

The visit to a gold mine – *THE FLIGHT*



by
Keld Jensen

The visit to a gold mine - The flight

I am living in the capital of Greenland, Nuuk. In the beginning of October 2006 I travelled by the national airline to the Atlantic airport in South Greenland, Narsarsuaq. This first part of the trip took place with a DASH 7 aircraft. The aircraft followed the edge of The Greenlandic Ice Cap. It was in the morning, and the day dawned.

The passengers look down at the breathtaking landscape. A marvellous landscape with snow-covered mountains and fiords full of small icebergs. I felt a lump in my throat. I know my fellow travellers have the same feeling. No one is talking. All watched the scenery outside the windows.

An hour later the aircraft started the approach to Narsarsuaq. Narsarsuaq is a former American military base, which now is carried on as part of the civil infrastructure.

The Greenlandic name Nalunaq means 'the place that is hard to find'. The mining company had chartered a helicopter to transport us from the Atlantic airport in Narsarsuaq to the mine camp located one hundred kilometres from the airport. The travel from Narsarsuaq to the gold mine

was carried out by a 222U Bel-helicopter.

The flight in the helicopter was a glide over the magnificent wild landscapes. Everything else in this world becomes trivial.

The landscape of South Greenland unlocks your eyes. The mountains, the fiords, the ice. These fantastically landscapes are passing through, as the helicopter carries you into the heart of the wilderness.

A lot of places give evidence for tremendous geological processes. Processes that took place a long time ago when this beautiful landscape was shaped. Billions of years ago the magma squeezed its way between the rocks.

The Headsets gave the possibility to communicate with the pilot under the flight. But most of the time the passengers just sat paralysed and looked at the scenery beside or under the helicopter. The pilot knew the landscape but just in case he used the map several times under the flight.

The pilot found the way through the mountains. He used the mountain passes on his way through the wilderness. It felt

as if the helicopter will hit the ground in the passes. Suddenly the helicopter dangled in an altitude of several hundred meters over a new valley.

The fiords are filled with icebergs. Either they are glacial ice from the glaciers by the edge of the ice cap, or they are transported thousands of kilometres along the eastern coast of Greenland.

Big fiords are located between Narsarsuaq and the Kirkespir valley, where the gold mine is located. In October the first snow of the season has fallen at the top of the mountains. From my seat in the helicopter, the landscape seemed friendly. But by boat or hiking in the mountains, I knew it can be a very difficult place to overcome.

The pilot had an easy job this day. We were lucky. The sun was shining and the weather was calm. Often the weather stops all flights in South Greenland. The flight to the gold mine was fabulous.



The Greenlandic Ice sheet in the dawn, October 2006



*The view from the
plane, October 2006*



The aboret located near the Narsarsuaq Airport, October 2006



The Larch tree in the colours of autumn, October 2006



Ice-covered fiord, October 2006



A glacier feeds the fiord with ice, October 2006



A mountain landscape shaped of ice and melt water, October 2006



The pilot inside the Bell helicopter, October 2006



A lot of sediments where the river falls into the fiord, October 2006



Grass fields and earth roads near a small farm, October 2006



Mountain lakes and the Ice Sheet in the background, October 2006



Dark blue mountain lakes and snow-covered mountains, October 2006



The lake Amarqup Tasia, October 2006



Mountain landscape, October 2006



Characteristic mountains in South Greenland, October 2006



Big rivers transports the melt water through the mountains, October 2006



With out vegetation the dramatically geological processes are visible, October 2006



