

Snug Books Writing Contest

Adult 3rd Place

WINDOW SEAT.

By Jay Lyons. Cowritten and edited by Raphael Foer.

Saturday, March 8, 2014, 12:10 am, Kuala Lumpur International Airport. This new job is gonna be awesome. Everything is falling into place. The owner of the company HIMSELF is picking me up at the airport and the first thing he wants to do is take me bar hopping in Beijing. He told me straight up in the interview that the job was mine, but in order for him to really vibe with me, he needs to see how i am after five or so beers. Great, apparently he's the kind of guy who looks past the resume and at the real person. I'm still learning Mandarin and because he doesn't speak Malay, we're meeting in the middle and speaking English while we get to know each other. There's just one problem: I HATE flying, particularly international red eye flights in the pitch black over open water. But that's OK, because I have it all worked out.

I booked a window seat and I have my essential travel music. That's the one thing that keeps me from getting nervous on a plane. My air travel ritual is this: I sit down wearing my Solar Shields on account of my light sensitivity, and I take out my lucky deck of cards to practice shuffling. Then I put on my noise cancelling DJ headphones and at the PRECISE moment that the plane wheels start rolling down the runway, I play Beck Sea Changes on my little Ipod Nano. 52 minutes of musical perfection. By the time track three "Guess I'm Doing Fine" is playing, I look outside my window at the buildings and cars getting smaller, and I think to myself, "Guess I'm doing fine."

I look at my ticket: 12:25 am departure from K L, 6:30 am arrival in Beijing. Judging by all the people lined up behind me, boarding should be in about five minutes. Boarding planes is always kind of interesting. Looking at all the people around you, wondering who they are, and why they're all going to the same destination as you. Even though everyone's wearing shorts and sandals, it's still freezing here in the waiting area. Oh well, I just hope it's sunny and warm when we land in Beijing and I step into my new life. Hopefully they have Michelob Ultra on the plane, or at least those little bottles of red wine. A pleasant female voice in English comes over the intercom and echoes through the terminal, "Ladies and gentlemen, Malaysia Airlines Flight MH 370 to Beijing is now boarding."

THE END