

FLIGHT OVER DENVER, by O. William

On July 13th at approximately 7:30pm, he boarded Frontier Flight #579 from Denver to the Twin Cities. Their plane had been delayed for two hours in San Diego due to mechanical problems. So, he was not a happy camper when he found his window seat and buckled himself in. He was tired, hot, and hungry. Once seated, he turned the knob for the air circulation all the way open, but didn't feel any cool air at all.

It had been very hot in all of the western states, and Denver was in its second week of above 90-degree weather. Dusk was just beginning to fall on the outskirts of the Mile High City and just before take-off, the runway appeared to be completely deserted. As the plane ascended over the airport, he could see idled construction vehicles on the edges of the grounds. As they flew, the distant mountains grew closer. The plane's interior lights were shut off, and the pilot turned the seatbelt sign off. The nearby mountains were beginning to become shrouded in darkness.

As the plane climbed higher, they encountered some air turbulence- the pilot turned the seatbelt sign back on. He turned his reading light on in order to read, but soon they were enveloped in a thick mist and he became entranced by the flickering wing lights, and the tail beacon outside his window. He turned the reading light off so he could watch the show.

The plane shook badly a few times but they flew out of the clouds briefly. He could see the tremendous cloud formations stretching across the horizon. A thin band of gold ran the entire length of the horizon, separating earth from heaven, with heavy blackness above and gray tumultuous masses below. The clouds didn't have any shape at first, but after a while, huge mounds of swirling clouds surrounded them. The clouds became mountains, and these mountains receded into the other mountains. Occasionally he could see the foggy ground underneath the plane.

However, most of the time, he could not see the wing of the plane, right outside his window. He was relieved when he could make out the wing and taillights. Often times, all he could see was the faint reflection of the lights off the billowing stuff, below them, beneath them, and above them.

The storm grew and then subsided. For the longest time, the endless waves of tufted clouds rippling along the horizon reminded him of the waves of an ocean. Somewhere over North Dakota, converging air currents broke the clouds apart. They then formed three distinct layers of clouds moving in different directions. The top formation was heading west, the middle formation was moving briskly to the east, and the bottom formation moved along with the ground below them. And all the while, the thin band of gold followed them. As night fell, the edges of the band turned orange and then yellow and as the sun set in the far west, the edges of the yellow band finally disappeared.

Somewhere near Fargo, he thought, the sky seemed on fire. He could see large plumes of orange burn near the ground. Through the now smoke-like clouds, several red explosions punctured through the black haze off in the distance. He could make out the lights of a few small towns, and knew that lightning was striking over them. The towns grew in size and density, their lights manifold like liquid life. The lights of three towns linked together by a freeway appeared to be as three small lakes fed by a single

tributary. Once, he had a clear vision of a lightning bolt severing the hot summer air directly over a mid-sized town.

In viewing all this from a height of 40,000 feet, he believed that he came to witness what it was like at the dawn of civilization. Before towns, before people, before freeways, before villages and farms, there was just a huge blackness that covered the earth. And once in a while, there was light.

There was light from the heavens. The light separated the darkness. And then the ground broke free from the heavens. And people began to roam the planet. And God saw that it was good.

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