

# miniMAG

*issue31*  
*departures*



## a six-seater didi just for me

Alex Prestia

Can't help being aroused by slack-jawed lesbians on the sidewalk, arranging their day. Not in a sexual way, but in an intellectually curious –how does bleached blonde Asian hair do on a rainy Xuhui afternoon?– way. A –what secret garden in this belching city do they have premiere access to?– way. A –where do the creatives go when the country doesn't want them but the city, desperately, eagerly, on its side in negligee as they come in through the door, does?– way.

If she was more caring she'd have written a poem. She desperately needed someone to write her a poem, and she was tragically attracted only to people who never would – write about her fullmoon eyes, her innocent smile, occasional snorts as she laughed. Write how she easily hid those features under a veneer so cold that I froze when I first touched her.

It's funny how we're always attracted to the things we need the least. You to me. Her to her. Me to freedom. A natural talent to rigid lessons. Don't let me be the piano teacher that slams your fingers after every improvised note.



Artwork in this issue by  
Edward Lee

# Sharp

Julie A. Dickson

His memories of WWII were seldom shared until he told of losing his mess kit spoon; some rations were difficult to eat without a spoon he recalled.

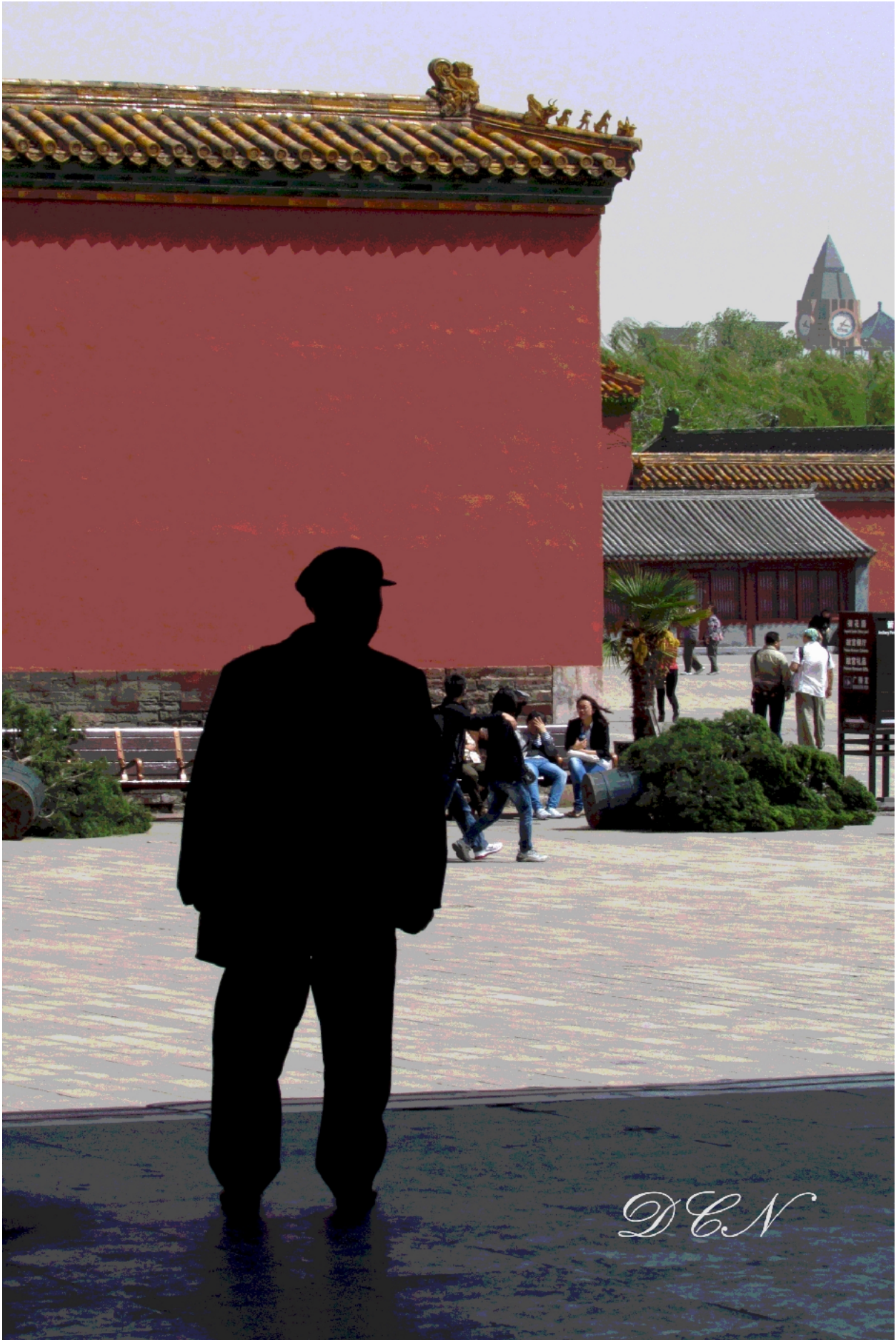
I watched as he finished off mashed potatoes with a serving spoon, perhaps unconsciously making a point, after carving roast beef with a sharp knife

