

**TOM SWIFT AND HIS AIR
SCOUT OR UNCLE SAM'S
MASTERY OF THE SKY**

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Tom Swift and his air scout or Uncle Sam's mastery of the sky by Victor Appleton

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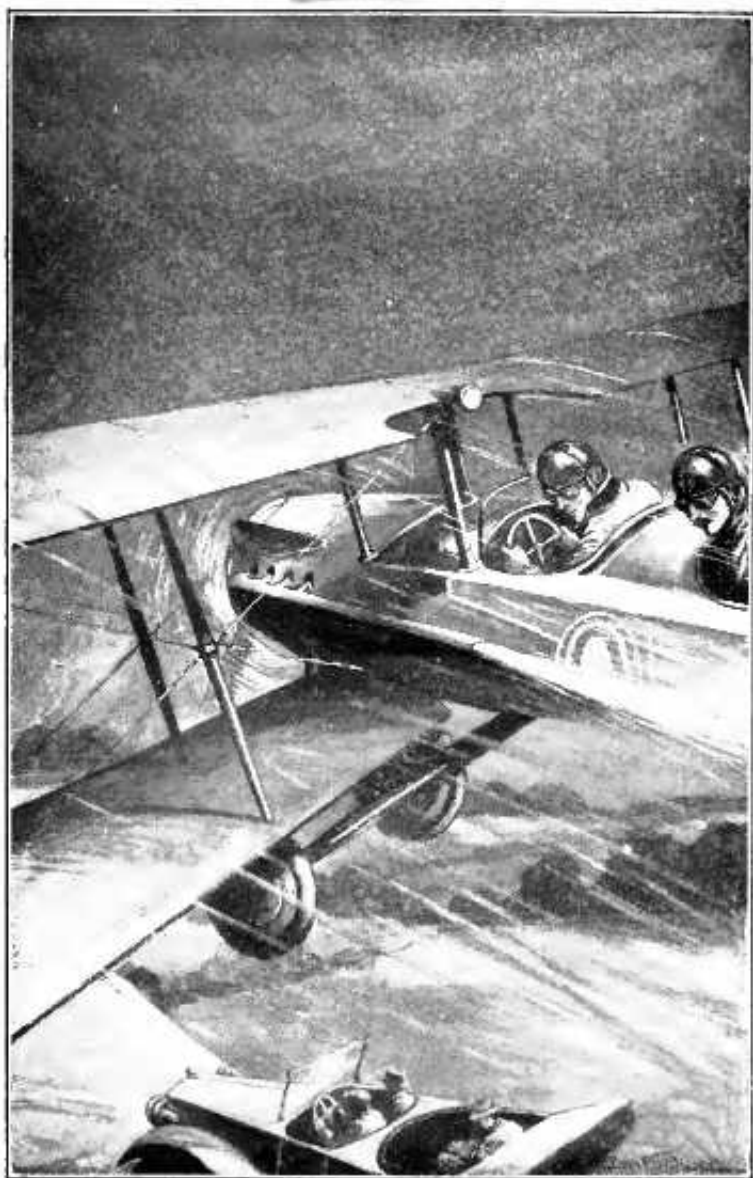
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VICTOR APPLETON

**TOM SWIFT AND HIS AIR
SCOUT OR UNCLE SAM'S
MASTERY OF THE SKY**



"LOOK! LOOK!" EXCLAIMED TOM. "DOESN'T THAT SEEM
SUSPICIOUS?"

Tom Swift and His Air Scout.

Page 265

TOM SWIFT AND HIS AIR SCOUT

OR

Uncle Sam's Mastery of the Sky

By

VICTOR APPLETON

AUTHOR OF "TOM SWIFT AND HIS MOTOR CYCLE," "TOM SWIFT
AND HIS BIG TUNNEL," "TOM SWIFT AND HIS WAR
TANK," "THE MOVING PICTURE BOYS SERIES," ETC.

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Tom Swift and His Air Scout

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TOM SWIFT AND HIS AIR SCOUT

CHAPTER I

A SKY RIDE

"Oh, Tom, is it really safe?"

A young lady—an exceedingly pretty young lady, she could be called—stood with one small, gloved hand on the outstretched wing of an aeroplane, and looked up at a young man, attired in a leather, fur-lined suit, who sat in the cockpit of the machine just above her.

"Safe, Mary?" repeated the pilot, as he reached in under the hood of the craft to make sure about one of the controls. "Why, you ought to know by this time that I wouldn't go up if it wasn't safe!"

"Oh, yes, I know, Tom. It may be all right for *you*, but I've never been up in this kind of airship before, and I want to know if it's safe for *me*."

The young man leaned over the edge of the padded cockpit, and clasped in his rather grimy hand the neatly gloved one of the young lady. And though the glove was new, and fitted the hand perfectly, there was no attempt to withdraw it. Instead, the young lady seemed to be very glad indeed that her hand was in such safe keeping.

"Mary!" exclaimed the young man, "if it wasn't safe—as safe as a church—I wouldn't dream of taking you up!" and at the mention of "church" Mary Nestor blushed just the least bit. Or perhaps it was that the prospective excitement of the moment caused the blood to surge into her cheeks. Have it as you will.

"Come, Mary! you're not going to back out the last minute, are you?" asked Tom Swift. "Everything is all right. I've made a trial flight, and you've seen me come down as safely as a bird. You promised to go up with me. I won't go very high if you don't like it, but my experience has been that, once you're off the ground, it doesn't make any difference how high you go. You'll find it very fascinating. So skip along to the house, and Mrs. Baggert will help you get into your togs."

"Shall I have to wear all those things—such as you have on?" asked Mary, blushing again.

"Well, you'll be more comfortable in a fur-