

The Trip
By Peter J. Dantes

Twelve hours round trip they said,
An easy two-day trip we were misled.
Everything started off without a hitch,
Except for the fuel gauge with a twitch.
Liftoff! To the heavens we soared,
'Til we cowered when thunder roared.
Two thousand was high enough for us,
Winding and twisting 'round rain – what a fuss!
Like an eaglet fresh from the nest,
Our tender plane gave us its best.
For hours and hours we flew,
Up high, down low, scudding the dew,
Til at last, hark!, fifty miles had passed.
On fumes, or so they say, we landed at last.

Westward ho the clouds weren't low,
'Cross piedmont piney sands so slow.
We trekked and night fell;
Only halfway done, we wanted to yell.
Modern means failed us,
No warm food to sustain us;
Just the cold hard floor of an F-B-O,
And not even a single cherrio.
But, sweet repose, a backpack for a pillow,
And the warm humid air for a billow –
It blows warm and moist and humid air,
And naught would dare enter our lair,
For we had a roach for a sentry,
And some remains of spider gentry.
The prince slept as soundly as a tossing wave,
And the princess slept very brave,
But at least she had no pea to scorn,
For there were no cushions to be borne.

The day started before the cock crowed,
And Florida was made before the sun showed.
A rest, at last, the beach was had.

Biscuits at breakfast was not so bad;
A kite sailed effortlessly in the sky,
And our plane envied it with a sigh.
We wove and wound through cloud,
Dodging mustangs flying proud.
Then, oh my, our destination!
Our gallant plane slumped in exhaustion.

We laid it to rest,
And readied to finish our test.
Like a phoenix out of the ashes,
A plane reborn, flashes
Brilliant blue and white.
Our start back home almost went all right.
But our plane was restless until it rested in S-G-J.
A nap and back in the fray!
We sailed homeward bound,
A mad dash above the ground.
A game we played:
To get home before the cylinder betrayed.

Alas, home, oh no, another storm.
Divert here, go there, to Raleigh was the norm.
Darkness fell, the beacon glowed;
Wings spread twixt thunder and flashes o'er the road,
One final push to home for those curious.

The midnight moon, waning gibbous,
Told the nightly bard,
Never before was seen a trip so long and hard.
Safe and sound the tires screeched;
Dragging feet shuffled to sheets,
cushions, pillows, and could it be?
Blankets and plenty of sleep for me.