

notes on flying

by Glynnis Eldridge

Going to Atlanta

6AM

Despite all the issues presented by Delta this morning (the rescheduling of my 7am flight at 1am to a flight at 10, giving me a two minute layover time in Detroit, and my eventual own rescheduling of my flight to 6am, and waiting on the phone listening to top 40 song previews instead of elevator music for two hours while on hold, often interrupted by a robot man telling me and everyone else calling in in panics at 1 or 2 or 3 in the morning to, "Get some rest!" by way of purchasing a reclining, "flat bed seat") I really do enjoy flying.

On the runway it's almost impossible to not become overwhelmed in anxious thoughts of plane malfunctions: the engines faulting, exploding, the propellers falling off, birds hurt in the process, the plane falling straight out of the air, nose diving, having to hold onto a seat cushion in a river or ocean, maybe surrounded by what remains of the oil globs from the crack in the bedrock off the coast of Mexico some number of years ago, or having to strap on an oxygen mask and trying to figure out what it all really means. There are fluffy, cotton ball clouds below. The plane tips from left to right, a sideways, flying seesaw. There are swirls of clouds on the horizon. If we fell straight through the sky those cotton candy globs of smog wouldn't do much of a good thing trying to help us up. To anthropomorphize those clouds though- that's something else, as if those puffs have intentions like the pilots in the nose of this tin can.

It wasn't hard to see the Berkshires when we took off. George Washington's nose was easily identifiable even in my no sleep from the telephone problems fog. I could locate, more or less, where I live, where my friends are, where my mother is. From the air,

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everything falls into or around a line, a box, a patchwork farm quilt. I have my eyes peeled for other things flying, punctuating the cloud blankets, announcing their presence through speed and direction. UFOs. Could be fun to fly that way.

The man in the window seat sitting next to me on my right looks remarkably similar to Juno's father. He is, unlike him, quiet, reserved, sleeping on the tin can next to the window. I'm tired too though.

Up here it's infinite blue and white tufts. Infinite. Infinite. Light comes through the windows and it's a white out outside us.

In love with mountains like I wish they could see themselves how I see them and I wish they could see me like I want mountains in my eyes always.

Can you see, did I see bears from my window seat in the snow on the mountains in May?

