Hatchet - Gary Paulsen

Study Passage 1

Brian Robeson stared out of the window of the small plane at the endless green northern wilderness below. It was a small plane, a Cessna 406 – a bushplane – and the engine was so loud, so roaring and consuming and loud, that it ruined any chance of conversation.

Not that he had much to say. He was thirteen and the only passenger on the plane with a pilot named – what was it? – Jim or Jake or something, who was in his mid-forties and who had been silent as he worked to prepare for take off. In fact since Brian had come to the small airport in Hampton, New York to meet the plane – driven by his mother – the pilot had spoken only five words to him.

“Get in the co-pilot’s seat."

Which Brain had done. They had taken off and that was the last of the conversation. There had been the initial excitement, of course. He had never flown in a single-engine plane before and to be sitting in the co-pilot’s seat with all the controls right in front of him, all the instruments in his face as the plane clawed for altitude, jerking and sliding on the wind currents as the pilot took off, had been interesting and exciting. But in five minutes they had leveled off at six thousand feet and headed north-west and from then on the pilot had been silent, staring out the front, and the drone of the engine had been all that was left. The drone and the sea of green trees that lay before the plane’s nose and flowed to the horizon, spread with lakes, swamps and wandering streams and rivers.

Now Brian sat, looking out the window with the roar thundering through his ears, and tried to catalogue what had led up to his taking this flight.