

ITO–HNL Nightflight

Two seats away, at the window
a young man lifts his shirt, baring midriff,
as if to cool it. But it is cold, so high!
None but the young so flat, unmarked
by muscle, flab or shape.

His companion, between us, wears a red beret
set back on white blonde stringy hair.
Rail thin. No vibes. Sister? Lover? Friend?
She could be fifteen, or thirty five;
I cannot guess an age in such an empty face.

Faceless others face forward,
rows on either side of a narrow aisle;
blank, not looking out or in.
Idly I wonder who sleeps with whom,
although nothing tells in public anonymity.

ITO is the code for Hilo, on the Big Island
HNL, of course, is Honolulu.

HNL–ITO Nightflight Return

For thirty–five minutes we share rows of narrow space
floating on air
*Seat belt on, tray closed, seat upright, emergency exits
here, there, and in the unlikely...*

No time to repeat all the rules and regulations
the Feds impose.

Outside, beyond port hole, nought but night and cold
and shrieking wind.

We share the noise, the sweet drink in paper cups,
carefully staring ahead.

Two women encapsulated for half an hour, catching up
on a year of absence.

Very occasionally a few lights below rush back before
we can identify.

Bridesmaids coming back from a wedding giggle
about whatever was so *wei–eird*.

Cabin personnel chases back and forth with drinks
before we land again

in a roaring rush to prove that Hawaiian flies on time,
most of the time.

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