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FASTEST PLANE.

At Edwards Air Force Base, California, America's top speed pilot Colonel Pete Everest puts on his pressure suit. He's going to try to fly faster than any man has done before. His special rocket plane, a Bell X-2, is slung beneath a giant bomber, which takes it aloft for launching to save fuel for the speed run.

The Bell X-2 is made of stainless steel and Inconel metal, to resist the searing temperatures produced at great speeds by air friction - the dreaded "heat barrier". Colonel Everest sits behind a windshield of glass built to withstand a thousand degrees.

She's away! Everest starts up his rocket engine, which develops as much power as a big naval cruiser.

Miles above the California desert, the little plane builds up speed as its rocket approaches full output. The sound barrier is passed - the camera plane is left behind - and soon he's streaking across the sky at nineteen hundred miles an hour!

In emergencies, a ribbon-type parachute would bring him to a lower altitude where he could bail out. But today Everest lands safely on Muroc Dry Lake. The X-2's skid landing gear raises a triumphant cloud of dust - a salute to the fastest pilot in the world!