

my **randomactions** upon living, dying and grief in the shadow of the 6th extinction

ACT-!-ON
ACT-!-ON

This mindful performative offering is a collection of narrative writings, photos and sketches.

These have gained form via creative expression through a series of

rituals of lamentation

for the grief i feel for the global suffering caused by humans to ourselves, and to all other sentient life on earth, and my own personal grief.

It is expressed from my eclectic, personal, and auto-ethnographic perspective as a creative thought randomiser, who dashes off on **anecdotal tangents**.

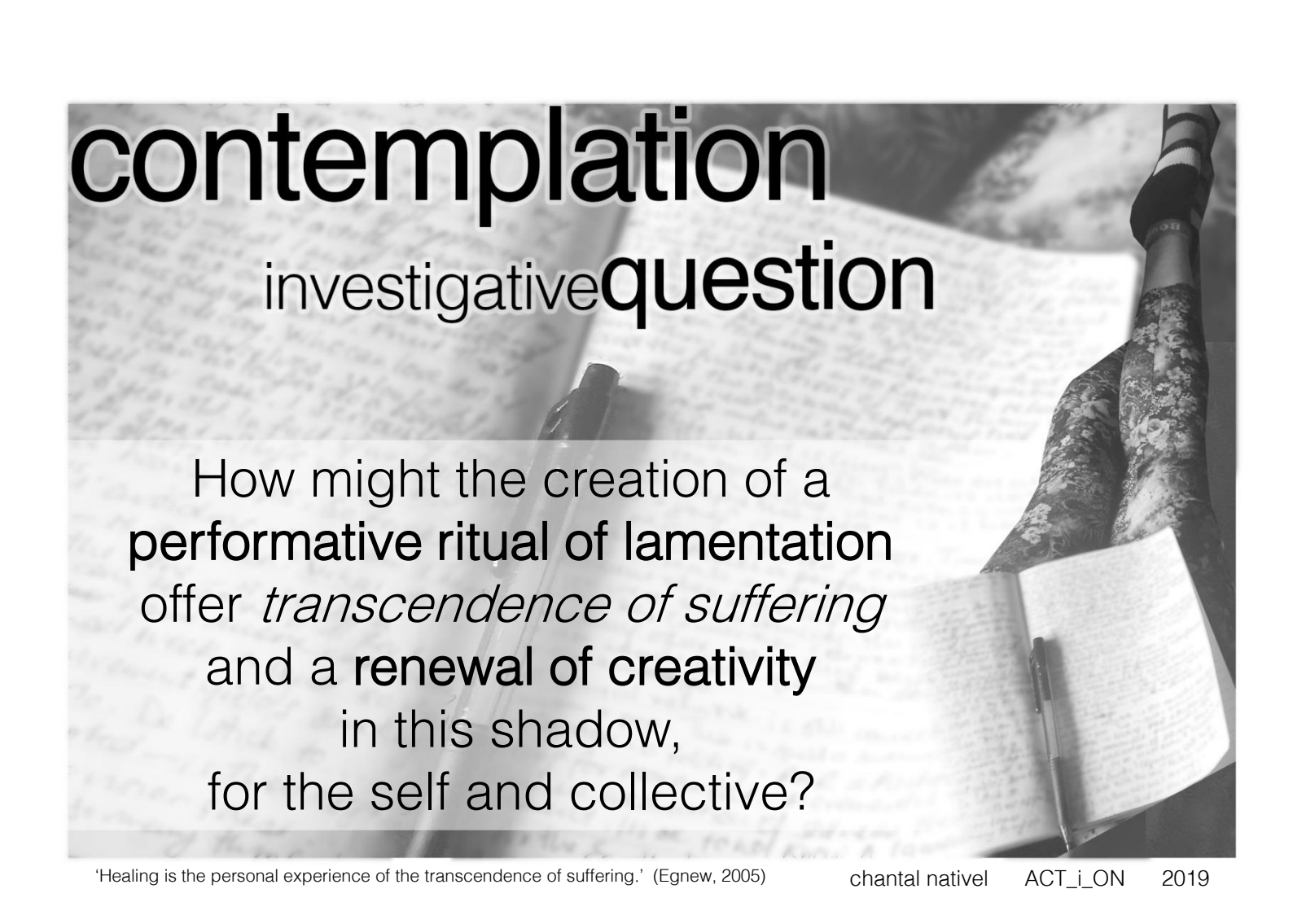
My lived experiences of wandering and wonderings are the contextual sources of this narrative enquiry through which i endeavour to forge meaning of living life in this age of unease, while seeking my own place and significance in this world.

The **random anecdotes** and representations of mindful actions are my antidote or healing balm for the malaise of this possible end of time.

The performative rituals are my coping mechanisms. They occur as i calibrate and re-calibrate myself through random, mindful acts, managing my general life anxiety, my eco-anxiety and grief.

This offering documents both the malaise and the random coping mechanisms towards my own healing. Through expressing my thoughts and emotions i attempt to re-resource myself.

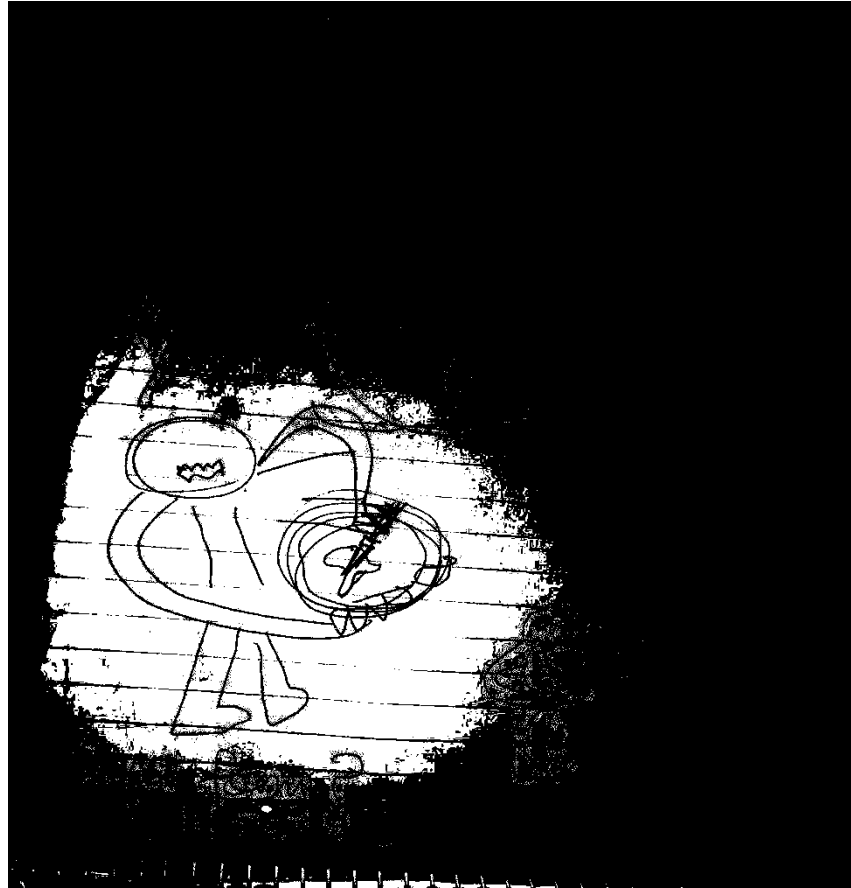
By seeking peace through centreing there is a commonality – a conscious embodied-practice combined with mindful engagement and self-activism. Others may use similar ACT-i-ONS to soothe themselves.



