

THEODORE HALL

Fear of Flying

I've never liked flying—
for good metaphysical reasons . . .
I turn into one white knuckle.
No, really, it's that flying
is too much like life.
You're in this highly artificial environment
pretending to read, smoking furiously, alert
to any sign of hope . . .
a baby . . . or better yet, a nun.
Wow, a nun! But
what if she doesn't truly, truly believe?
What if she's not on the list?
Keep calm. Remember—
you can depend on good American know-how.
How old?
And upon corporate executives dedicated
to your safety. And to profit.
The friendly wings of profit!

Flying is too much like life.
A limited supply of fuel,
a destination you only half believe in.
Oh, sure, you can be "better off,"
go first class. You get the best
and get it first — the food, the liquor,
the crash.
Safer to ride in the tail, but there
it's bumps all the way.
Every American, they say, can grow up
to be a Pilot!
So what?