

# VISIONS & DIRT (the stomachs)

by Christine McDonald



This is a collage of self findings, woven impatiently,  
patiently blowing, little leaves and sticks of my fingers,  
arriving in tongue-boats; with both numbers and words for naming.  
Vignettes culled from dreams, everydaylife,  
literature, reviews, colors and special circumstances.

These are all different “pictures” of the ground;  
escaping, soaking, climbing, cracking, salted, colorful, explained and ignored.



1. Lightning bolt body, ooo teeny weeny tail, the skinniest mermaid buried in the soil. She's got a salty shell in places where her head should be and another one for show.

2. This fissure is not load related, longitudinal to its respective edges. It is environmental shrinkage that makes what is itself visible; so goes the pointy thing, the weapon, vanishing in a spotlight, because what is more interesting than the sharp thing is a story.

4. Two small piles of salt--a fistful for each hand, a handled crevice looking like a dagger or a narrow body.

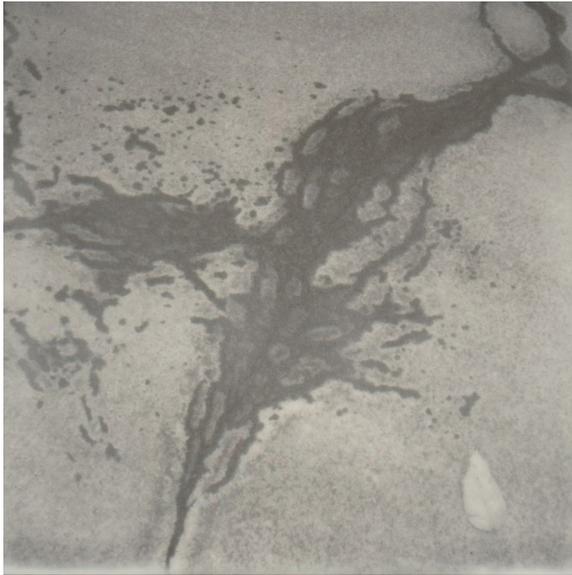
3. Rather than conflict;  
"A leaf a gourd a shell a net a bag a sling a sack a bottle a pot a box a container. A holder. A recipient."



## Choreographer

Almost hard to see at first, this spidery--significant--growth with five fingers total is miraculously growing from the pink-green wall. A whisper incarnate and one like my own--confused at where my thumb begins or pinky ends;

I watched a dancer, Milena Sidorova, dance like a spider; she paid careful attention to every line in her body, a wide-stanced side-step scuttle on all fours, a horizontal bend-and-climb up the “vertical” wall; loose-ing the nearly invisible lines of a web across the entire stage in after image, and countering a familiar posture.



### Simple Knot

Trefoil Trefoil Trefoil!

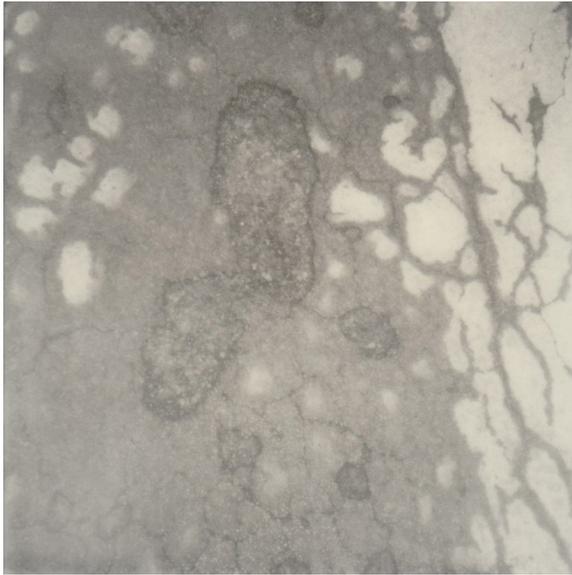
Riverplant with three leaves and many veins

This location is reportedly wet but not water logged, clogged. a body Vanished right here with the ground opening

Into three parts--it was not warmer But faster gravity--an oozed quickness and now only the vent of it is left to keep draining. I think it will open again.

