Spring 1993

Flying Home in December

Ripley Schemm
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.