

Going Home

for Harry

I hope the plane isn't crowded
when he travels so he can stretch his legs
across three seats, and I hope
that nice girl I met when I went home
is working the flight, so she will let him have
as many cushions as he wants and fix him
a special meal of only the soft stuff that he
eats now, and smile that pretty way of hers
that even his wife won't mind,

and I hope the pilot is one of those
exceptional BWee guys who make it seem
so easy you hardly know when you take off and
land, just a soft bump as you taxi in, who make
small talk for the whole trip in the parlance
Harry loves, saying, instead of turbulence,
"We just have to make a little giddy in de hole,"
so all the passengers laugh, and feel comforted,
and raise their behinds and crane their necks
so they can see each other.

And when they land I want the sun to be
shining, or if it's drizzling lightly
for a rainbow to appear by the flyover, and
his grandson to be chatting incessantly all
the way home to his house in T'un Back Alley,
and the breeze to be just laden with the heady
smell of ladies of the night, though it's only
afternoon. And his wife and daughter to
stand on either side of him with their hands
under his arms, and hold him up so he can look

over the rooftops down to the sea, so the view
will enter his eyes and go straight to his heart
as they step over the dog sleeping nearby.
And the steelband just below will begin
practicing a tune he's never heard before,
so he'll forget all about where he's been,
as the whitecaps rise and fall with the music,
as the arranger strikes for them to stop
and take it from the second passage,
only slower this time.