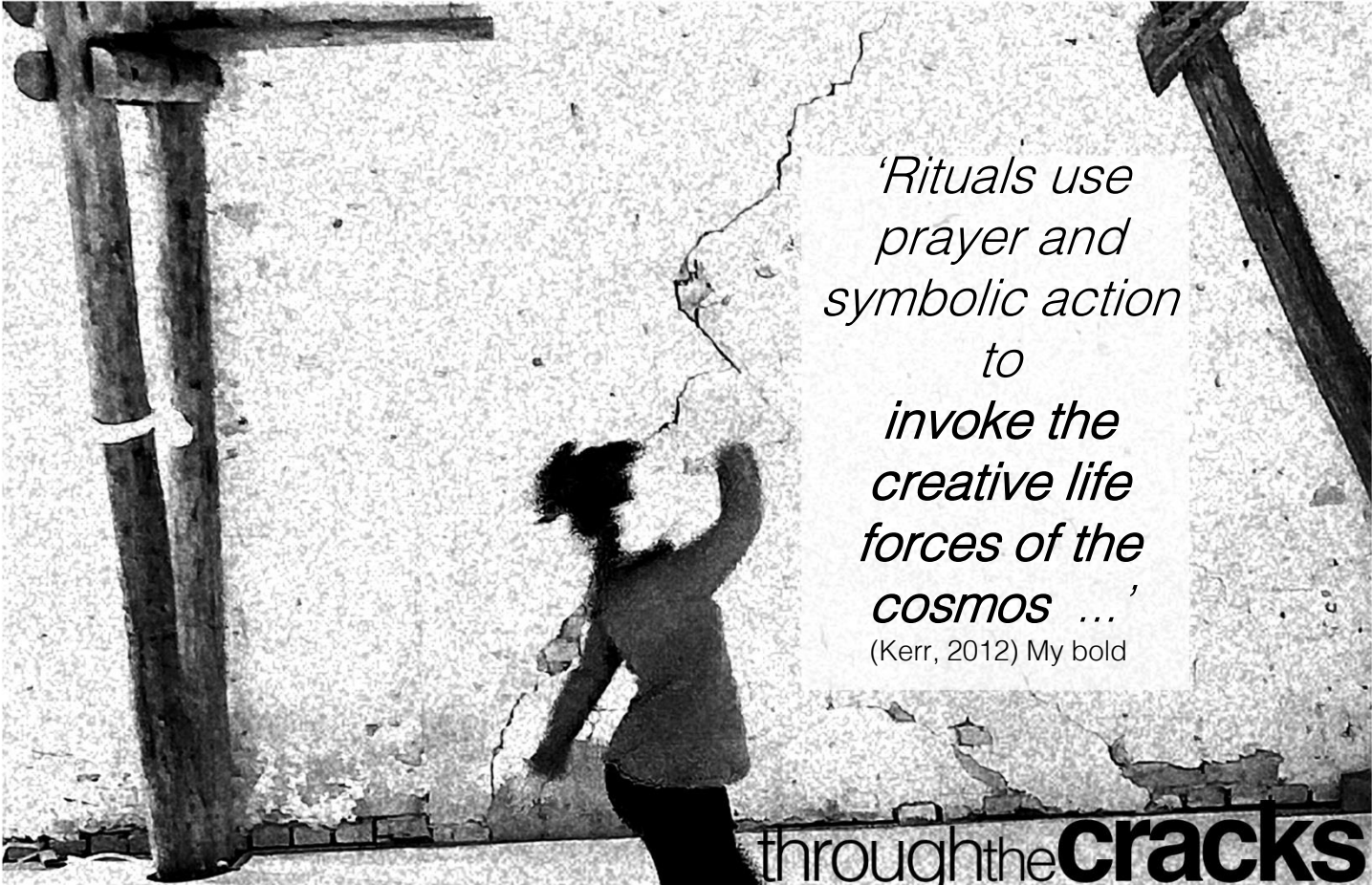
contemplation

investigative question

How might the creation of a
performative ritual of lamentation
offer *transcendence of suffering*
and a **renewal of creativity**
in this shadow,
for the self and collective?



what
form
can
hold
such
grief?



*'Rituals use
prayer and
symbolic action
to
invoke the
creative life
forces of the
cosmos ...'*

(Kerr, 2012) My bold

through the **cracks**

chantal nativel

ACT_i_ON

2019

Lamentation

‘The passionate expression of grief or sorrow; weeping.’

(Merriam-Webster, 2019)

*‘ ... lament is not an action,
but a response to
and an expression
of human suffering.’*

(Harasta & Brock, 2009)

*‘The purpose of healing is to be awake.
And to live while you are alive
instead of dying while you are alive ... ’*
Roth, 2014)

aliveliving

This desire to **live alive** has been, and remains a daily challenge against the backdrop of the Sixth Extinction. Terrifying, and saddening for me because of the suffering that has been unleashed on so many for profit, greed and power. So many voices silenced, tortured, made **extinct**.

i seek an infusion or renewal of Life, firstly for myself, and by extension for others who are suffering the same overwhelming grief, and levels of anxiety and stagnation. We’re all enmeshed in the systems that have caused this – how do we envision a different world?

MsMalaise's rose-tinted specs

yearningly creative
expression
awkward aging
body-mind aches
cacophonous modern
urban life disconnect
suffering sentiment
eco-calamitous
mass die-offs

overcome the dulling
drone of the "so what"
in my head, against
the equally raucous din
of social media's
manipulations / algorithms
feeding me DEEP FRIED
BONE LESS
FAST BYTES

life-long-melancholy-tetering
on the edge-of-life imperfect
flawed fearful box water
bobbing along a river of pain

OH I pathologized own "river of pain"
IT'S actually universal.
I'm not ALONE, but submerged in same
river as millions of others!
MISERY's company ☹️☹️



