



Happily, in decades of piloting **GREG BROWN** has never experienced an irreversible engine failure in flight.
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showers ended just to the north, I observed visually—and confirmed on my cockpit weather display—should a detour have become necessary.

I launched into sapphire skies, those distant snow showers sparkling in late-afternoon sun. Flagstaff continued reporting fair weather as I proceeded northeast, but the intervening snow squalls were coalescing into a continuous band. With conditions changing so rapidly, I decided that shooting Flagstaff's GPS Runway 3 instrument approach through 10 minutes of snow might be safer than trying to visually circumnavigate north near the mountains.

A Cessna Citation pilot reported negative icing on the approach, so I requested a pop-up instrument clearance, activated pitot heat, and plunged into a wall of snow over the Red Rock-Secret Mountain Wilderness. There I encountered a fantastical fairyland of crimson pinnacles revealing their charms through mist and snow in a dance of seven veils. Dazzled, I snapped a photo before configuring the airplane for final approach. Older Cessna 182s are notoriously susceptible to carburetor ice, and although I'd experienced no roughness or power loss in cruise, I knew the engine might momentarily stumble on any accumulated ice when I applied carb heat upon reducing power.

I was not prepared, however, for the engine to quit altogether. Anyone who's lost power in the clouds knows that even a brief interruption seemingly lasts forever. I instinctively applied throttle, but in the silent seconds before the engine roared back to life my mind traversed the invisible, inhospitable landscape below—dry Rogers Lake being the only obvious landing option if I emerged at just the right spot. Apparently enough carburetor ice had formed that when melted, it sent a brief, incombustible slug of water through the engine. Thankfully this rarely occurs, but the shock when it does never diminishes. As always, know your airplane and keep your cool.

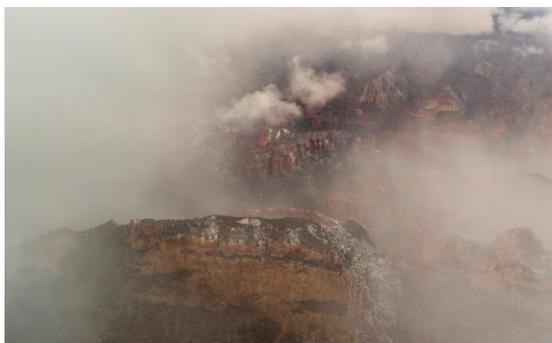
Moments later I burst into sunshine as I approached the runway. Snow clouds shrouded the peaks to the north, suggesting that continuing in that direction probably would have dictated turning back. Just a few minutes in the soup had twice taken my breath away—first with stunning sights, and then more ominously. Fortunately, it's the beauty, not the silence, I'll remember. **FT**

SILENCE 'IN THE SOUP'

A daylong snowstorm had just passed when I flew Jean to Phoenix to see her mom. Lingering flurries receded to the east, while from the west approached intense cobalt skies seen only after snow.

By the time I dropped off Jean and steered for my next appointment at Prescott, a few new snow showers sprinkled northern Arizona's mountains. No worry—Flagstaff's San Francisco Peaks beckoned clearly from between them for my subsequent flight home.

Ninety minutes later, I preflighted for my final 50-mile hop. Prescott's Ernest A.



Arizona's Red Rock-Secret Mountain Wilderness, through mist and snow.

Love Field Airport lies in an open valley, with Flagstaff 2,000 feet higher at the base of Arizona's tallest mountains. You can usually see the peaks directly from Prescott's airport tiedowns. Now, however, the snow showers between here and home were denser than before. I couldn't see the peaks themselves, but sunshine illuminated red-rock cliffs three-quarters of the way there. What's more, the