I dice celery and onion with my silver-tone sharp paring granny knife, its sharp edge biting into vegetables like teeth; I don't use my mother's old knife. It looks almost the same, but the blade is narrow and discolored, thin due to the excessive sharpening by my father, subjected to repeated strokes, sharp enough for doing battle

I feed him with a spoon, sitting in his wheelchair, strapped in so he cannot fall again; ground-up food like mush so he won't choke after Alzheimer's started messing with his ability to swallow. Some type of meat and potatoes unrecognizable, cut into small pieces with a sharp knife to food processor on puree, he is reduced to only a spoon, while forks are still readily available

I suppose I am a granny now but times change; we gathered every holiday and often on Sundays over pot roast or meat loaf, mother's paring knife lay on kitchen counter near peeled potatoes. Tradition reversed; now my daughter acting as my mother, preparing meals in simmering slow cookers; pulled chicken and meatballs in sauce, no silver-toned sharp knife on her counter; I don't host holidays

When last I saw him, a wizened figure, body curled into a fetal C, he was reduced to infancy without ability to speak beyond grunts, unintelligible murmurs; I could not turn his rheumy gaze from lions on *Animal Planet* [no sound since he became deaf]. He used to be gruff, a lion or bull elephant bellowing sharply, chopping fallen logs, forest of his domain, an acre returns to nature as his body curls inward



## Silently: Beijing Train Station

She moves through the boisterous station  
silently,  
while the crowd talks loud  
and arrivals and departures  
are proclaimed.  
She catches an eye  
or taps a knee  
as she did mine.

She bows.

She points to her mouth,  
to her ear,  
and holds a silent baby  
sleeping as if drugged.  
She pleads  
silently.  
A few yuan  
passes hands.  
She nods, bows,  
then moves on slowly  
to the next person  
silently  
through the loud crowded station.

# Laodice Through Telemachus

other views:

Laodice Through Hecuba

Issue04

Laodice Through the Immigration Officer

Issue19

Alex Prestia

“Dee, I love spending time with you.”