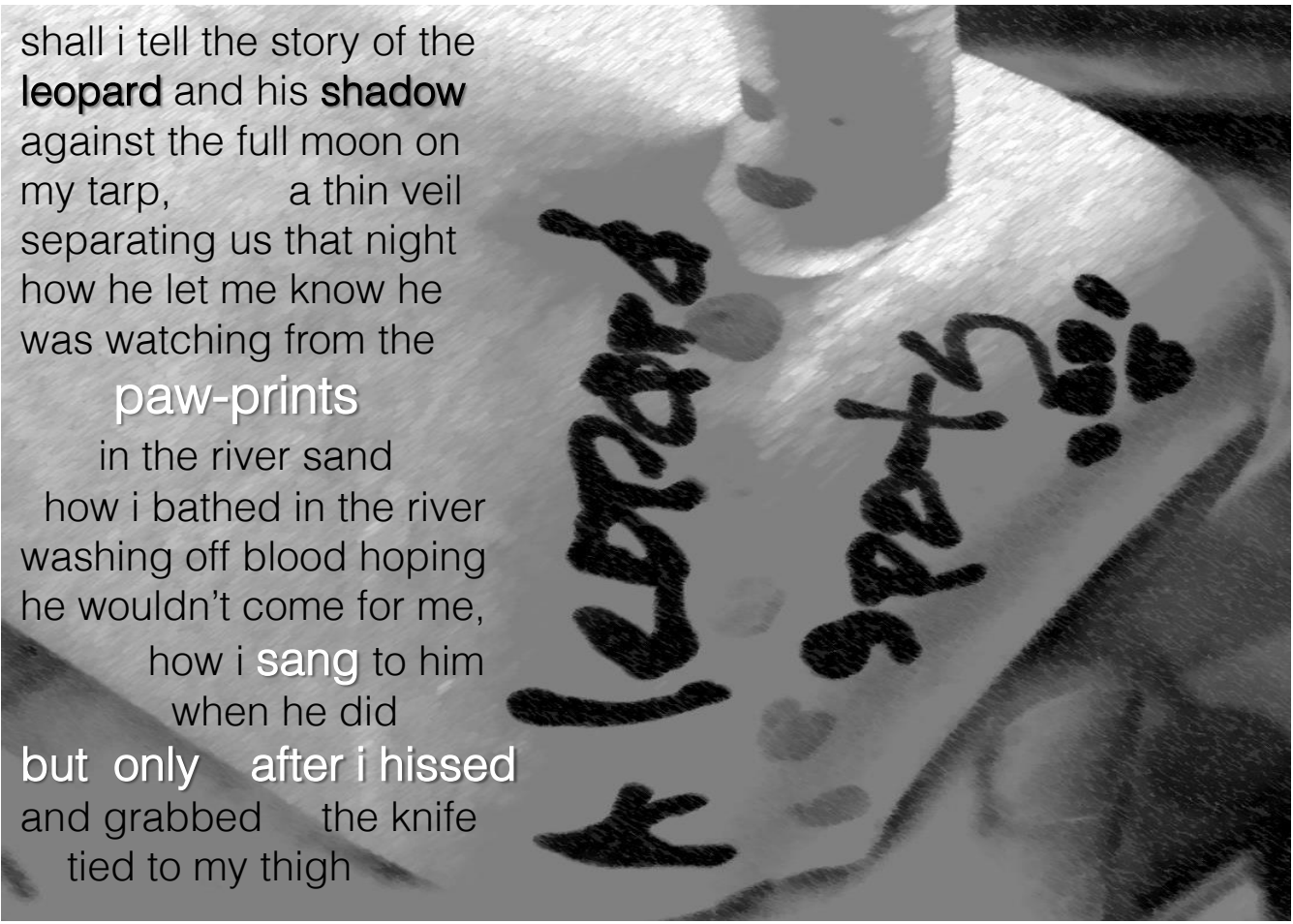
WALK Run
Cook
garden
swim
make s^{he}

DEAD Talks

Ideas worth dreading

shall i tell the story of the
leopard and his **shadow**
against the full moon on
my tarp, a thin veil
separating us that night
how he let me know he
was watching from the
paw-prints

in the river sand
how i bathed in the river
washing off blood hoping
he wouldn't come for me,
how i **sang** to him
when he did
but only after i hissed
and grabbed the knife
tied to my thigh



leopard
shadow



spiralⁱⁿ
spiral^{out}

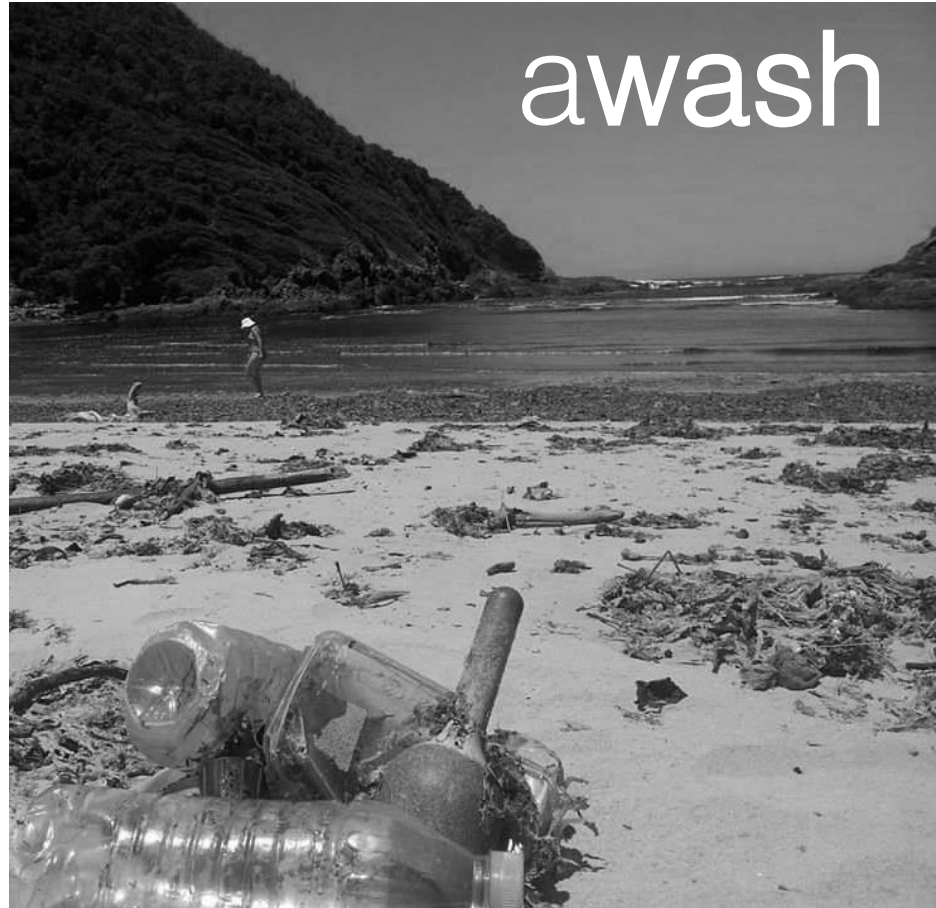
our nervous system
develops from the
quantum net and is
outside behind us. our
organs are outside
in front of us.
our skin forms at our
backs, and zips up front.
we are a million billion
cells zipped up front
plugged and networked
at the back.
we are miraculous matter

anima mundi

as i move on earth
with each rhythmic breath and
footfall
each in-and-ex-halation, i desire to
intend back into the earth my
gratitude, my love, my wish to do
better, my wish to do no harm, my
wish to live harmoniously
each movement forward i wish to
plant this practice into my body and
back into the earth
and yet, i am the community of harm



the state of our
world
- i weep -
tears cannot wash
it clean. we are
polluted.
generational
memory is
polluted. **the**
bodies of water
that hold the
memory of all
are polluted –
we cannot return
there is no return.





unravelled

stretched as a
cloth might be

an old cloth

still attached

to the loom in

parts

warp

and

weft

unthreading

and torn

loom

what is life?
living?
are we doing it fully?

when is enough?
is too much?
is not enough ?
are we fulfilled?

what is it about **life**
that keeps us here?

is that even a question!



preparing for **death** is impossible

Dad Mom Rosie ... i tried

here/there

standing under the mulberry trees this morning

with the

muddied river

flowing

and you **running, wagging, barking** up and down along the fence

the other side

your mates in full yaaaaaaaaaaaaaappp

i realised

next mulberry season you won't be

nor **splashing** through the

river **floating** sticks or scuffling rocks

like puppies borne proudly in your mouth

a tear dropped to the mud

how present you are

how abstracted and far away i was

how much pain i caused myself

as i thought about you not

being here

yet

you were

and i

was not



rosie

unspeakable grief wells up during lunch while looking at a photo that fills
the entire wall

i'm pulled right into it

elephants run forward **trumpeting**
and then they're cut down by rounds of automatic gunfire

i'm hit in the stomach

tears land on my salad



hide

food becomes us



about 100 of them
lying with their babies
lying with their mommies
i *ommm-ed* to them and they
listened ears twitching
eyes gentle
they didn't get up and run away

150 million terrified,
shivering, quivering,
helpless, hormone-
filled, tortured
sentient beings
slaughtered daily,
hearing the sound of
their kin screaming
out for mercy, only to
be served with
potatoes and gravy



the fish
lies on bloodied wooden slats
the man
takes a chain saw and starts to
saw off its head

the fish opens its mouth

it is still alive. sharp in - take of breath

my hand covers my mouth

a groan escapes

i sob deep

repulsed

repulsed

repulsed

heaving
horrified

later another man
inserts his hand
into the fish's body

look he says, holding
up a soft organ –
it moves -

it's still beating

he gleefully laughs



choc brownies have been served!



