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## Flying Home in December

Ripley Schemm

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Ripley Schemm

## *Flying Home in December*

*for Dick*

If a creek ran quick through this meadow  
of cloud, if you and I made a picnic  
up here, tuna on white bread, an olive,  
a pear, would we have to be careful,  
sit on our coats, not bounce around?  
We could hold hands as we fell.

Below is the Yellowstone—I can see  
when clouds open, my face pressed flat  
to glass—where we rode the train  
from Billings, going East. That trip  
it was chicken, on white bread again,  
cole slaw, Mars Bars, coffee—lots  
of coffee. And stories the miles unwound.  
Kisses and jokes in a private compartment,  
love for the country we owned  
with our eyes, for the moon  
that made silver of aspen.

Up here in the 747, I forgot  
what you always told me: get a seat  
on the right side heading West  
so you won't have sun in your eyes.  
Clouds close again. I'm nearer home,  
nearer the creek and the great red stone—

the stone that could hold us both.  
This is December, too cold for a picnic.  
But now that I think of it, ours  
was a picnic that worked.