very proud of its company flag, so the pilots had orders to put the flag up whenever the plane was leaving the ground or landing, so that people on the ground would see it. If a pilot forgot to fly the flag, he had to pay five dollars. As soon as the plane was in the air, the flag was taken down, so that the strong winds which blew past would not tear it to pieces.

It was a dark, cold, stormy night, and as Henry's plane went up higher and higher, the air became colder and colder and the plane's wings became covered with thick ice. Ice is dangerous, because it makes a plane heavy and difficult to fly, so George told Henry to bring the plane lower, where the warmer air would melt the ice from the wings. George began to obey, but as the plane was going down, both its engines suddenly stopped, and the plane began to fall. First Henry and then George tried to start the engines again, but it was quite impossible for them to do so. Something had gone seriously wrong. Henry was really anxious now, and shouted to George, 'If we continue to fall as fast as this, we shall hit the ground in a few moments!'

'Well,' George answered angrily, 'don't just sit there! Get the flag and put it up! Do you want to pay five dollars?'