Distr-
ACT-
i
-ON

*one
sure
way
to
avoid
grief
...*

grief dragnets me
through the ocean,
trapped along with
millions of fish, sharks,
dolphins, turtles and
crabs. grief stun-guns
my head and bleeds me
out onto the blood
soaked concrete with
billions of factory farmed
"live"-stock! grief
suffocates me as yet
another few billion trees
are butchered. grief
bloats me as plastic
blockades our rivers and
chemicals poison our
seas.







neurological nets with energetic
threads
field
contract
expans-i-on
moving
connective tissue
appreciate
this life
merely
mostly
magnificently
the embryonic womb
expression on larger
scale



belonging

near the end
my father
 who **danced** me
 up from my cot
 who soothed
 me to sleep
 and on
 spacious
 shoulders bore
 me skyward
laughing into
 the wind

was
 light enough for
 me to lift in my
 arms generous
 enough for
 students to pick
 his cadaver

loving
 enough to
 nurture the
 plants with his
 ashes **my father**
 who **danced**
laughing



O
S
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C
Y
X
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S

The Luz or coccyx: a mystical bone of resurrection (Robert Shapiro, 1987)

chantal native

ACT_i_ON

2019



lament for mother

Before you read the poem, i invite you to **place light attention on your breath...** and feel where the breath moves your belly, and now you're following breath into your belly for a while, and as you do you may allow a picture of your mother to emerge. **Breathe into whatever feeling may arise for you.** And as you just allow these feelings, imagine your mother's mother behind her, and her mother behind, (take your time, be gentle, that's right) and her mother before that, and all the mothers before. **Let yourself breathe deeply through your umbilicus for a while.** And then, you might follow your breath to your feet, and through them into Mother Earth below you. That's right. Perhaps you are even feeling how the nourishment returns to you, up through your feet and into your umbilical knot feeding your mother, and your mother's mother, with each breath you are of the Earth, a living seed, a connected spirit, remembering itself.

i am undone
untethered
an unbeliever
that you have actually gone
this time
This time
you left
untethered unmentionable are you not going to open
your eyes
again
the soft warmth of your hands
How can you
we asked you
we wished you would
to end the suffering and now that you have. My g-dd
so cold you became
your eyes fixed and your breath
That's what they mean
Rasping breath
Breath taking death
There i have said it Death
My mother has left and now
i don't know
and now she's cold and alone and gone but has she
really
what happens now when she's dead
My mother dead
My mother dead? Can't be, not her

mamma

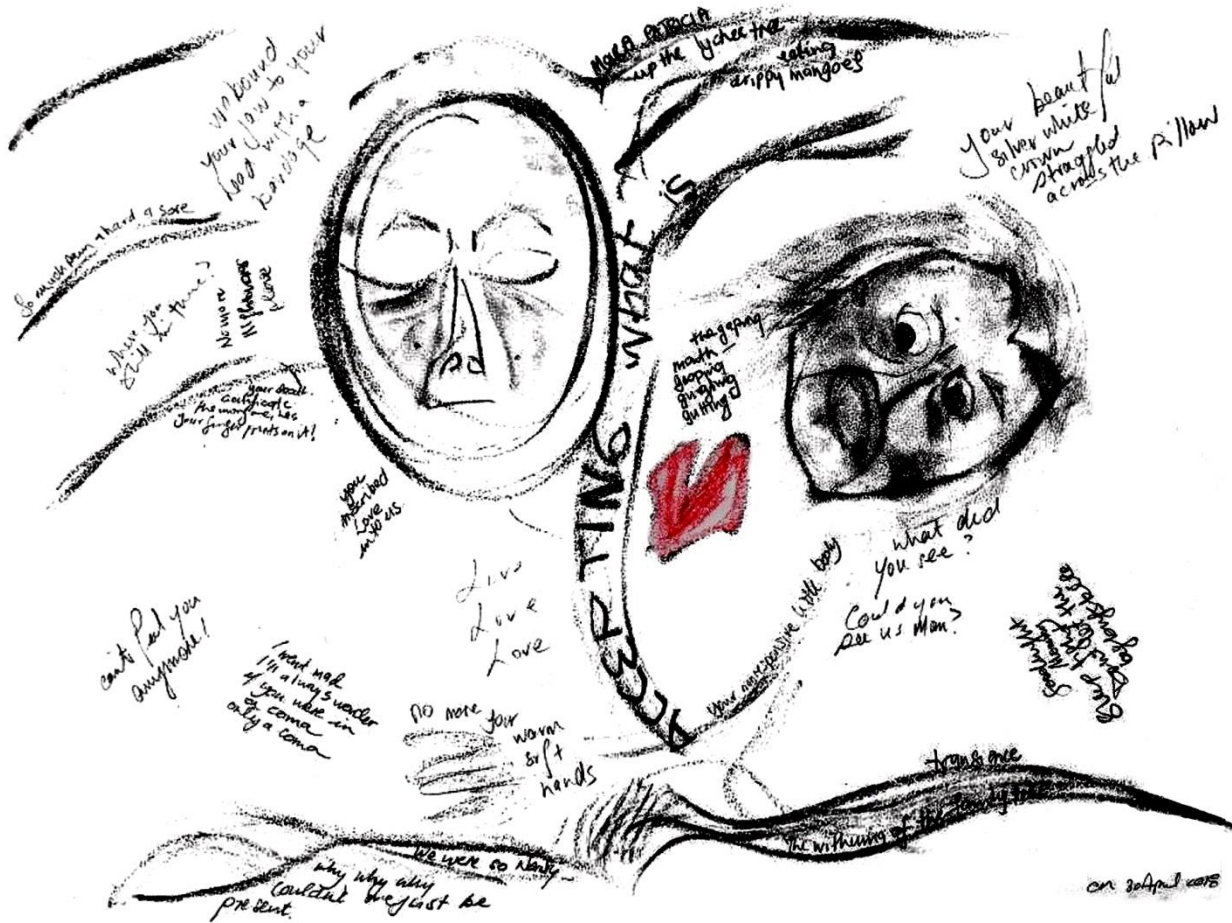
In your pyjamas we dressed you - pink plaid
and a grey top with love written on it 3 times

