

TITAN

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In 2005 on 19 October

We watched the last launch and knew it was over.
The last Titan IV, that magnificent beast,
Roared into hist'ry from SLC-4 East.

As you may surmise it garnered attention,
And the weather resulted from Divine Intervention.
It was the only fair day occurring that week,
The rest were the frequent Vandenberg bleak.

Mission integration had been a bit of a fuss,
But it lofted a spacecraft the size of a bus.
From Titan I to Titan IVB,
It amounts to one helluva family tree.

The first two of the family fought the first Cold War,
Making up for the shortfalls of Atlas and Thor.
Test launches began in '59,
Four of the first seven went just fine.

They survived the requisite early disasters,
And rose to serve a trio of masters.
From Air Force, to NASA, to NRO,
The family was consistently able to grow.

Despite propellants that were hardly inert,
They stood 24 years of strategic alert.
They were an integral part of the old arms race,
Then took the U-2 mission and flew it in space.

Grissom and Young were the first Gemini crew,
To journey to space on a Titan II.
Later it earned another kudo,
Sending Voyagers out past the orbit of Pluto.

And in time continued a familiar pattern,
Sending Cassini and Huygens to visit Saturn.
Three hundred and sixty was the final score,
As we watched the last flight of the Titan IV.

The family *Titan*, all venerable steeds,
They served our nation's many needs,
Hist'ry records their remarkable deeds.