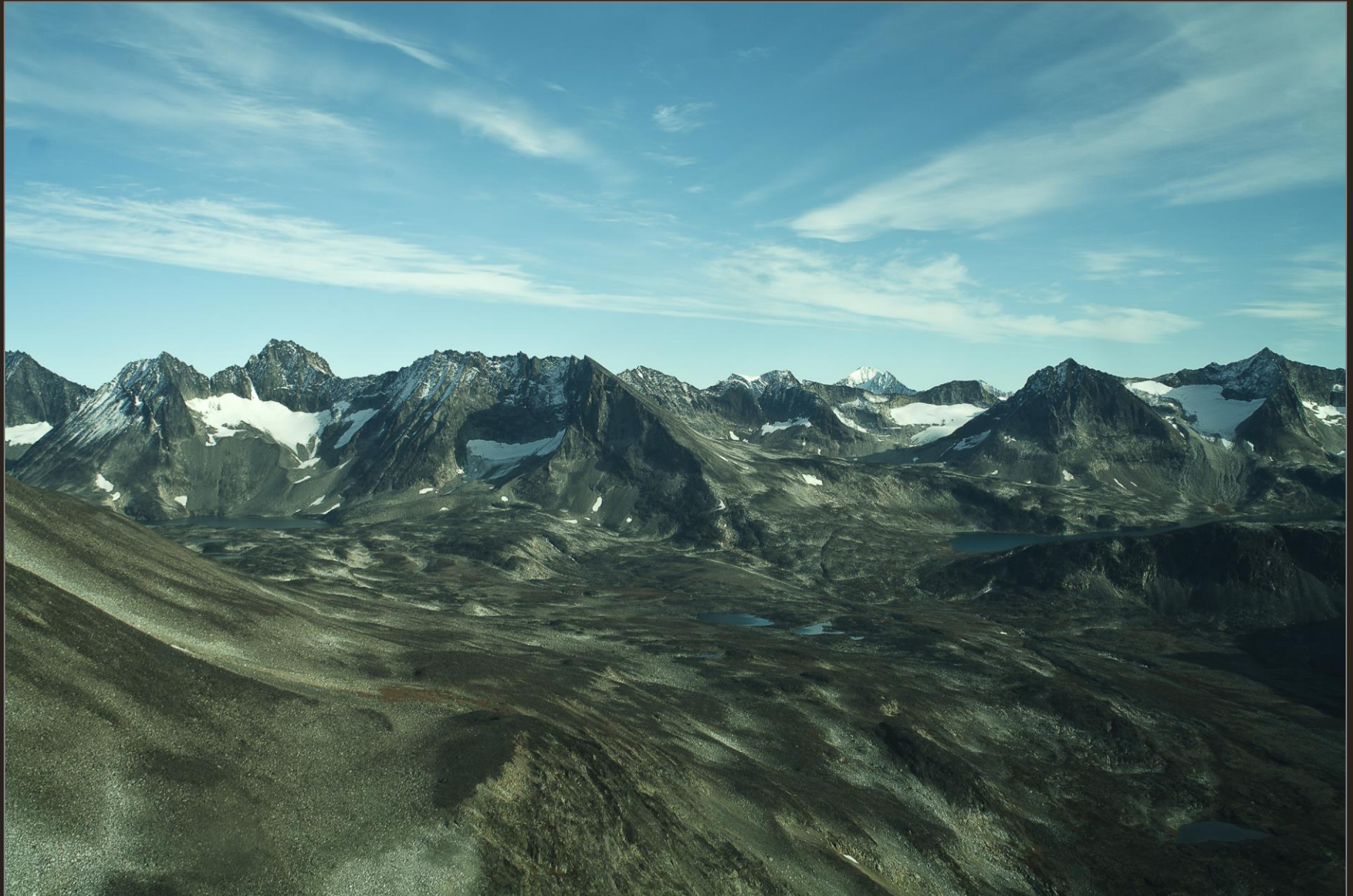
The helicopter passes by a mountain pass and a new valley emerges in front of you, October 2006