Love
Love
Love

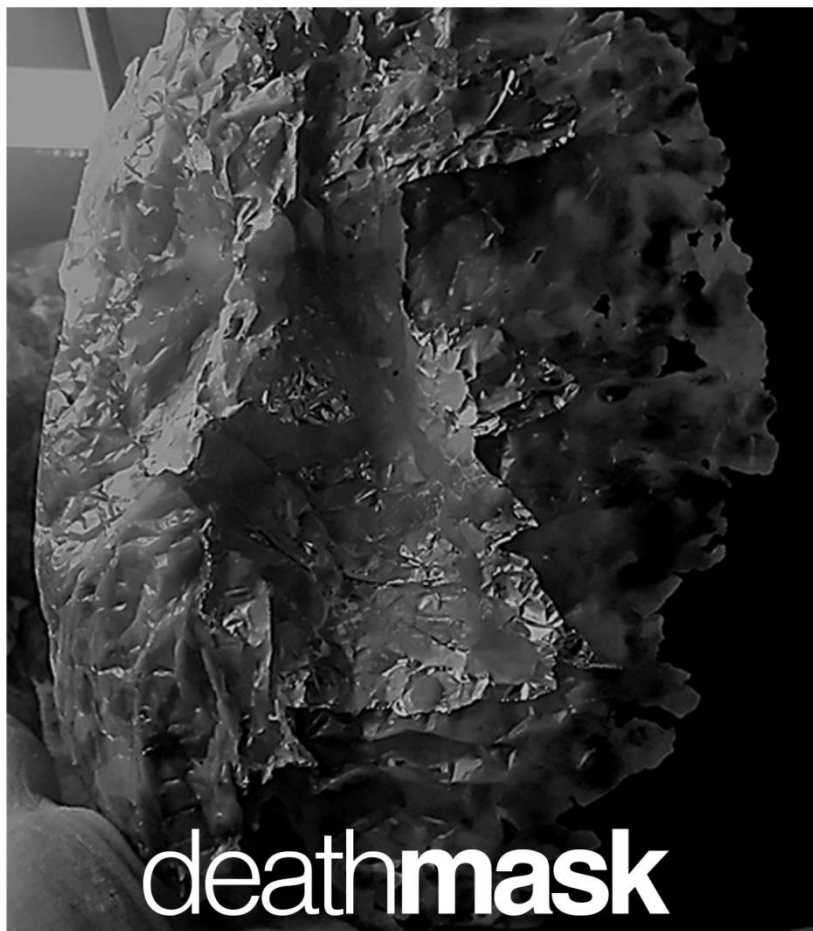
You inscribed love into us
All over us you wrote love
Love of people and trees and mangoes lychee
salad animals
Compassion you through and through
My mother so much sore and pain and hard
and compassion to fill the ocean
Never again your warm soft hands

mammmaaaaaa

lament for mother



r
i
t
u
a
l



can't
contact grief
i'm numb
not true
i'm angry
as
scared
of
death
as she
was
i'll be so angry
i'll hate
everyone



a million sorrows rise

how does this body hold them

where do they store when grief sets all the old ...

this deluge of pain gains power as the pasts

join and link and gush to the

skinthe monuments of
grief

where did you put

where stuff it

where

waning

mind

returning

past

anxietysuppingdemons

i too am now scared

did your grief steal your mind

your losses and pains and all the not good

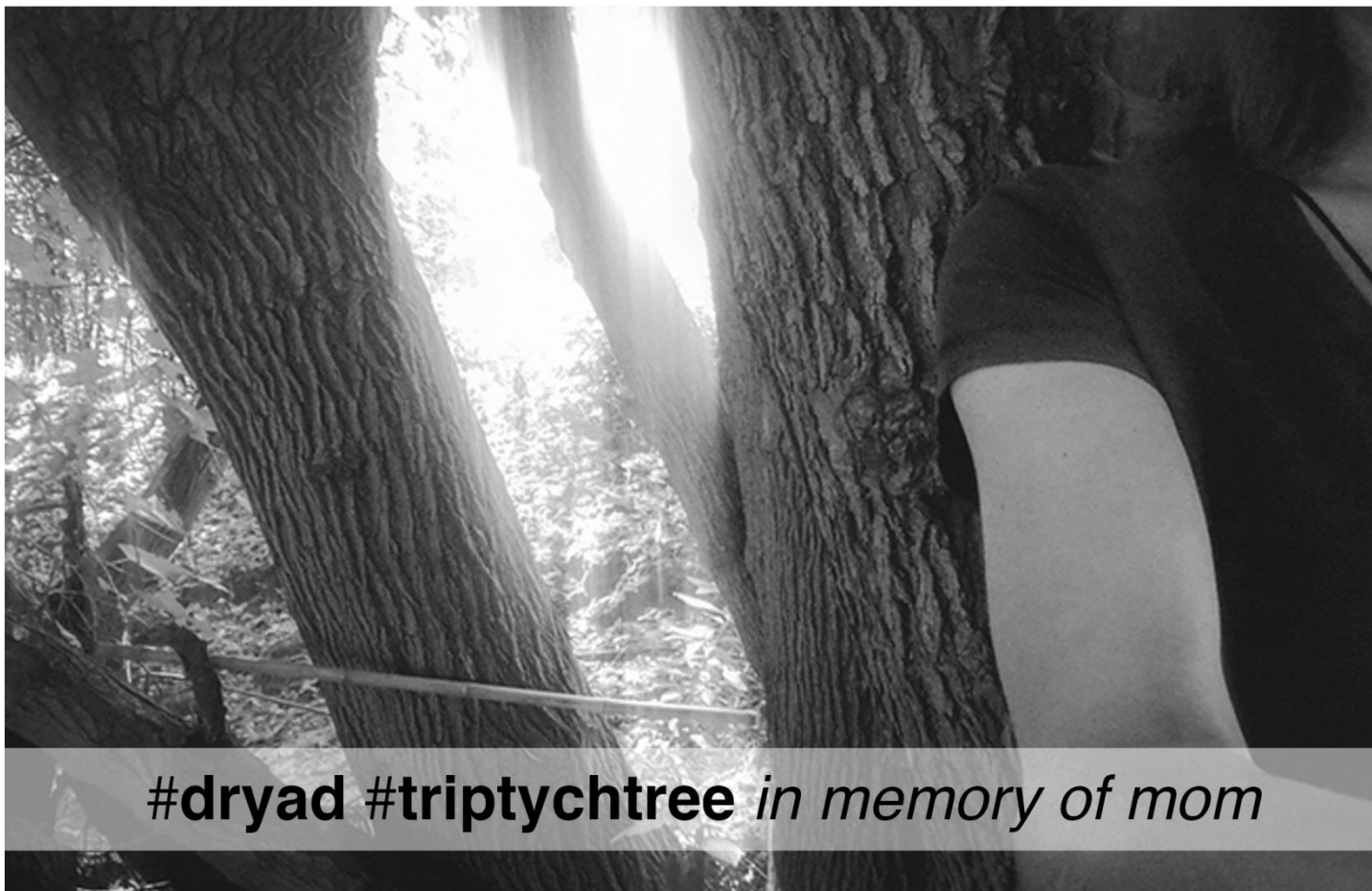
enoughs that came back, did they

slowly **steal your life**

away

slowly

thought by thought, and word by word?



#dryad #triptychtree *in memory of mom*

Dryad: nature spirit who lives in trees ["Dryad | Greek mythology," n.d.]

chantal native ACT_i_ON 2019



being in
my
body

skin is not thickened

i bruise & hurt as i roll
& curl & unfurl
on the floor

sticks

skin

blistering it

my aging
energy is
hard soft *difficult*
to locate subtly
subtly retiring
no impulse to spar or
thrust or quest
i'm asked to roll,
move, react, jump,
thrust.
i want stillness
or contained focused
micro-movement
... **i want to stop**
except when outside
outside i want to
walk. explore.



