

Wilderness House Literary Review 6/1

Robert Vaughan

Planes, Trains and Automobiles

1. Planes: February 14, 1981

A smelly bathroom interior, charting intercourse with pilot Dan, overnight flight (Chicago- Paris), circa 4 a.m. while co-pilot catches a snooze.

Full speed ahead, clothes removed faster than a speeding bullet, cramped, pilot has his own key, he double locks from inside. *Who's flying this bird?*
No answer.

We're somewhere over the Canary Islands, can't get that Canary in a Coal-Mine song out of my pounding head as he pounds me from behind.

Is he heterosexual? Who cares? I wince out the tiny window into pitch black.

2. Trains: February 14, 1991

He passes my seat and heads into the coatroom. I follow. Standing upright against the floor length winter coats. Numb penguins. He rubs against me. Pretend I came to pick coat pockets until it happens again. Then.

Coatroom pas de deux, rush hour, Metro North heading south. He enters with the sounds of locomotion, chugga-chugga, chugga-chugga, breathing syncopation, undulations, stations stops: Cos Cob, Darien, faster, his furry hand muffles my moans. All aboard the express kundalini.

Pressed between coats, pinned, piled, mounted over coats like a high school rave. A third adjoins: ménage a trois. It's my track coach with a butterfly net.

3. Automobiles: February 14, 2001

Inside smells of gasoline and rubber tires, or rubbers. Tried. Moving cargo.

We're bound, tied against one another. Tethered. Immobile in this trunk. Car now parked, tear the tape from your mouth with my teeth, you do the

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same. We kiss as we're taught, slowly, mouths closed. Licking, sucking, hearing the dark. Soon frenching with a devouring hunger. The earth falls away, are they coming? A matter of time.

Searching for a hole, by the pin-prick light in your eyes. The crushed lullabies, the stomped puddles. We come, like soldiers in the camps, barbed-wire barrier. Or I do. Either you or me.