

REQUIEM FOR A PILOT

HE FLEW

He flew. In his younger times he tried to match the grace of the sparrow, darting and flashing, breathlessly and skillfully using the air as a palate to show his joy at performing with such precision. Striving for perfection, he flew.

He flew sometimes as the hawk, soaring and riding the wind, effortlessly scaling the thermals, climbing at will to heights that could only be passion; there, the naked world lay exposed to his marveling eyes. And as the hawk he struck from the sky, casting fire in his righteous anger. Daring his very life, he flew.

He flew as no creature has flown since the beginning of time. He flew with such power that the gentle winds tore apart before the fury of his transit. The pressure of his full-grown wings squeezed moisture from the humid air and left its own white finger of cloud to mark his path. The air itself shattered before him and screamed in pain. The sound of his passage was more than thunder, and it caused the earth and us upon it to tremble. The thrill of his flight filled his very soul with life. Supremely, he flew.

And after he passed, the birds and the jealous planet below paused a long moment in silence, left with only an echo and a memory, before resuming their leaden existence. He flew as none other before; he flew as none to follow. He will fly no more.

Yet still he flies! Look there in the heavens! Just out of sight in the clouds right before you, he dwells now in the glorious prismatic sunrises and rainbows, in the mysterious beauty of the Northern lights and the breathless green flash at sunset, making his home in the sky he loved so well. Mourn not: the aviator is home! He flies now with God.

Hank Hoffman
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