

“Night flight to San Francisco; chase the moon across America. God, it’s been years since I was on a plane. When we hit 35,000 feet we’ll have reached the tropopause, the great belt of calm air, as close as I’ll ever get to the ozone. I dreamed we were there. The plane leapt the tropopause, the safe air, and attained the outer rim, the ozone, which was ragged and torn, patches of it threadbare as old cheesecloth, and that was frightening. But I saw something that only I could see because of my astonishing ability to see such things: Souls were rising, from the earth far below, souls of the dead, of people who had perished, from famine, from war, from the plague, and they floated up, like skydivers in reverse, limbs all akimbo, wheeling and spinning. And the souls of these departed joined hands, clasped ankles, and formed a web, a great net of souls, and the souls were three-atom oxygen molecules of the stuff of ozone, and the outer rim absorbed them and was repaired. Nothing’s lost forever. In this world, there’s a kind of painful progress. Longing for what we’ve left behind, and dreaming ahead. At least I think that’s so.”

— **Tony Kushner, Perestroika**

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