

A Valentine's Day Poem for Frances

By Tim



Sunrise on the 2nd of January 2005
I'm flying east while my girl lies asleep
With vivid dreams to keep her warm.
Ten more nights to go
The longest we've ever been apart
Since our flaming start one score and five-point-six years ago.
San Juan Chickens is ready to crow
The master, the graphics, the critical hours behind us
The cutest librarian in the 'hood became a violin teacher after all
And my lips have something to live for.

A wiggly river, perhaps it's the Platt,
Eclipsed by a wing, silver over silver,
The sun still mirrored on the miles-long snake
While buzzards animate my ears
And restless toes test the limits of my black oxford Clarks, due for a shine.
My little shoe lady had 56 pairs once upon a time, she says,
Her trickster stories turn my head
Not just from what she sees, but by the books she reads,
Her colors are black and red.
Her strong back likes to be rubbed.

Power-walk between terminals, half a mile
With carry-on bag in tow.
Then wait for a late take-off.
Finally the whine of the turboprop
And the harmonic modulation of the pitching blades
as we advance and coast, advance and stop, with eight planes ahead of us
in line like the well-mannered little school kids
you and I were back in another century,
bashful victims of pushy children's venial crimes
against our seedling selves.
Where were you when I was ready to hold hands and see
Where it could lead with a wild sensuous child of the other gender?
At that age you were fiddling in the orchard, playing with dolls
and suffering falls from your bike,
little imagining the six kids in your future,
grandkids and cell phone calls to this third husband away on a business trip.
Blades cut in, rumble and roar,
pushed back in the seat, we're airborne and climbing.
I'll kiss you for Valentine's Day and more.