

# Airport Hotel

*by* Robert Detman

You were a tether. I didn't understand. I loved it. That you were there, five hundred miles away, waiting for me.

I was all alone in this bleak airport hotel. Planes came directly toward my window, their high beams lighting up from miles away, then they drifted past, low, just above the windows, silent. Then an interval and a long rumble, far away.

I'd ordered a Caesar salad at the bar. You called, it was late.

There was trouble getting to the airport that morning, I thought I'd miss my flight. We had words.

"I was concerned," you said, afraid we'd lost each other. I was no longer concerned. I thought, none of this matters: I'm serious about you.

You showed a resolve I wished you'd had to go the distance.

How I searched late one night driving up the winding roads of Grizzly Peak to find your house the first night we spent together. As I stepped on the flagstones, motion detector lights flooded your patio. Your dog barked, saw me and wagged his tail. I entered a paradise, the feeling I get when I am falling.

After sushi one night, I took your hand and held you close and walked you to your car. But I struggled, too. I was ready to ravish you. You were a deer caught in the headlights.

You might have thought I took you for granted.

I was relieved to see that we felt the same way about each other. Maybe I didn't say it right, but I knew it the moment I met you, but I was unsure how to proceed. They say the way things go at the start is an indicator.

We construct what we want, from what has failed in the past. We thought this worked. The picture was buzzing for me and I tried to hold on. I went blindly forward.

On the phone at the hotel I was excited to hear your reassuring voice, your careful words. "I was concerned." After a long

conversation about these things, I thought my phone battery was going to give out. Content, we said goodnight, until.

Exhausted, I fell asleep in a directionless room while planes slid past, a mild rumble. Heavy curtains blocked the light though I could still feel their passing. I slept so solidly that in the morning light I awoke to this unfamiliarity and for a moment long enough to terrify me, I had no idea who I was.