I emerged from the darkness of the castings to see a feather nestled in between floor-working stones, right where the light met shadow. Eyes watered in the gray light, wiped like fading conversations in open space, it was now blue sky outside of the underthing. The magpie was yards ahead looking to my left and leaning with a wing to the right almost like it was splitting itself in half.

Body like a twitching camera, I steered my feet in the direction of the changing bird and too close, a flash darted. Wings one moment and now standing another threshold away. Stepping so much more softly towards the black and white sleek of the sky. I felt the talon on the edge of my eyelid, I tugged my skin behind a bush with white berries and noticed they were softer and more rotten than lush. All the twigs snapped their fingers and I felt featherless.



### One and a Half Left Feet

What a surprise to run into Ana Mendieta on this road, amid the smaller ambiguous footprints I find one and a half shapes of foot soles, and I step in and hold my own feet inside them, a little awkwardly. I wonder if these are feet prints or rutting. “Occasionally sadistic, mesmerizingly narcissistic, deeply ambitious and utterly beguiling,” writes Rosanna Mclaughlin, and I nestle into it. Overwhelmingly one and half the same foot.

A very large crow flew in through the window with thin white feathers in between the black; rather excitable, I tucked it in the crook of my arm but it was not entirely pleased and kept snapping its beak at my hands and face. I tried to pet it and calm it down but it grew and wrapped its beak all the way around my left wrist and started flying. It was pulling me around the house and I tried to show the portrait of the lady what it was doing because it was both terrifying and amazing, but she just looked at me.

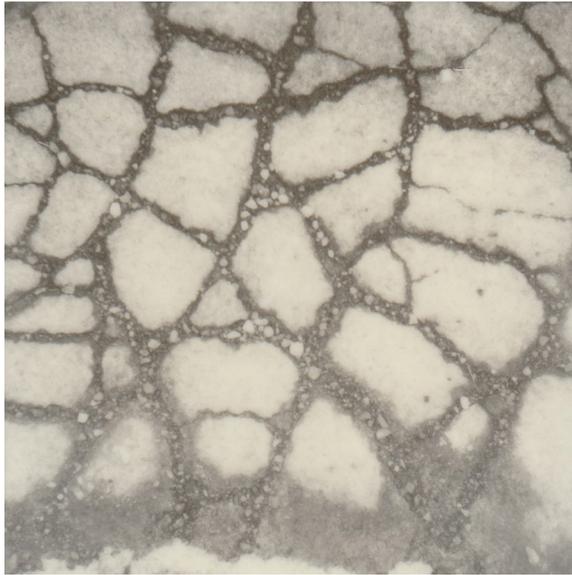


## Two Ice

A lot grows in the water: aching fissures; frozen-horizontal-tree, twilight, a swirl of dark ice, a patch of snow, pockets of bubbles, a pink corner with vertical growth, shimmering top soil, a creak-awakening--say,  
Can a season be a thief?  
I decide I will come back later like a gardener to trim the bottom right corner more curve-like, in the sunshine perhaps.



a rabbit, a tongue boat, a mission in curving this way and that way, too hard, too slow, too shiny, a hruruuru noise, rocking baby, miss missile, too-took-k-k-k-k-kshhhh



### Grasshopper

I see the face of a grasshopper where the fatigue-cracked lines intersect in the middle-left, and the lines themselves are moist and teeming with a rhizomatic attitude. Teeny almost dry, pebble rivers that have led me here and revealed neighborly islands. The cracked ground is here the crackled image; and what is clear, if one were hopping, is that there are many alleys for feet to choose from. In a pause of path building, this monochrome face of a grasshopper peers forth, speaking quietly like the sound of my own feet. Before I leave I count 39 large rocks in the frame and I wish to keep going.



I dig my frog hands - into - your charred end  
and rip back - along the shattered grooves  
disintegrating - as I reach some-  
thing smaller - and solid underneath

The core of the thing - still intact - after  
burning for sometime  
the ready wick - of a candle - never lit

