

Catching a Plane

by Holly Davis

This piece is a 90-second radio commentary initially aired in December 2000 on KUSP in Santa Cruz, CA.

It's 5:50 p.m. on a Friday night and I've just tried to confirm my flight for the next morning, but it turns out I have no flight for the next morning. In fact, they've got me booked on a flight that leaves in under an hour from now. The travel agent goofed up and there are no more seats on the early flight tomorrow. I'm supposed to rendezvous with the oceanographic research vessel the Thomas G. Thompson in Eureka, California by 1:00 p.m. tomorrow or it sails without me. One problem, I'm still in Seattle.

I decide to make a run for it. I fly into action. I'm calling a friend to drive me to the airport and I'm throwing things in my bag as quickly as possible. My friend arrives, I hop in his car and we're off. It's rush hour so we avoid I-5 in favor of 99. The traffic is moving and I'm beginning to think I just might make this plane. But I'm not home free yet.

The only drawbridge on the route begins to open. This drawbridge rarely opens, and if it does, never during rush hour. Except today. As we slow down to a stop it hits me: I've left my driver's license at home. How am I going to get on the plane with no picture ID? I have only an e-ticket after all. I wonder if my Costco card will do?

The drawbridge has reached its full and upright position and we're staring at a wall of concrete. Suddenly the whole situation seems incredibly funny to me. All of the stress from the last two weeks of intense preparation for this trip flows out of me in a river of giggles. Either I will make that plane or I won't. It's clearly out of my hands now.

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(And yes, I did catch the plane, but just barely.)