

that I first felt the dizziness of infinity?

The day before our departure, my mother bought me a book on shells. The shine from the pictures matched the shine of my cowrie shells. When has this been repeated? From the plane, I saw a maze of islands so small that they could barely be called islands. I wanted to step on and off them in hopscotch fashion and bathe in their pools.

Only on those islands were time and space made wonderful and strange.

Without warning, we were in England, with grandfathers in cardigans who winked at you and ate fish and chips in ink-stained newspapers (why?). I was forced to wear shoes again and the sun just disappeared.

On 19th September, 1994, Tavurvur and Vulcan awoke and burnt Rabaul off the map. There is a group on Facebook called 'Did you ever live in Rabaul, PNG? I have joined it and found you again.



ASHLEY CAPES

WASHING — BASKET

the word 'backyard' suggests a lawn
at the least, and possibly
fruit trees, a shed,
a woodheap and an old trailer
or bike, then kids
with makeshift rules for cricket

but my strip of concrete out back
with its metre-span clothesline
doesn't really measure up,
at least, not until the moon comes
and pours its silver across
the washing basket.