Amazing landscape, October 2006



The snow never melt at the highest peaks, October 2006



Mountain landscape without vegetation, October 2006



An isolated mountain lake, October 2006



Dark blue fiord in front of the Ice Sheet, October 2006



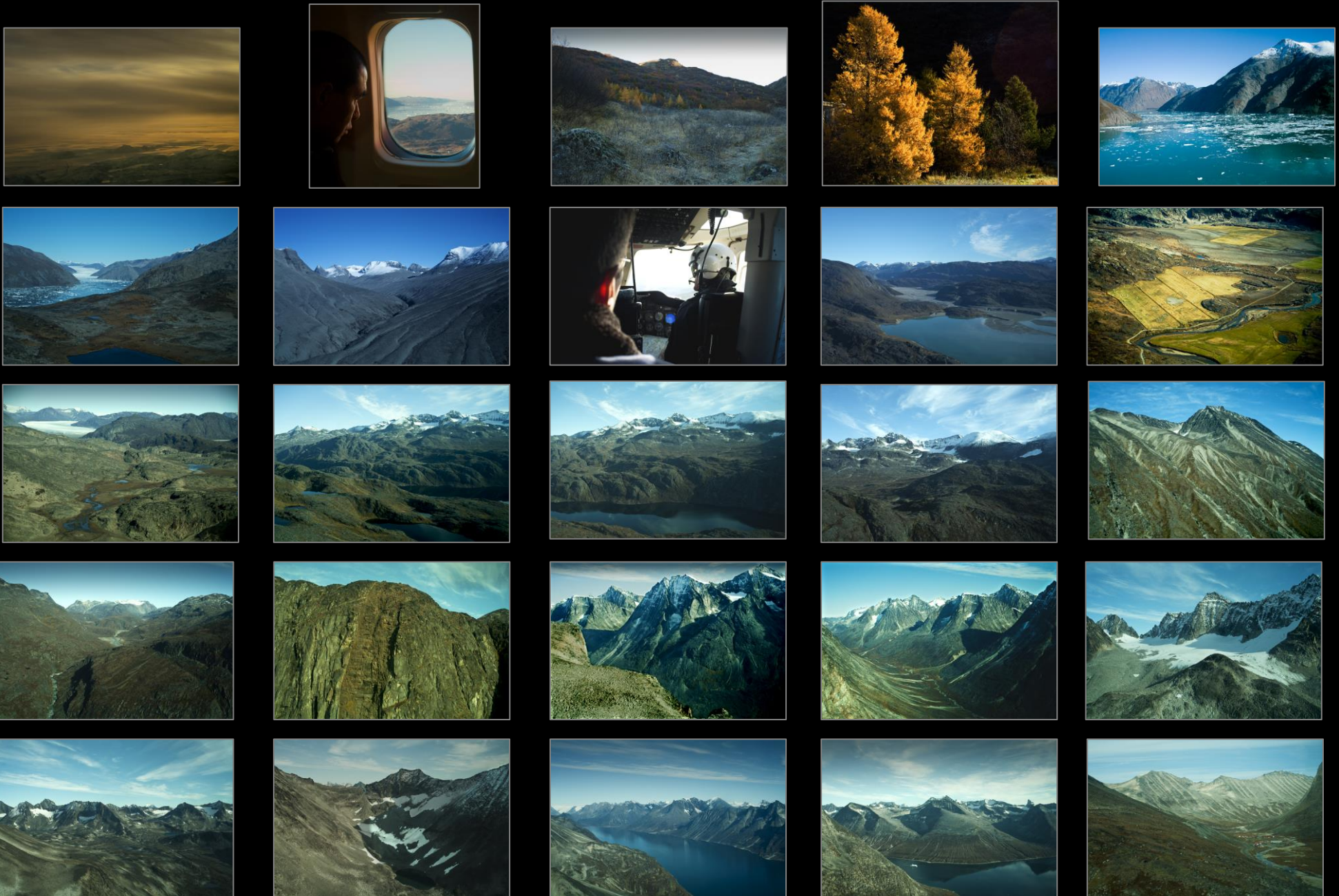
The Kirkespir mountain in the background, October 2006



The first view of the mine camp, October 2006

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COLOPHON

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