

miniMAG

issue103

lovers carvings





**Opening Session at Earth Live!
2641 Interplanetary Business Symposium**

Jan Lee

The conference-goers sat expectantly,
As motionless as any mannequins,
The breathing apparatuses we wore
Betraying our ancestral origins'
Environmental incompatibility.
Or, if, from out our customary veils
No tubes or filters could be seen to jut,
One could assume, from such refined details,
Genetic tinkering had done the job
Of subjugating Nature's quest for breath,
Just as our parents' science, years before,
Had crossed the galaxy, defying Death.

Before proceedings were allowed to start,
A special guest was welcomed to the stage,
Unusual in stature, form, and frame.
His raiment hearkened to a bygone age
When all-organic beings had held sway.
Unsuited though his mouth-parts were to speak,
He somehow made his babble understood,
Thus adding to his puzzling mystique,
As he began his ritual display,
Consuming, from a cylinder of glass,
An amber-colored liquid, glittering
With fragile sparks of effervescent gas.

His message? That we honored, on this land,
The tribal owners, who, in eons past,
Had called their own folk “Europeans”, yet
Themselves had colonized dominions vast
Enough that they enriched their kings and queens
With spoils of exploitation overseas.
So few remained, now, we would never meet
One, barring formal rituals like these.

We shifted with discomfort as he spoke.
If, as he said, his own ancestors, too,
Had seized the land of others (as had we),
Why dwell on it? If it were even true.
By right of conquest, Earth was now our own.
Mere billions inhabited this place,
Where many more lived now, descended all
From settlers who crossed the seas of space.

Still, courteous, as always, when he sat,
We paid him our respect. I gently stroked
The ridge of my front carapace, and looked
Away from those odd questions he’d evoked
With his inflammatory, brash remarks.
Yet it was done. He’d finished off his rite,
Permitting us to network, meet, and learn,
And, after, to swim off into the night.





Amala!!!

Solape Adetutu Adeyemi

And they brought the amala

In a wine coloured dish

The amala was serenaded with stew and gbegiri plus ewedu

Hefty lumps of beef, fish, pomo, shaki and kidney playing catch up on the palm oil laden stew

Your body upon seeing this largesse started vibrating

Your friend who had accompanied you declined firmly and quietly

And even warned you to be wary of freebies

As there is always a hidden price tag

You paid him no heed

As you settled down to do justice

Almost forgetting to wash your hands!

You loosened your belt and zipped down your trousers a bit, to allow for extra space to do justice to the deliciously delectable and irresistible meal laid in front of you

And you dig in

By this time your guy had left, unceremoniously

And you eat and eat and eat

Like you had been starved for days

And as you eat

You forget your past as a new future is birthed before you

You forget your wife and four sons whom you could not afford to bring with you to the city

As a new face and another reality is birthed before you
The face of the young lady who had been smiling at you, even as she served
you
The proud owner of the buka who had graciously invited you to eat, for free
You continue eating nonetheless, shrugging the thought away
Until you can eat no more
Your favourite brand was brought to help with cooling you down after
ingesting the hot amala
The mortuary standard Goldberg
And you relax, adjusting your butt on the cushioned chair, belching
periodically
And when you get home, eventually
You start seeing yourself with this lady
You dream about her and there is an insatiable longing to see her and to eat
her food
Your wife's calls go ignored
As you seek Labake out,
Labake alamala
Unashamedly begging for her love and her hand in marriage... as she has
become the centre of your universe





Fairy Raid

Erik Plet

no these are happy tears mommy says/ she says shes happy when
Daddy hugs her and touches her/ she says viola youll grow up to be
such a beautiful and happy woman

but rosina is more beautiful than viola/ i want to be like mommy
rosina/ shes the queen of fairies/ Daddy says if i tell mommy about her
magic will leave the house/ shes our little secret

everything Daddy does he does out of love and when Daddy loves
everyone is loved/ we are lucky he says and hes right theres not many
girls that still have a Daddy to tell them what to do/ they must be
feeling lost and scared

their daddies left them because they were ugly

mommy rosina makes Daddy happy and when Daddy is happy
everyone is happy/ mommy doesnt cry her happy tears when Daddy is
happy/ shes quiet because shes mocking him

all mommy wants is viola to be happy thats what mommy says

Daddy helps mommy rosina rehearse/ shell be a star so she has to practice singing/ i dont like how mommy rosina sings

i dont want to be a star

mommy sang too but she stopped/ Daddy says shes got no talent anymore/ i cant tell her because thats mean and a good girl isnt mean/ Daddy can be mean because hes not a girl

when Daddy and mommy rosina rehearse i need to stay in my room and cover my ears/ if i dont magic will leave the house
if mommy rosina is a fairy cant she make magic stay/ mommy rosina doesnt answer me/ fairies cant see me or mommy/ Daddy must be a fairy

mommy rosina is the queen of beauty

A QUEEN WEARS

-long heels

-short skirt (isnt she cold)

