

Trump's toxic legacy, a dark day for Brazil and talking evolution

Two years after the Capitol riot, the toxic legacy of Donald Trump's big election lie has been fully evident this week, not just in the US but also further afield in Brazil.

In Washington, the new Republican majority in the House of Representatives took 15 attempts to fulfil its primary duty of appointing a speaker. Kevin McCarthy eventually squeaked through by just four votes, after quelling a days-long revolt from a bloc of far-right conservatives. But, with a wafer-thin majority, and few powers, Nancy Pelosi's successor looks set to be one of the weakest speakers in history. For our big story, Washington bureau chief David Smith examines the chaos within Republican ranks and what it means for the party.

The big story [Page 10](#) →

In Brazil, meanwhile, supporters of the former president Jair Bolsonaro stormed congress buildings in scenes eerily reminiscent of Washington on 6 January 2021. Latin America correspondent Tom Phillips reports on a dark day for Brazilian democracy, while Richard Lapper considers the potential fallout for the new president, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, and a deeply fractured nation.

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There's a feast of great writing elsewhere in this week's magazine. British food writer Jack Monroe, who taught us how to eat well on a shoestring, opens up to Simon Hattenstone about her struggles with addiction. And Chris Stringer, who has received a CBE for his work on human evolution, tells how his remarkable quest as a young researcher transformed understanding of our species.

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Our puzzles and crosswords make a welcome return after IT issues meant they could not appear last week. Thank you for your patience while we worked to restore them.

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On the cover

Illustrator Justin Metz took the traditionally harmless-looking motif of the Republican elephant and turned it into something altogether more fierce to signify the head-on collision between Trumpian disruptors and the more conventional conservatives at the heart of the party.

Illustration: Justin Metz



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