

The Unmaking of a Day

A poem by Anthea Pretorius

1. There is a tiny bugger that can make you mighty sick so very, very quick!
2. This female critter, *Anopheles* is her name, is ravenously hungry– from dusk to dawn each day.
3. Sly and mean; without a single buzzy whine to warn you - she attacks when you aren't looking.
4. No-one wants to be a statistic, yet over two hundred million cases are reported every year!
5. Imagine an insect this small, wreaking so much havoc! Contracting malaria is the pits, for sure.
6. The first symptoms appear: Fever, perspiration and the onset of sudden shivery chills.
7. Your poor head will ache. Diarrhoea will make you trot. Nausea will make you want to lie down.
8. By the time you start vomiting, you will feel like crap, so . . . listen to the Doctor warnings
9. In high-risk areas, wear long-sleeved shirts and slacks. Put on socks and shoes.
10. Liberally apply mozzie repellent, burn coils and delicious Citronella candles; Sleep under a gauzy mosquito net.
11. Put screens on every door and window; make sure they are whole - and fit real snug and tight!
12. It is so important to investigate the area: look for litter, empty cans and beware of any stagnant puddle,
13. pool or area with reeds near water – for this is where these critters live and want to breed!
14. Mosquitoes are flying insects that notch up 2.4 km/per hour; and the blighters live for six months.
15. So, if you travel to areas where these critters thrive, make sure you take the meds
16. exactly as Doctor prescribed! Mozzies may have no teeth that's true, but use a device
17. called a proboscis to penetrate the skin and extract blood, while an enzyme which is injected prevents blood clotting.
18. The spot will swell – and itch like blazes, coz of the mozzie's spittle.
19. To alleviate the frightful itchiness, dab on a drop of Vicks, Vanilla Essence or use a bit of Tea Tree Oil.
20. The pesky parasites she leaves behind in that tiny little wound, are searching for a new home.
21. It is crucial to see a Doctor right away. Do not delay! You might only notice symptoms after a week, or up to fourteen days
22. But believe you me, those bloody blighters are already making themselves at home . . .
23. in your liver, lungs or spleen! Very soon they will lay you low. So take every precaution.
24. Then, trust me you will be
A L R I G H T ! ! ! !