Chainmail

—Ray Komatsu

For once you are glad that Melbourne airport is dwarfed by the Changi in Singapore. You track the pair by the trail of stupefied onlookers garrulously recounting what they’ve just seen, and soon find them near the lavatories. You discover a new-found appreciation for potted plants as you creep from behind one to another with ninja-like stealth. You stop behind a recycling bin, about ten feet away from the pair, and try to listen in. Without warning, one of them strides towards you, fumbling for something hidden in his cloak! You smack your back against the metallic bin, heart racing but with all other muscles paralysed, while you decide between fight and flight. You brace for a brief thunderous explosion and the immediate cold feeling of hot lead sinking into your skin, but meet instead the fading echoes of departing footsteps succeeded by a crumpled piece of A4 paper rebounding off the rim of the trash can.

Three minutes of eternity slowly tick away before you can feel your body again. By now, your back is soaked in cold sweat. You gingerly pick up the paper ball with trembling hands and head straight into the rest rooms. Unravelling the ball, you feel incredibly silly for risking so much for a discarded chain letter. But why print it out in the first place?