



**Z**igzagging through the air, you try vainly to keep your mind on the task ahead, but it's hard to hear anything over the massive quad propellers of the *Skyslicer*.

"You know," shouts Lamar, comical circular pilot's goggles clinging to his eyes as he sends the craft careening suddenly to the left, "it's taken old Lamar this long to realise how insane you are."

"One more time," you scream back over the cacophony. "Just one more pass. Please, Lamar! There must be something here!"

It took a great deal of begging to get Lamar to come and pick you up from precinct headquarters, with the world's military en route to investigate the suddenly empty city. "Old Lamar doesn't do police headquarters," he'd sworn over the phone. "Lamar's cargo plane doesn't like police." Fortunately, he owed you nine favours, but you still considered it better not to discuss your plan of action until the *Skyslicer* was in the air twelve hours later.

"Three times. You've made old Lamar fly over the Bermuda Triangle three times," he moans from his leather pilot's chair. "He thought he was done for in that typhoon during the second pass."

"Just a bit of rain," you retort weakly.

"That was a rain storm, my friend, and Lamar's not surprised you don't get them in your nice cushy -"

Lamar's spiel is interrupted by a moment of silence. All four propellers stop at once.

"Uh oh," says Lamar. The *Skyslicer* plunges downward, screeching, toward the endless blue ocean.

Petrified, you cling to the back of Lamar's chair, and your face is pressed up against an array of words carved into the leather...



desist    crafts    cowboys    void

mirrors    nook    them    snakes    found    yang

field    bacon    order    behold    cause    rock

circuses    odds    tumble    nip

hue    limb    warts    pins    caboodle

touch    out    times    switch    trial    file    surf

cloak    each    macaroni

breaking    divide    hem    apples

punch    battery    kin