



It is a significant shock to be weighed-in (with my bag) in front of the assembled passengers.
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MAUI, HAWAII

Uh-oh. My luggage and I are ordered on the weigh scale in Maui

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Sometimes things don't go as planned – and those moments often make for the best stories. Tripping columns offer readers a chance to share their wild adventures from the road.

“Okay, you, big guy, step on the scales.”

Um, what?

The fierce-looking woman about 5 feet tall and maybe 87 pounds of lean muscle and a mean temper glares at me.

“Pick up your carry-on bag and on the scales!”

WHAT?!

I mumble something to no effect. Frankly she scares me. I grab my travel bag and slowly approach the scales of doom. This isn't a doctor's office or health club, it's the airport check-in counter. People are looking around to figure out what they might jettison from their luggage or person. The options are limited.

I'm in Maui. The actual airport terminal is rather pleasant; but this is the "other" airport, a much shabbier structure for smaller, commuter planes a couple of hundred metres and several decades behind it. It does have a pleasant "open door" policy, possibly because there is no door.

It is a significant shock to be weighed-in in front of my fellow passengers. My bag and I step on the scales gingerly. My feet barely press down. I think light, airy thoughts. I look down as the arrow spins. It seems to take a very long time. Holy cow! My carry-on bag must be really heavy. It couldn't be the breakfast buffet at the hotel.

There is little happiness in the experience as the needle on the scale spins and the agent mutters a number and writes it on a piece of paper. The mind wanders to thoughts of airlines charging passengers by the pound. Check-in. Luggage. Weigh-in. Defibrillation. Golly, that would cut the airport crowds.

That humiliation over, I step away. Security at this terminal is slightly different from the shoe-and-belt-removing demands of larger airports where sweaty palms brush over you. Security here seems to be an elderly mutt sleeping in the shade.

We clamber onto the shaky stair of the Cessna. The airline name painted on the side is different from the one on my ticket. Doesn't seem to matter much to anyone.

The wooden door slat separating the cockpit from the cabin suddenly slides open. Our captain peers over his shoulder at us. I'm guessing he has recently passed the age of majority. Possibly the night before.

He urges us to secure the seat belts – both waist and shoulder. I tighten them into a tourniquet-like constraint.

The plane suddenly darts out onto a runway and within seconds is airborne. We aren't hitting the waves, but we're not in the stratosphere either. The passengers are divided on whether the blow from a whale we fly over caresses the bottom of the plane.

We land in Kona 30 minutes later and I totter off in search of a taxi. The memory of the public weigh-in still scars my poor, tormented psyche.