

The Parachutist In Love

by Spencer Troxell

For E.G.

The Parachutist's ripcord is malfunctioning. He is aware of this piece of information, and finds it duly disturbing.

You see, were the Parachutist on ground, in his plane, lying in his bed, sitting on the toilet, eating eggplant parmesan at his favorite Italian restaurant, bedding a young vixen, bedding a few young vixens (one slightly older than the other), practicing the clarinet, making a shopping list, or even playing volleyball at the beach (again with young vixens), becoming aware of such a piece of information would be easily resolvable. Being however that he is currently falling from a very great height, the information about the ripcord is pertinent.

His instinct is to curse, but not being the swearing type, he decides to pray instead: Praying turns out to be harder to do mid-free fall than one might expect, so he curses.

Being a person who has read a book or two by Deepak Chopra, he attempts meditation: He is going to die. This is evident. He attempts to clear his mind by focusing on the snowy mountain tops that cap the quickly disappearing horizon. Also difficult: Consider G-forces.

What about the man in the colored jumpsuit with goggles and helmet?

The Parachutist's favorite joke is one that usually only garners polite laughs when he tells it:

Q: How many surrealists does it take to change a light bulb?

A: Two: one to hold the giraffe by the neck, the other to fill the bathtub up with clocks.

He has a picture of his nephew riding a horse on his coffee table at

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home. The picture was taken by his brother, on the boy's twelfth birthday. The boy's name is Cody. The Parachutist has tried to teach the boy how to play chess several times and has failed. Once, when Cody was about six, a little marble pawn showed up in his stool. The Parachutist has quit trying to teach the boy chess.

The Parachutist closes his eyes, takes a breath, and then opens them back up again. The earth is very beautiful, and very small from where he is. It is getting larger quickly, which is vaguely alarming. The Parachutist decides it would be better to misinterpret this alarm as exhilaration. 'Whoop!' he says.

He's over a piney region of Alaska. The tree line spreads far and wide, and there are mountains in the distance. The Parachutist tries to imagine himself crashing down through the evergreens. Every snapping twig that he foresees, were he to write a blog about this episode, he may call it 'Returning to the Earth in a very real way', and the post would be very spiritual. The Parachutist is a very spiritual person in his own way. He has read books by Deepak Chopra, and always plays Prince music when he beds young vixens.

The Parachutist is pleased with how easily he turned the whole tragic affair into something more philosophical.

He imagines the earth wrapping around him, his body becoming thin and embedded, and he begins to relax his muscles as it all becomes very near, the whistling becoming increased, and the mountain view becoming out of sight. He thinks about the terrain, and tries to picture it without trees. A parking lot. A desert. An ocean. A pile of feathers.

To the ordinary wild porcupine, the grass is gentle and high, and the soil is agreeably moist. It easily absorbs the creature's small footprints as it pads and sniffs it's way through the sweet smelling forest, looking for whatever it is that porcupines look for.

Some kind of small bug, I would imagine.