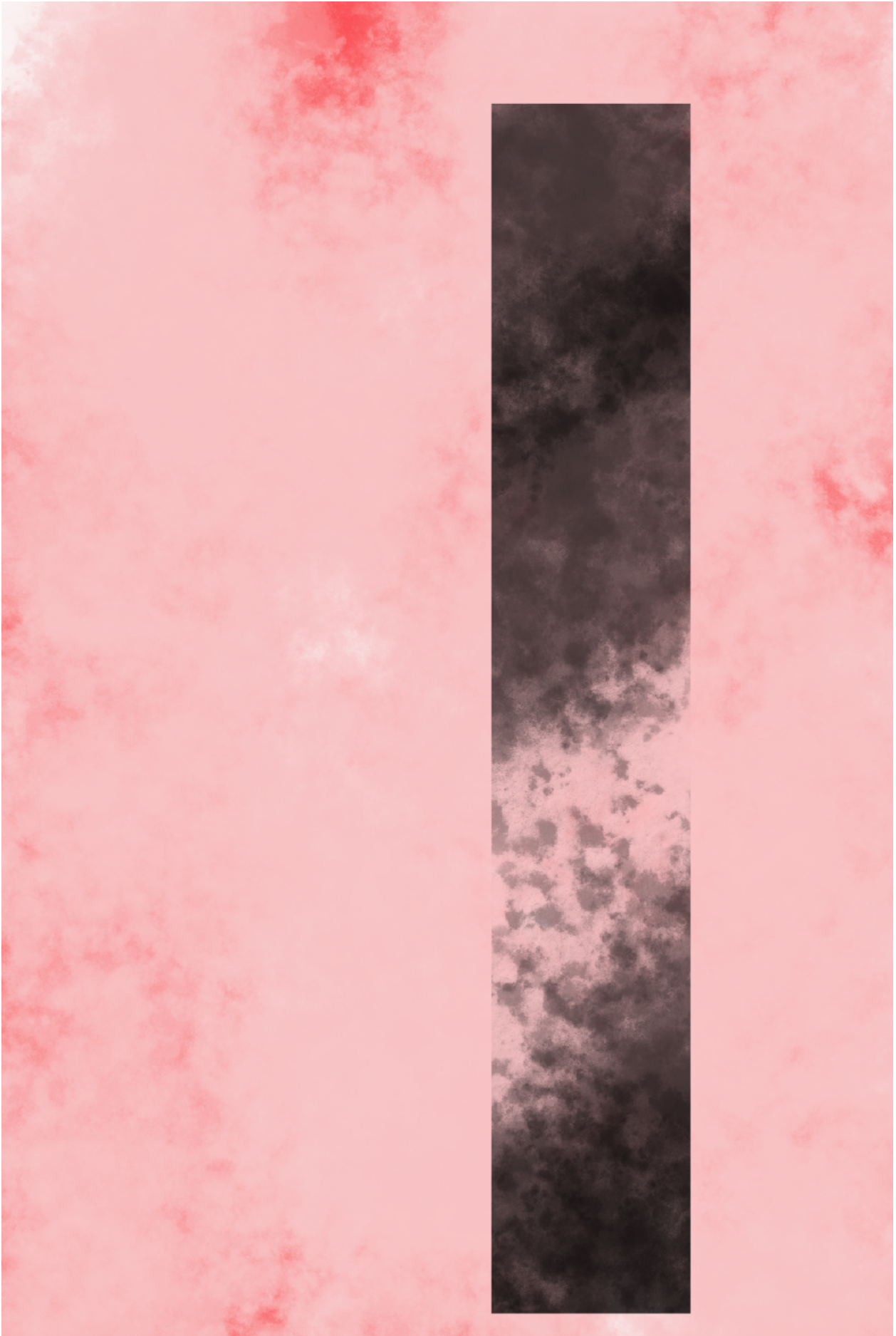
“Me too, Tele.”

“I just feel like, together, we can hang out and not have to worry about anything. This bed’s our kingdom and we’re safe, together, here. I’ve been thinking so much about the future lately, my father, always my father, and what he wants and all of that. Laying here with you, that’s all I want. It’s so simple. Who cares about the future, right? Let’s just lay here, ok? And not think about it. Just lay here.”

*Just look at you. You’re so sexy. What am I even supposed to do? And with graduation coming up. And jobs. And my father, yes him again, always him. We both know this isn’t going anywhere, right? You totally know I’m just hiding here. I’m using you as the closet that protects me from my hockey mask wearing dad. And even in the movies, the hide in the closet trick never works. You’re so hot, though. Fuck, I’m lucky. This act is great. It is an act, though. You know that, right? I know that, atleast. We’re play acting. My father certainly knew that when he met you. As if the famous Odysseus would let his son marry a Trojan. I’ve got to say, though, you are the hottest Trojan I’ve ever met.*

I’m listening to Grecian Public Radio. I’m on my way to hook up with this Median transwoman who I met on Columnr. That’s the part I keep to myself when we’re together; that’s the “reticence” you’re constantly referring to as if it’s some manly attribute. You put your arm around it and show off to your friends, “Oh, he’s just quiet sometimes.” You say with a smug smile over coffee in a wool sweatertoga.

I like listening to GPR on my way to suck and fuck because it calms me. Because it reassures me that this is ok, the monotone of the Aegean Shipping Forecast keeps me planted firmly to the driver's seat of this Apollo A-150 Truck. "Gythion, Sparta: southwesterly, 4 or 5, increasing 6 at times, thundery showers. Good occasionally, poor later." Keeps me from bouncing uncontrollably in anticipation.



She's Median, thicc, we've been messaging back and forth. On a typical night we're off rhythm, don't make the connection. Me: "Horny tonight?" Two hours later, her: "How are you tonight, sweetie?" And I've already jerked off, or got cold feet, or went to hang out with you, or something like that. Until tonight. Tonight, she and I are on the

same wavelength; she responds to my message in 5 minutes. I actually get into the truck, turn on GPR, and begin my glide towards something illicit, exciting; different from you.

