

A TrILERMAN'S PRAYER by Wally Byam¹

*O Lord, give us springs that won't break.
Give us rocker arms that won't wear out the bearings,
Give us shackles that won't elongate the holes
Give us a water heater that we can light from the inside
and not have to go out in the wind and the rain to try
and light it with a blowtorch
Give us water tanks that don't leak, either water or air
Give us tubing that doesn't break at the flares
Give us windows and wheel housings that don't leak dust
Give us roof locker doors that will stay closed*

*And above all, O Lord, give us a stove that will stay together
In one piece at least for a day or two of washboard
roads and we thank those for finally giving us a
refrigerator that will make ice under most any
condition, the same as Swedish inventions*

*But we pray, O Lord for a door for the refrigerator more
solidly built that will stay on under any road conditions
And if it is at all in reason, we would like rivets on the
inside skin that would not come out, especially on the
bows and around the door and we would like a door
lock that wouldn't shake loose and a door handle that
wouldn't break off in a place and a way to carry eggs
outside of burying them in the bed clothes and some
way of keeping the clothes hangers from jumping off
the rods.*

*But with all the things we want, we thank Thee for the best
beds on earth, a trailer that is remarkably cool, even
in the desert heat, windows that open wide and give
good ventilation, a tight roof that doesn't leak, even in
the flash floods and the tropical rains of the Belgian
Congo, refrigerators that make ice under any and all
conditions. A bathtub and a shower that allows a
human being to keep as clean as a human being
should and a toilet that flushes and a septic tank that
doesn't have too much odor on the inside and a
trailer that is with all a haven of comfort on mountain
grades, in rock waste lands and in monotonous
deserts and it is always home wherever your wheels
may stop.*

¹ From Wally Byam written on the 10th of November in Moyale in Ethiopia with the worst roads of the entire caravan just ahead of us.