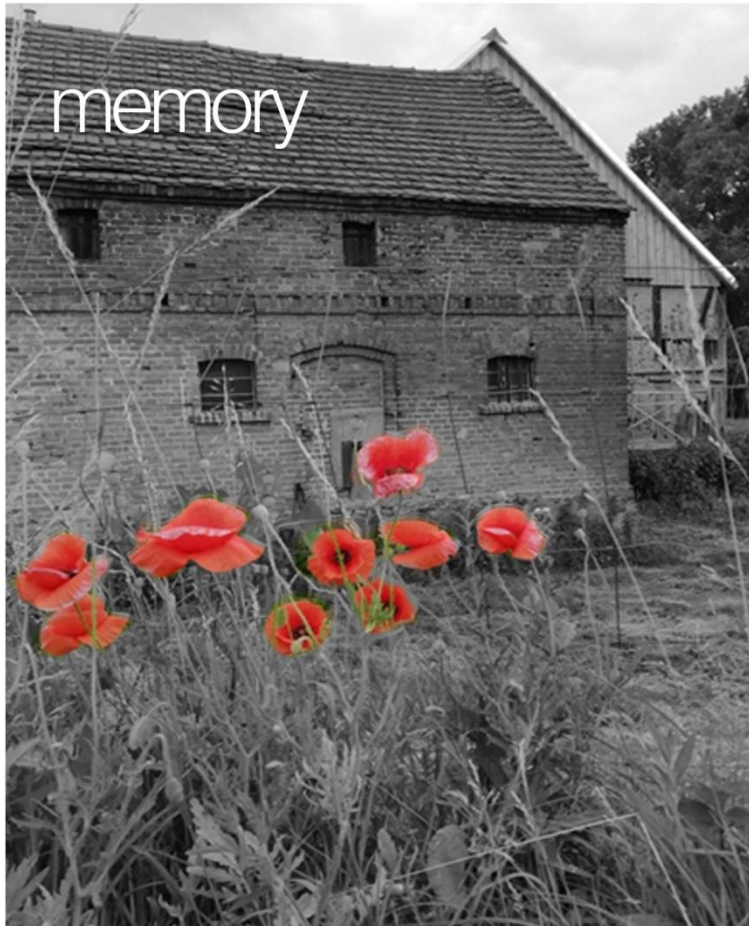
is this the
same for the
Earth?

the abused aged
Earth struggling
with things rolling
jumping
poking her

retire: to retreat

retiring: process of
disengagement

retiring: to become
tired again



i'm walking across the bridge back
over the river. i went for a run.
Bales of hay, and the most
astonishing crane sounds, and this
bizarre sense of safety.
i'm one of the few people awake.
Birds are still waking.
It's **incredibly beautiful** and it really
feels **incredibly peaceful**. i feel like
a huge layer of armour has been
removed from me.
i'm looking at red poppies.
It makes me think of all the wars,
Flanders Fields. Standing in
Germany. A sense of my
grandfather and uncle in prisoner
of war camps ... can't get the
camps out of my head ...

life is a bowl of cherries eat your heart out
soul is a bowl eat cherries feed your soul
bowl out life eat heart feed
eat your heart a bowl of life
your life soul cherries
eat your soul



spiralInSIDEoutSIDEspiral



a pantry

every time i cooked breakfast and entered the **pantry** - an awkward narrow space secured by an old wooden door fortified with a heavy latch, i'd wonder how many people had hidden in there during wars
every time i gazed out at the **barn** opposite with its dense double doors and small top window from what would have been the old hay loft above the milking shed, i felt the sniper's rifle trained on my forehead, and heard the chaffing ropes penduluming bodies of agitators and innocents

every time i strode along a cobbled **street** flanked with vibrant hanging baskets and windows framing orchids, i walked abreast another 4 and 20 in goose-stepping precision

every time a leaf crunched or twig broke in the **forest** i favoured, scraggly blood-smeared ghosts soaked into boughs

a pantry isn't a pantry, a barn isn't a barn, a street's not a street, nor a forest a forest - **what shall we leave behind?**

once upon a time i overheard ...

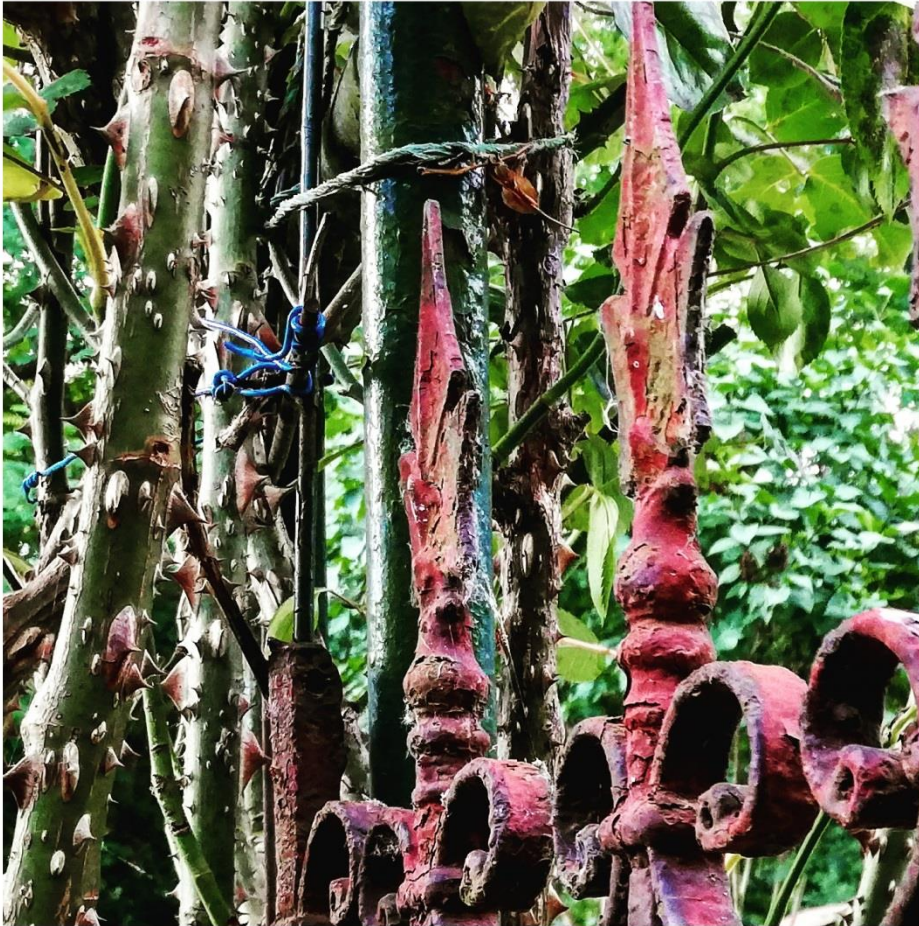


spin world downside up wave



behave man made
plan made not this
dizzy spin dizzy spell
spell weave
invoke in-choke
what have i
fear

umopside
up



fairy**tale**

meeting the brittle edges as i walk
chaff stone trauma experience loss grief
thorny edges pokey edges
sticking out appendages with tendrils
warning bells, learned behaviour

how hard our **scar** tissue is
it loses its pliability
losing our ability to weave, like
challah bread, strands have been
worked and worked and kneaded
so that they **stretch**
and **stick** together & **stay** together.

these edges, these weavings of
life, meeting our edges,
knowing when to be in fear
and not to be in fear

The other day i ran. Only person i saw was an old man on a bicycle and i was so ... i remarked to everyone **how safe i felt**. Today out running, i see a tractor, farish. And i prickle, then it goes past the junction, and i breath a deep sigh. Then the sound changes, and it turns direction and starts to come towards me, and on my right is a maize field, on my left is a maize field.

And i wonder where can i escape. i see trees. i think the driver can plough through the field no matter where i ran. If i go up a tree he'll just wait. And i wonder how long it'll take him to find me.

All the fear and memory. All i've read, seen, heard. And i wonder - why would i feel safe? It doesn't matter my age, dress, anything ... and i'm thinking about women, lured under false pretences for work in fields such as these, all around the world. Women sold! Night after night. Repeatedly raped. Women lined-up for men who are working the farms, spilling semen and not caring, and then tending crops, but i suppose it's not much tending.

i can see the church steeple from where i'm walking now.

All he needs to do is drive over me a few times with the harvester. But i'm hoping that my leopard print pants stick to the machine. Somewhere at some time someone will find a piece of fabric, and he won't get away with it. (Sigh)

But here are purple flowers, and white flowers, and red, and thistles, sand and cobbles and cranes and ducks and hares.

And it is exceptionally beautiful. It is pastoral. It is astonishing.

