You Should Change at Jamaica

by Carl Santoro

I wake and immediately feel more vulnerable. The metallic voice overhead announcing a stop I had hoped to avoid.

Eyes across from me staring at my bare knees. The train pushing through gravity in its merciless forward momentum.

Now what?

Wiping my drool away seemes perfectly okay in this situation.
Eat, Pray, Love had fallen between my heels.
My laptop needs closing.

Time to gather, compose, leave.

Someone left a tin of Altoids on the seat next to me.

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I throw it in my purse.

We all rise for the venture beyond the threshold of the sliding doors.

Like drops in a huge splash, I and the others disperse onto the concrete platform. An island of respite. A place to gather our thoughts as the steel snakes ooze by us, determined to feed on other holders of tickets.

My phone is dead. It is getting dark. Time for Altoids I guess.

The hinged container feels a little strange. Different. I shake it.
No rattling of pebbles of menthol can be heard.
Instead, feels more like only a single, solid object banging around inside.

I open it slowly. Cautiously. Inside is a black thumb drive resting on a bed of folded paper toweling. A white label adheres to the whole length of it. On it, small, hand-written words intrigue and begin to scare me:

"Insert and be changed forever.
Otherwise leave for someone else."

I reach for my laptop.

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