

Children Serenades and Sexual Politics:

An In-flight Adventure

with Arthur B. Undermind

He sits next to me singing "This Little Light of Mine"...and twenty minutes into my flight from L.A. to Chicago, it is quite obvious that this kid next to me is going to let his damn little light shine.

There was so much promise. Waiting at the gate to board the plane, there were a few lookers. Not the hottest, but which tanned women are going to leave L.A. in the winter time? But there was one that caught my eye: she was reading a "People" magazine. When it was announced that my row could board and the "People" lady got up as well, I thought for sure she would be seated next to me.

I sat down at my window seat and waited anxiously for her to grace the seat next to me. Then I saw her, coming closer, holding her magazine. My mind wandered. We'd chat, get the blankets out (wink, wink) and soon, when we met in the bathroom, I would become a member of that mythic and fabled group of sexual trailblazers: The Mile High Club.

I was knocked out of my reverie when I heard that obnoxious aforementioned tune being sung by the little boy sitting next to me, whom I first noticed and detested when I was waiting by the gate. Somewhere during my daydream, the little bastard had made his way into the middle seat with his mother on the end. I nearly cried. Oh where did Ms. "People" go? Again craning, I discovered her a row back, kitty corner, already talking to some 35-year old man in one of those "pre-worn" hats from Abercrombie & Fitch. Those A&F guys - always cockblocking. But this was all twenty minutes ago. I am big enough to put it behind me. At least I may operate my electronic equipment now. I get out my Walkman hoping to drive out the crooner next to

me and distract my overactive mind from imagining Mr. A&F stealing my spot on the Mile High Club List. (I wonder if such a list actually exists and is kept by the proprietors of posh nightclubs, snazzy restaurants, and high-class strip clubs. And I wonder if presence on said list entitles one to free entry, a discounted meal, or a romp in the Champagne Room.)

"Those A&F guys- always cockblocking."

How dare this A&F poser steal my "People" woman and subsequently snag my status as one of the elite frequent flyers? I know it was fantasy, but that was my spot. My blood is boiling. I turn to look back at them and she is giggling. What on earth could he be saying that is so great? Holy shit! She's really eating it up. I can't believe it. My nightmare is coming true.

She was The One. I know it now. Why didn't I see it earlier? Why didn't I talk to her when we were waiting by the gate? We could have discussed the current goings-on from her "People" magazine. Afterwards, debated if we wanted to be married in a large cathedral or a quaint chapel outside Arcola, Illinois, wed by a dignified Amish minister. I blew it. She would have been mine. She could have been mine.

But the last nail has just sealed the coffin. I see the two of them get up and head towards the rear of the plane. All I am left with is the consolation that there is always the return flight with the chance, the ever-present glimmer of hope that I, too, may stake my claim at 30,000 feet and make my little light shine.