

MARISSA GLOVER

The Weather Is Not the Weather

When everyone else speaks of the weather
it's because they've nothing to say,
but when you report the rain
or describe how the moon waxes in the Afghan sky,
I know you mean something else
because *The Waste Land* is your favorite poem,
and only Pound and the Fisher King know what it's about.

The weather is not the weather.
Nothing is what it is
unless it's also something more.

Life is difficult; each month is the cruelest.

Greetings from Helmand

To survive, a man's got to know the meaning of things
and how to use his standard-issue SA80 A2.

You understand allusion and metaphor
and how to kill a man at a hundred metres.

When everyone else sends postcards from the desert—
lush field of poppies backed by distant snow-capped mountains
and *Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*
scripted across the scene—to tell Mum and Dad
they've sent another raghead to hell,
you email on a secure line and ask if anyone will reach Elysium
now that you define "enemy" with both dictionary and mirror.

The Taliban have a word for enemy too.

Death by Unconventional Warfare

I trace the tracks in your skin
to fields of wild poppies—
tracks puckered by Sangin sun, soaked
in sand that dries in the cracks of your eyes,
peppers your face, waits for washing.

I think of the dirt behind my knees,
creasing my elbows,
and the cost of getting clean.
With showers sucked from miserly skies,
we improvise ways to water parched cells.

Your need still courses through your veins,
as mine does through mine,
as we wait for our devices to explode.

Marissa Glover teaches writing at Saint Leo University, hosts Friday Night Open Mic, and shares her thoughts more than necessary, which she considers a form of charitable giving. If it counted as a tax deduction, she'd be rich. Her poetry has recently appeared in *The Lascaux Review*, *Picaroon*, *Ink Sweat & Tears*, *Stoneboat*, and *After the Pause*. Follow her on Twitter @_MarissaGlover_.