



Squalor and Splendor: Expat Tales of East and West

Paul Luchessa

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SQUALOR AND SPLENDOR, Tales of East and West, is a series of unusual travel stories that take place in Europe and Asia covering the Philippines, Japan, Indonesia (Bali), Papua New Guinea, England, Spain, and Morocco. The title refers to the two polarities of the traveler's experience: unpleasant encounters and observations of degrading experiences balanced by the ecstasy of beautiful lands and new and fascinating experiences.

"Flesh" deals with prostitution in the Philippines and the narrator's strange reaction to it. "Revolution" portrays a spoiled, bored member of the Marcos class that was to fall in the revolution of 86. "Million Girls" is the story of a typical Philippine prostitute. "Boracay" is the odd story of a man who mistakes a young Filipino transvestite for a girl. "Green Man" is a parable of reverse racism in Japan. "Jean Shrimpton" relates the oddly connected experiences of a man in London over a period of eighteen years. "Wimbledon" is about a student who has a not so idyllic experience as a cook in a steak house. "Bali" deals with the negative effects of tourism on that no longer enchanted island. "Morocco" shows a young westerner encountering the drug and hippie culture, along with a persistent boy prostitute, in that atypical Muslim country. "Hemingway" is an ironic look at the Hemingway heroic myth in Spain. "Siquijor" is an account of faith healing and magic on that island in the Philippines. The subject is a well-known faith healer named Tibor.

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