

miniMAG

issue50

phantom limb



Balloons

Jerome William Berglund

foggy day
on the runway – plane sits immobile
still, safely grounded

by window as dusk falls
reading on rug
natural light

these knees weren't made
for concerted yard cleaning
yet cleaning yard must do

Riverside plaza, night
from street level beneath –
muted blues, shades gray

can't tell weeds
from what's good and wanted
so leave everything green



Unbandage-able Wounds

Smrithi Senthilnathan

i couldn't find the bandage, it
remains hidden despite my best efforts to
locate it. my mother cannot tell me where
it is and we both play a delicate
dance of gauging the other's thoughts- my
mother wondering why i need a bandage
and i, why she lies despite knowing
exactly where the bandage evades me.

our physical wounds can be covered so
easily using material things like bandages
and cotton and casts. why do we hide our
emotions behind masks of happiness and
fake smiles that we hold until our teeth
fall down and all that's left are the open mouths.

the bandages eventually reveal themselves
to my eyes, my mother despairing when she
sees them in my hands. why do you fear, mother?
is it because of the lack of physical wounds?
is it because i have nothing to bandage?
must these only be used for physical wounds?

gently i place a bandage on my head, the material
rough against my smooth moisturized forehead.
it's funny to me how the physical and mental
states are juxtaposed in the same body. how they
coexist and war with each other yet manage not
to drive me crazy with their intersections.

or have i gone crazy already? my mother's looks
certainly make it so. all i wanted was the bandage.
the bandage that - if it can cover up my physical
scars, the scars i endure when i fall down or get
hit by a truck as i wander aimlessly into the road,
why can't it cover up the migraines and intrusive
thoughts and hazardous impulses i have?
what if the cotton and antiseptic create a new
chemical that makes everything go away, that helps
me dissociate from reality? is it too much to ask?



Arms of lovers wrap around you like clothes
Then you get compliments on your style
They will always wonder how you got your
Layers to fit your curves
So thick
Walk out of bed, breaststroke to the wind
Your pants in a puddle
Makes you want to pee
So you step over them
To pull them up
Later
Time for another layer

Marcelle

sometimes when it rains I remember

Emily Kay MacGriff

the notch on your left ear, cocked
toward a foreign voice on the other side of the door-
the scar on your shoulder grown over a few years, a remnant
of your attempt to bust through the fence in DC, after a deer
if I recall correctly
the droop of your eyelids
how your footpads frayed
and yellowed the scar you came with,
 your back right leg
how your coat was loose and lived in and smelled
like cinnamon buried miles underneath
your skin sewn over by leather le out in the rain, cheeks
wet then
dried and wet
then dried cherries picking up umbels
from dandelions caught in the dew or grass clippings
how you came to the door to nose open any mail, your whole head diving into contents
rarely if ever yours
how you didn't much care for food and never overate
today
I refused
to draw a 1/4 sun in the corner
of my construction paper and instead watched
the spider building
egg sacks in the easement
leap into the wind

Family Dinner

Evan Cozad

My mother sharpens her blade and carves into the flesh of the pineapple.

I wish it was me. Instead of my family gorging on the sweet syrup that spills out of the pineapple, they gorge on me.

My father picks out my calf—bone in—for himself.

He rips into the sinewy meat as my brother licks the fat drippings coming off my ass meat, and my mother savors the delicate flavors emerging from my bicep.

Each of them making small talk about their day, the weather, and the tenderness of my meat.

After dinner, my mother brings out the crème de la crème—my slouching penis on a sliver tray. Cooked rare to preserve the juices.

They each take part in this delicacy—barely enough to go around—and finish me off as my left testicle slides down my father's throat.



backporch, va

Alex Prestia

smoke trails of an incense stick
on a dark patio.
i bought an incense holder
with golden stars
and a crescent moon on it,
so it would always be pretty,
even when it's alone.
richmond's known for its humidity.
that's ok tonight,
let it burn slow.

there's a lover
left behind
thousand miles back.
we said it was mutual.
comes to mind often
on a night like this.

there's smoke there too:
cigarettes and joints and wildfires.
she's ablaze.
burning would move me;
humidity has me placid.
that's ok tonight;
the incense is smoking well enough,
there are plenty of flavors.
cherry, fortune, sea breeze.
she's not you.