She lives in an apartment complex hidden by middle-income suburban sprawl. I wouldn't have known these faux-brick apartments existed if not for hooking up with strangers. I pass off the main road into lanes surrounded by three story-high and corridor-long apartment buildings. There a couple parking spaces in front of each unit and a small pathway separated by some grass. Deeper and deeper I delve into this labyrinth, not touching the gas but just creeping forward in drive. "Piraeus, Athens: north 3, clear. Fair, good."


My Columnr app is on my secondary phone and doesn't have access to data. I'm afraid to ask her where I can park, the spaces are crowded with cars older and less high end than mine. Each parking spot has a little number written on it in faded white paint. Does the faded paint mean that it's a free-for-all here? I don't know. "Argive's Landing, Troy: southwest by west 4 sixteen miles, heavy fog to thundery showers later. Poor."

Building 26 Room 4. That's it. Is this safe? I'm not worried about this being a primarily Median immigrant complex, that's not it, I swear I'm not racist, it's just an economic thing, you've got to understand. I'm not nervous because they're Median. But I have to admit, I'm not just scanning for a parking spot. I'm scanning for a trap.

The spots directly in front of her place are all occupied. Across the lane there's a spot with a small grass median and some open spaces. I'm pulling the front of my truck into the spot. I think I see—in the rearview mirror, the door of her apartment opening, that must be her. "Heraklion, Crete: southerly at 4 or 5. Good, occasionally fair."

As I'm slipping into P from D on the transmission, with her centered in the rearview mirror, a lifted Wreath Victoria rolls up behind me, blocking me into the parking spot. This was their plan. I've been set up. They waited for me to park and then blocked me in. I need to get out quickly, the median only raises a little bit. The spot across from me is open. I've got 4-wheel drive. Everything's a blur; and I pop the switch on the side that says 4X4, and put the transmission back in D, and hit the gas, trample my front two tires onto the median, hear the gas going, roll over the median into the open spot, bump as the back tires come down off the median, see that the Wreath Vic is pulling away from where the spot was, can't locate my fuck buddy, and rip off





into the night, out of the compound and back into the suburban 6 lane thoroughfare. Safe. “Chabahar, Persia: showers becoming variable at times mainly fair. Good, occasionally moderate.”

Looking back –as I’m speeding down the main road with my cozy Shipping Forecast droning on— I realize why I can never be with you, Laodice. I’m too much of a coward to go any way but forward.

*the train's whistle*  
*a flutter of anticipation*  
on the platform  
the thunder  
of dragon dance drums

*Paul Callus / Christina Chin*

## **You. Survived.**

Frail. Small.  
Through wind.  
Fear. Rain.  
And still. You. Frail.  
Small. Survived.  
Through pain.  
Chronic. Gasping.  
And still. You. Frail.  
Small. Survived.  
Someday. Prayers. Tears.  
You. Will.  
Die.

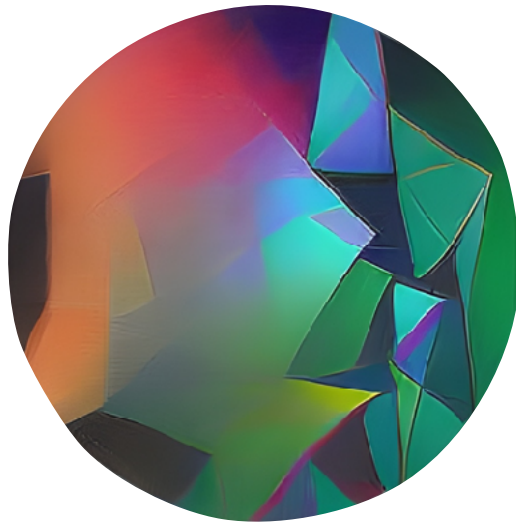
Nolcha Fox

climate scientists:  
the king's wearing  
a cloak of flesh!

*the taste of meat  
turns to ash*

Jerome William Berglund / *petro c. k.*





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Page 1: A Dream Almost Remembered  
Page 3: Swift Moments To Remember  
Page 7: It Was, For A Moment  
Page 9: Some Dreams Make Sense  
Page 11: Emblem Of The Past

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Books available on Amazon:  
Bullied Into Silence  
Untumbled Gem  
The Seven Trials of Kiera Snow

“Silently: Beijing Train Station” and accompanying photograph  
“Forbidden City Silhouette- Beijing” on Page 3  
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“the trains whistle...”  
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