

## A Short Trip

By Gregory JM Kasunich

I've never been to Papua, New Guinea  
Don't know if I'll ever go  
Figure, I'll sleep on it as ambivalence metastasizes into despair,  
despair resolves into action

Not quite knowing where it is,  
I pore over digital maps  
Prevaricate and price compare  
Sort reviews by star rating

Select a hostel hovering at 3.2  
I pack poorly, in artificial haste, for a conjured adventure,  
Some latent Lachesism – hoping for the worst

The priceless porcelain of my edgeless days  
pushed to the precipice,  
praying a ponderous gawker sends it floorboard

Over ocean now – soft shades of blue perdition  
Sibylline in my seat, predicting disaster

Maybe it's just the recycled air, the cabin pressure,  
the inability to know what I'm doing here  
We descend into heat and humidity,  
fat drops of moisture impossibly suspended

I'm greeted by a kiss– a never felt sip from a native mosquito,  
(taking his fee from the tourists and travelers)  
The itch and bump materialize in the aging cab; all fumes and friendly questions.  
In the Genesis, I take in a hard pull of the musty hotel air

I don't unpack, and fall into an uneasy slumber  
My malarial mind swims in untaken Atabrine dreams. A million minor tragedies play out and I  
Awake. Alone, in my studio apartment,  
the keys of my computer keyboard have waffled my cheek...

I see the digital maps, the tabs of hotel reviews. I begin my bleary shuffle to my bed.  
My preoccupied mind fails to see the opened, unpacked suitcase lurking on the floorboards

A misstep.  
The short slap and crackle of my skull on the tables edge, unheard by my neighbors.

The warm bath of leaking blood  
I close my eyes and attempt to return to Papua, New Guinea

This was not the trip I had planned.