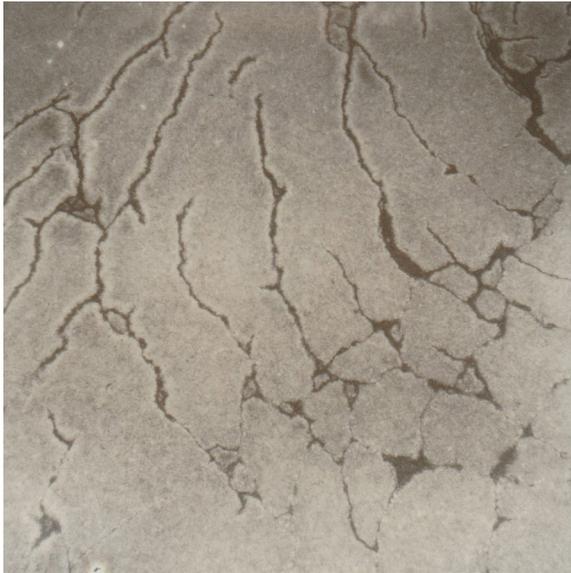


### Smokey Bluffs

Two houses on a scraggly bluff with chimneys of smoke heading off towards the east.

These bluffs are fundamentally flat from each direction, bustlingly flat. When the formation was happening, shelters crackled into existence.

One shaped like the acorn, the other like a brick, two beetles live there and are quiet neighbors. Long proboscises and manners keep them somewhat distant.



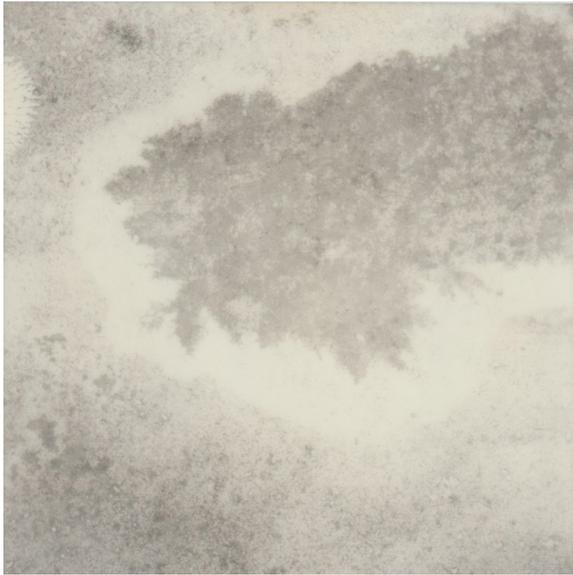
### Between the Lakes

A series of northward flowing streams, a smattering of lightning bolts, an enigmatic fish tail, earthworms, salt soaked sticks - all colloquial expressions for the finger lakes region, I'm told dating back to when walking insects came to work the lakes, cohabitating aqueously.

Often finding themselves passengers of land and water between the lakes.

The hard crumbly ground gets all kinds of soft when it is stilled and milked for visual information.

If you could satellite your eyes up and way above, what between is becomes multi crumbly, and rather wet.



### You Open the Door

The haloed stain, not unlike angels illustrated in glass, frocked by a leafed texture amid a speckled atmosphere. A form made from rolling, I am reminded of spills, leaks and contamination between all things. The fog cloud border of separation and the evidence of other species. Relatives!! Meaning contemporary times or physical forces; are these peripheral lines and waves, sometimes curtains, perhaps surmountable or with a lifting motion, passable/learnable with a wetter sponge?



#### Left clam and Right clam

Dusk along the rocky beach, a few feet of smooth sand trailing into the water. The light everywhere is gray and yellow; it's hard to be in here, but I persevere as I pick up clams from the shore just beneath the water. There were two kinds of clams, distinct, based on the way the front of their shell rippled, I could tell when one was left and one was right.

When I woke up this time, the lady told me I was making noises of disgust or discomfort. I told her it was because I was eating the jelly inside the clams, it was like dead moon jellies and it tasted like salt. I could hardly see.



### Flavor of a Frown

Once I had this idea to put as much salt as I could into my body, so I created a highly salinated mixture (roughly 1 whole kitchen pantry size box of table salt dissolved in a half gallon of water), it was like a paste going down my throat. I was smiling at first, because it seemed like an awful lot of salt to drink, and then soon into it I was involuntarily frowning during the act, hurriedly gulping the mixture down. As soon as it was over I bent and began drinking water and regurgitating the salt mixture back out of my body, because it was hurting.

When I came home from New York, all of the many shelves I had hung in our house had fallen off the walls and ripped them open; within the gaping holes were hideous fluorescent lights and plastic boxes. Everyone was furious.