-tight top (wont her chest pop)

Daddy says i can only dress like a queen when im older/ i try to dress like a princess till then/ will i have golden hair too/ Daddy says sure why not

i hope i wont end up a star/ stars are stars because they wear stars on their chests/ but theyre not as beautiful as a queen/ why does mommy rosina want to be a star

mommy hates mirrors/ she says they bring out the ugly in people/ i dont look into mirrors anymore/ i dont want Daddy to leave me because im ugly

mommys selfish again/ she doesnt like it when Daddy takes me shopping/ she wants me to go with her only

Daddys mad again/ he says he only wants to buy me clothes/ does mommy want me to not wear clothes anymore

I WEAR

-flat shoes

-long pants (they keep my legs warm)

-big sweater (comfy)

if mommy gets her way ill be wearing

-

if Daddy married mommy rosina hed be the king of fairies and id be a
real princess

mommy and Daddy argue because fairies and humans dont get along/
but me and Daddy do get along

do we

what am I

Daddy counts his money/ he splits

mommys food is ready/ she shares

Daddy gets a lot of money/ mommy gets little and i get nothing

Daddy gets a lot of food/ mommy gets little because she gave me more

theres still money left/ we never know when were gonna need it

mommy keeps asking about it and Daddys mad again/ he says close the
door and close it well and cover your ears and cover them well and if
you dont hear viola then its not about viola

what i hear is not viola what i hear are not words



invisible

K Weber

my hormone
hair

the way
my mouth
doesn't

you bite my lip
if i forget:
tooth-stung

morse code
across pink
skin

where you left
that kiss





The mark we made on the earth

Bruno Cooke

You came at precisely the right time,
flash and twinkle, skin, eyes and bones
in a heap on the step, trundling into view
like a carabao – long neck, head up –
smile swinging in a threadbare hammock
not far from the river, do you remember?
Neon-lit by the glimmer from a glass cabinet
whose light, reflecting off key lime pie,
gave passers-by a cartoon-like,
disembodied quality.

Whenever someone leaned in to deliberate,
gaze dancing from one item to the next,
I would try to predict their choice:
apple crumble, date slice, chocolate cake.
Banoffee crumbs lingered on my fork.
We were talking about the difference
between a religious experience and a spiritual one,
or between Maoism (as defined by the Shining Path)
and Mao Zedong *Thought* – he was a poet
who didn't like the term 'Maoism' –
about Biafra, Kingslee Davey, salt flats and
mineral deposits.

And then there you were again,
in the street, shoulders draped in sky-blue silk,
Yumeji's theme playing somewhere offstage;
once a geologist, forever a homeopath;
nonprofit employee in pachyderm pants
disguised as a Spaniard in search of wheels.
You bought a sack of ferns
from the old ladies on the street
before trading it back in the village for
tubes of fresh rice cake.
We snatched them off you like children.
Your skin was soft brown. We spoke in German.
Unafraid of details, you described to me
a recent sexual encounter with a Latina woman
(her first of the kind) and an exuberant,
I remember you saying 'pneumatic', young man.
It could've been Ha Long Bay.
Draught beer was 25p a glass and *cold*.
Elsewhere it was free drinks from seven till eight,
happy water and off-brand cola.
You insisted I come back in the morning
for iced coffee and coconut crackers
but didn't hang around long enough to see me
vault the fence. I keep a mental picture of you
in my wallet, wearing a mustard-yellow toque,
driving a taxi-yellow scooter,
screaming into the blackness of a cave.
I could never guess which cake they would go for,
back along the river; the options were too many.
We all have our different selves.
The kitchen twirled around you,
around the Mexican food we made
and the marks we left on the earth,
all skin and eyes and twinkling summer rain.
The time was exactly right, and will be again.





Asking for Answers

McKenna Ashlyn

Boot after muddy boot along. Everything moss-crept and misty.
Tireswing whose child must be grown now creaking

under me. Here I think of our venom spitted pleas to be loved
from last night and make this the end of something.

Before I've always been the type of girl curling
towards someone. Rocks not quite cemented into path catching loose

under my hinging ankles. I've found a road where raincoat locals
still against my smile plastered face.