owls hoot a mixture of longing and hostility;
too finicky to find each other in the dark



Remington Gifts

Tom Will

There's rifling along
Hera's long Swedish legs

As an Indian burn
She waits in line
For her own grand opening

And am I a fool
To be surprised
When just one hoof pedals my bike

Or when I the headline scan
"Navajo Nation In Talks To Buy Remington Arms"

Or when Hera's photo is a-flying by
Above the fold her pleats all a-rifling

My Dark of Night

Howie Good

I wake with a jolt. The bottoms of the bedroom curtains appear for an instant to be dripping long strings of bloody saliva onto the floor. It's 4 in the morning, the coldest hour of the day, and with the darkness spreading in circular ripples. As soon as one war ends, another begins. I'm near helpless, like the 18-month-old slipping under water when her mother leaves her unattended in the tub for just a sec.



Baptism

Alex Murphy

Eat a fruit in the shower

Try an apple –

Crunch.

Then the water washes away the flavour

And the apple is flesh,

As you are flesh

Drying off,

Frantic ritual

Vigorously rubbing your legs

As though grating cheese

Worry not,

The bathmat is your counsellor

Will an apple core flush?

Down the toilet

Are you going to be the one

To find out?

Surely not,

Now that you're so clean.

MOBILE CABIN: 8

Alex Prestia

The rain began at the same time for two days straight. I would stay here longer but the camp is closing to the public for special maintenance tomorrow. There does seem to be an unreasonable amount of common houseflies buzzing around this otherwise pristine piece of Utah mountainside. It must be their fault.

Yesterday the rain came on powerfully then was gone in an hour. Probably will do that again today. Otherwise the weather is perfect here. Even with the rain, it is perfect here.

There is no wind with the rain. Maybe the northside of the mountain is constantly buffeted while this side soaks up all the sun. I guess that's why this side has the cannabis plants, and the flies, and these fat ungainly mosquitos that wouldn't last a day in the big city. Idk. Maybe. There's no cell service here to check my wild guesses.

Saw a lot of lizards when I hiked up the mountainside earlier. No snakes. I haven't seen any snakes. I never see any snakes anywhere. Doesn't seem right; I see lizards everywhere I go. They probably see me first. I'd look it up but, y'know, no cell-service.

This is the second time I've stayed at a place named Oak Grove Campsite. Utah and East Texas. There were only pine trees at both. I noticed a lot of oak saplings sprouting up around the pines. I guess they were thinking long-term with the names.

I'm just writing this because I'm cooped up in my truck until the storm passes. I wish I had walked all the way up to the summit today. I gave up three quarters of the way there. If this was Zelda, I woulda got there. On my way down I saw someone paragliding. If this was Zelda, I woulda done that, too.

I promise I'll climb the next one.



url: minimag.space
subs: minimagsubmissions@gmail.com
twitter: @minimag_lit
discord: <https://discord.gg/guHSz8pH>
substack: minimag.substack.com

“Balloons” by Jerome William Berglund

Twitter: @BerglundJerome

Insta: @lespectrepoliteraryjournal

Website: <https://flowersunmedia.wixsite.com/jbphotography/blog-1/>

FB: <https://www.facebook.com/JeromeBerglundPhotography/>

“sometimes when it rains I remember” by Emily Kay MacGriff

Website: <https://emilykaymacgriff.com>

Insta1: @emilykaymacgriff

Insta2: @ekmacgriff

“Arms of lovers...” by Marcelle

Insta: @cellescenés

“Family Dinner” by Evan Cozad

Twitter: @evanjcozad

“Unbandage-able Wounds“ by Smrithi Senthilnathan

Blog: <https://theunwrittenstories101.wordpress.com>

Insta: @theunwrittenstories101

“Remington Gifts” by Tom Will

Twitter: @TomWill72550626

Book: You, the Viewer at Home, Moon (<https://a.co/d/2qSKEd5>)

“My Dark of Night” by Howie Good

Book: Swimming in Oblivion: New and Selected Poems (<https://a.co/d/0v9eprW>)

Website: <https://unlostjournal.com/> (co-editor)

“Baptism” by Alex Murphy

Twitter: @thatalexmurphy

Insta: @datamiln

edited, “backporch, va”, “Mobile Cabin: 8”, and AI art
by Alex Prestia
(fictional)