It is unbelievably beautiful

How unbelievably beautiful it is.

tendrils

whirling





into the briars

last night was the solstice. i had nothing to offer.
one of the oldest in the group and couldn't offer
a song, couldn't offer a ritual. i, i couldn't offer
a dance. i couldn't offer - there was nothing
a sense of emptiness. a sense of sadness,
that i offered.
a sense of, of redundancy

help**yelp**

help!



dead

is gone
is not here with me anymore
is never to be here again
is all memory

a diminishing sensory experience

there/here

You are fresh gone
of you lies under
checked there when i
by the door, or there
the cabinet with your
cool on the tiles with the
ruffling your coat
started to stick up
bark rising above the river
through the kitchen window
dad, if i stayed to clean
and the biggest rose quartz
between the monk's bench
i'm reaching up and around
Our hearts are pulled
rushed ahead straining

We are sensing you
And we are

unsatisfied

yet your **presence**, the essence
the purple bush because i
woke up today, or in the sun
between the monk's bench and
head on your paws or keeping
front door breeze

i stroke your ears, your spine
under my hand. i imagine your
across over the roofs and in
as you played in the river with
Today your collar and leads
we have, and some angels sit

and the cabinet

trying to touch you
tugged like when you
for the gate

in all the air around us

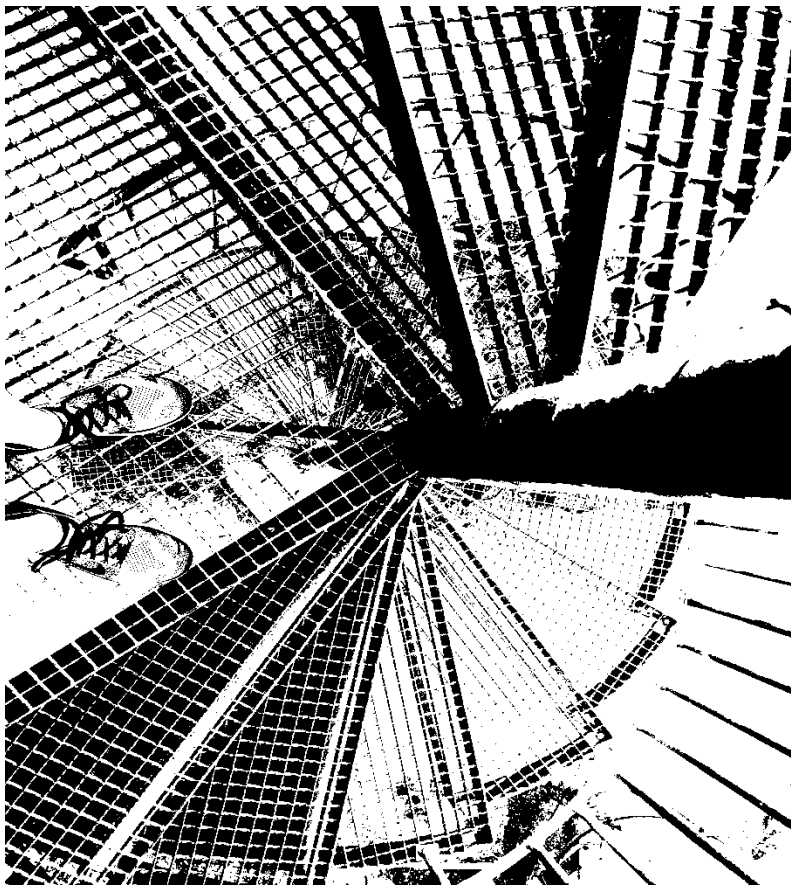
brittle
brittle edges
brittle centre
the **world** a shard of **brittle**
cutting bone and the
flesh
tattered **torn**

i
rough **crushed**
underfoot
i
the egg **shells** others tip toe
around

but still the aloes tint the sky
pink

brittle





what is my expectation of
being alive
in the world



In*spiralINSPIRINGInspirational



when i allow myself to connect
to my memory of my mom or
dad or rosie, i get teary, and i
feel my heart expand, and i
acknowledge how very much i
loved them. how very much i
miss them, the spaces where
they were have been filled in,
but not in my head or my
heart, those are in my cells
and i'm actually filled with
them, right now, they are in
me, around me, i am them.
and i thank them, i tell them
i'm so sorry for when i was
irritated and didn't have
enough time to just be in
loving full breath with them,
and i send heart love to them



observations of a contemplative movement session with objects - person with fern tattoo curving around their neck proudly carries a long steel pole. this totem, adorned with high-top nikes, is paraded around the room. a doe made of hard plastic with 3 broken legs is carefully carried and laid down in the centre of the space. it is wrapped in a blanket. a few people gather, quietly, and one strokes, in a gentle smooth manner, the person who has placed the doe there, someone ties ribbons around the doe's neck. later another comes to offer the doe water from a green plastic watering can.

chaos breaks out. power struggles. masked people. interactions.

i sit on the side, using my object as prayer beads. there are beautiful moments of structure – rhythms that move through the room. a large emerald green dragon is dislodged from the rafters and transported dangerously around. with 7 of the 37 minutes left, i'm compelled to enter the space fully! i crawl to the doe - lying on her side covered by blankets. i lay her head in my lap and repeat –

buddha of compassion have mercy on us, rocking to and fro. someone comes and rocks me more. someone else tries to tie a thread through my plastic yellow prayer beads - i snatch my hand away.



people like ritual

i like order
and ritual
and my views

-- grate

dis – inter –

grate me grate me raw

give me back my f***** prayer beads

bike rides to lakes and stolpe
and cake and raspberry ice cream made from the milk
of **happy cows free roaming!** a nursery of two mommies
and about seven or eight babies.

walked in long single file back to the herd,
after being taken to the tanker for water. one baby
running after mama - one mama gently nosing another
to move a little faster. a run broke out amongst them -
playing, racing, kicking their heels

