

JUST UNDER A SECOND

in which THE AUTHOR, on a plane, experiences the full arc of the Classical Romantic Tragedy.

Winston Daniels

All three of us, it turns out, have ordered orange juice.

THE AUTHOR (*seat 19D*) lifts his plastic glass and shoots a grin, collegial silliness, to THE BEAUTIFUL YOUNG ARGENTINE (*loose inference—dark complexion, accent, the plane's ultimate destination is Buenos Aires*).

YOUNG ARGENTINE (*19F*) smiles back (*cooly?*), then looks to the window. But THE FATHER, A STERN CATHOLIC (*crossed himself repeatedly during takeoff*), intercedes by dint of his position (*19E*).