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Isle

Hugh Bramlett

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Perhaps she scanned the fence line for defectors who, in pursuit of an American bounty, braved an indiscriminate sowing of land mines. Maybe she imagined the explosives lying in wait, heard the click of metal prongs depressed by a single misplaced foot.

Her baby went missing when the tree stood bare. It was only after flowering that the sharp knock, at odds with a young fist, resounded. The fruit had matured, but the sheet of paper slipped through my door jamb told me no one was looking for mangoes.

Another search planned. Any help appreciated.

Perhaps it was the stirring within that led me to the tree. Grocery bag handles threaded between my bloated fingers, I picked the fruit. Two reddened globes dropped for every one sought, yet I couldn't discard any. Left exposed, only a scattering of kernels would remain.

I drove to her, my offering tumbling across the floorboard. The mangoes bounced as I passed the next khaki-hued tract to be stripped of mines, land betraying no clue of its vicious intent—subversive earth that would offer no yield.

Isle

HUGH BRAMLETT

It is among the ten
where I sit with the sun.
I borrow some thoughts
and watch fingers

of the sea turn pages
of deep, one by one.
Palms lean themselves
In consent, en masse -

as crowned kings
ruling over red pigeons
and busy leagues
of young seagulls,

that pick through
a tingy wash
of foam and shell,
as if to jot their words.