So I fall to the riverbank where water rushes freely,
smooths the stones. I find myself leaning against spider webs

just to be held. Rain gasps down at me. Soaks my dress into an embrace.
You never wear coats when it rains. Out for a picnic

before the birds are even singing again.


I'm reminded there's always a river, always the moss.

Always the moon peeking through on the days you forget
she's even alive. Never an answer. Always a man hacking on the train

or running into on the sidewalk. When I met you
I was always moving out of the way.

I walk muddy into town. Fumble through without cell service or map.
In an empty cafe, a barista asks where I'm from

and I don't really answer him. But I turn back towards the mountain,
hoping when I arrive you will be home.





Musk

Kevin MacAlan

You spoke of summer rain,
and perfumes damp as tears,
then turned to walk again
to lose yourself in years.

Does Love, By Definition, Endure?

Kevin MacAlan

Does love, by definition, endure?
Must it last to be true?
If it doesn't survive, was it pure?
Can love just briefly ensue?

My heart is enfolded now for sure,
Has been for year on year,
But was what I thought love before
Merely brief - or insincere?



Youless

Kevin MacAlan

I thought you were right behind me.

But the rattle and rhythm
of a rickety bike
disguises the absence
of something alike.

And after I'd told you
I wanted you there,
I halted and turned
to discover thin air.

I had spoken to the youless wind,
and the youless wind had answered.



Eleanor

Chelsea Allen

Dear Mr. Dover,

They are such kind words which you spoke of me while asking my hand in marriage from my mother. That only one dance could evoke feelings of such immediate regard is a compliment, I am sure, many covet, although it vexes me a good deal that I should hear none of it until before my mother recounted the tale of your visit to the family over supper.

Your generous offer notwithstanding, I must apprise you of the sentiments my dear friend harbours towards you. Surely you remember Miss Augusta from York? The youngest of the Pembroke sisters you danced with at the very same ball we met? It was a most delightful moment when she returned to me from the dance floor and declared softly that she'd never chanced upon a gentleman so fine as you. Might I add, it met with the highest approval of the company that evening, how perfectly suited you and Miss Augusta seemed on the dance floor. You mustn't let me keep you from such a match! Besides, I am afraid my heart simply doesn't flutter for you in the way it should for a future husband.

I think it's best, perhaps for all parties concerned, if you withdraw your marriage proposal, and consider cancelling the meeting you've arranged with my father when he arrives back in town after the fortnight.

Yours sincerely,

Eleanor



Dearest Eleanor,

I must at once assure you that my mind belongs to no one but you. While I can recall the presence of one Miss Pembroke at the ball, it escapes me that I ever had a dance with her. But probably I did, and probably it was your most pleasant countenance that robs me of such a memory. But to speak of your feelings in such mistruth to benefit your friend? You've only let my admiration for your kind heart soar.

I am most obliged that your mother has accepted my proposal. I am therefore only in earnest waiting to ask your learned father for your hand in marriage.

Yours ever,
Charles Dover

Mr. Dover,

Perhaps I'll take the liberty of suggesting some enlightening literature for you. Have you read Mansfield Park by Jane Austen? I must urge you to read it if you haven't, and pay close attention to the character dynamics between Fanny Price and Henry Crawford. With any luck, it might improve your prospects of understanding things better.

~~With much affection,~~
Eleanor



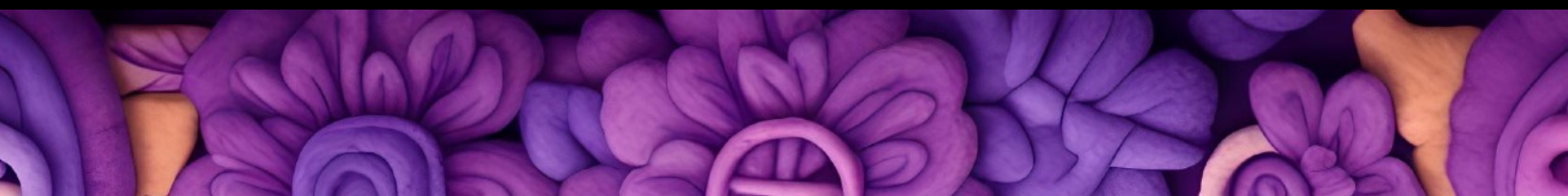


SUPERCALFRAGILISTICEXPIALIDOCIOUS

(for Helena Qi Hong)

yuan changming

Your inner being is so full of sunlight
Every flower that catches sight of you
Begins to bloom against the season
Just as each face that turns towards you
Bursts into a smile when you pass by





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“Fairy Raid” by Erik Plet

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“The mark we made on the earth” by Bruno Cooke

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