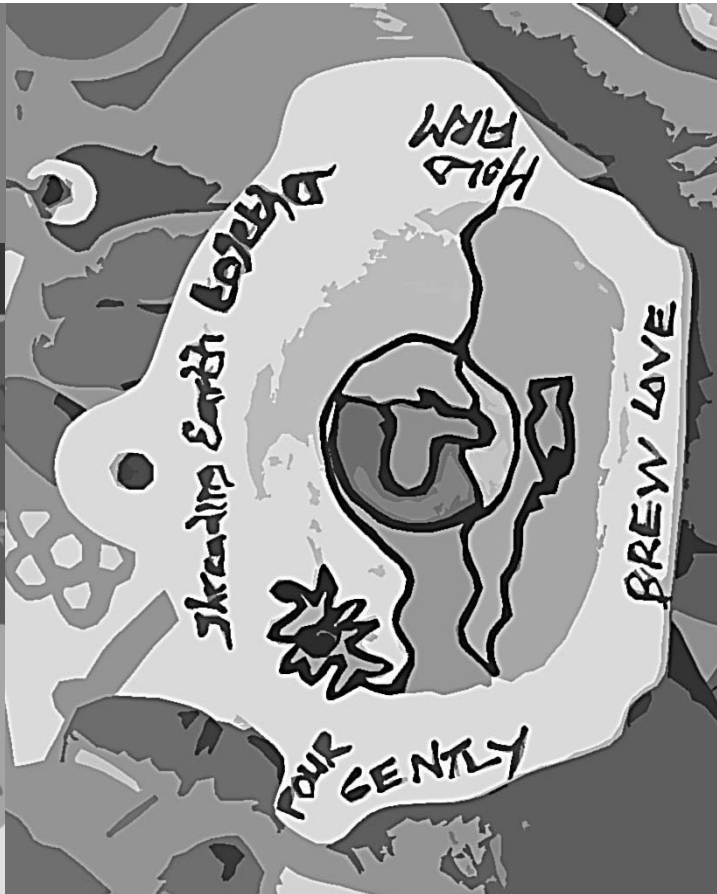
pure delight

pure
delight



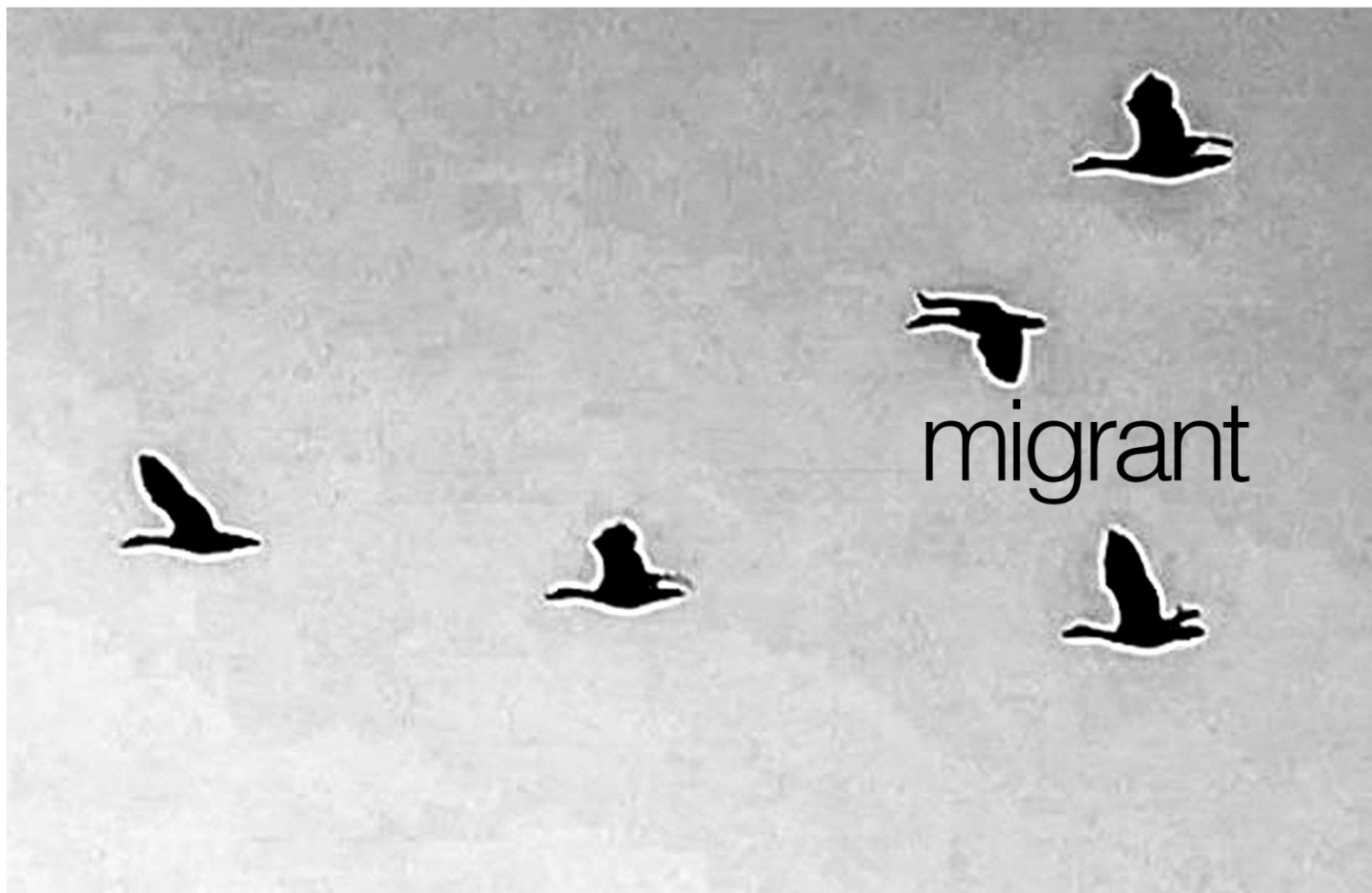
inspiration

expiration>





a
prayer
for the earth
all is not lost
who's-the-boss-at-what-cost-
lookout-no-more-permafrost



migrant

accepting what is

this is time for radical action!

accepting?

what is ... this?

is there time for radical action?

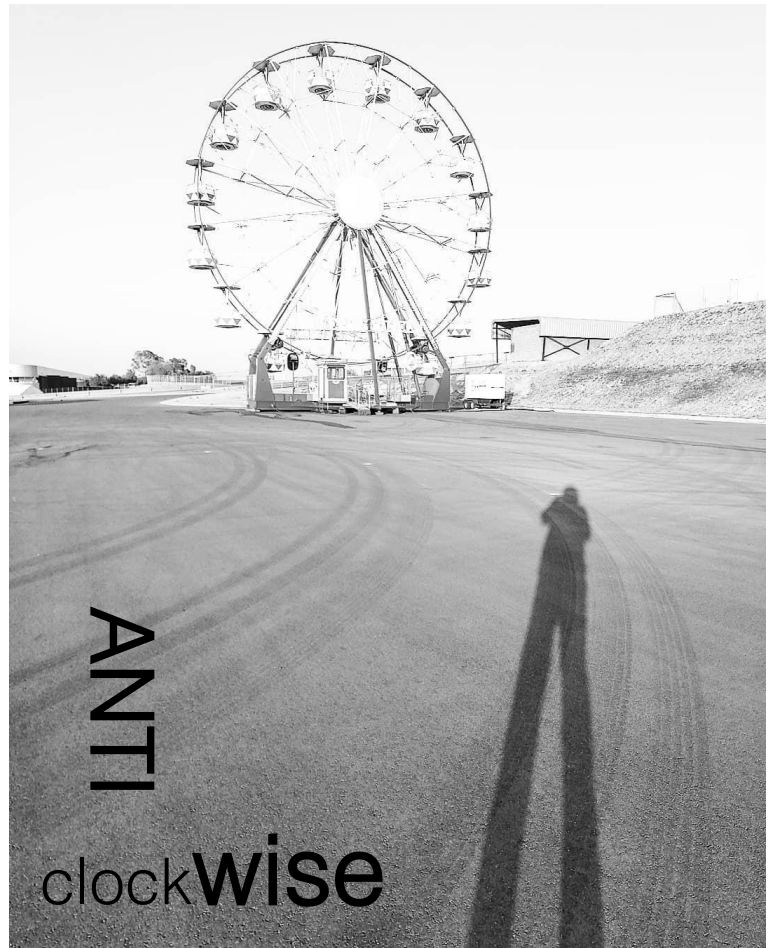
only radicals take action

radical actions take time

is time a free radical?

time accept radicals

~~debate ... oops too late~~



dead is dead

speaking about this and we kept coming back to the thought that

flowers grow through the cracks ...

if there's **10 000 years** (or whatever that awful number is),
and all the pollution in the whales, and the plastics, and toxic air, and no food and
everything that we've killed off,
whatever survives with its own nuclear mutations grows to be a new Something ...
isn't that what happened after the dinosaurs and other extinctions?
all this massive die-off! surely an asteroid would be better, quicker.
but we, we're cruel, deeply cruel.
so there's **a hawk that's riding the air currents** above me
what pain and suffering will we cause it ...



the
world
isn't
ending
time
is just
bending
away
from
you
and
me

eternity



mindful **embodiments**

♪dobedobedoooo♪

> healing balm

run-walk

walk-run

keep
me
afloat

practicedrich-uals

move

here rub on this > >

swimming

breathing

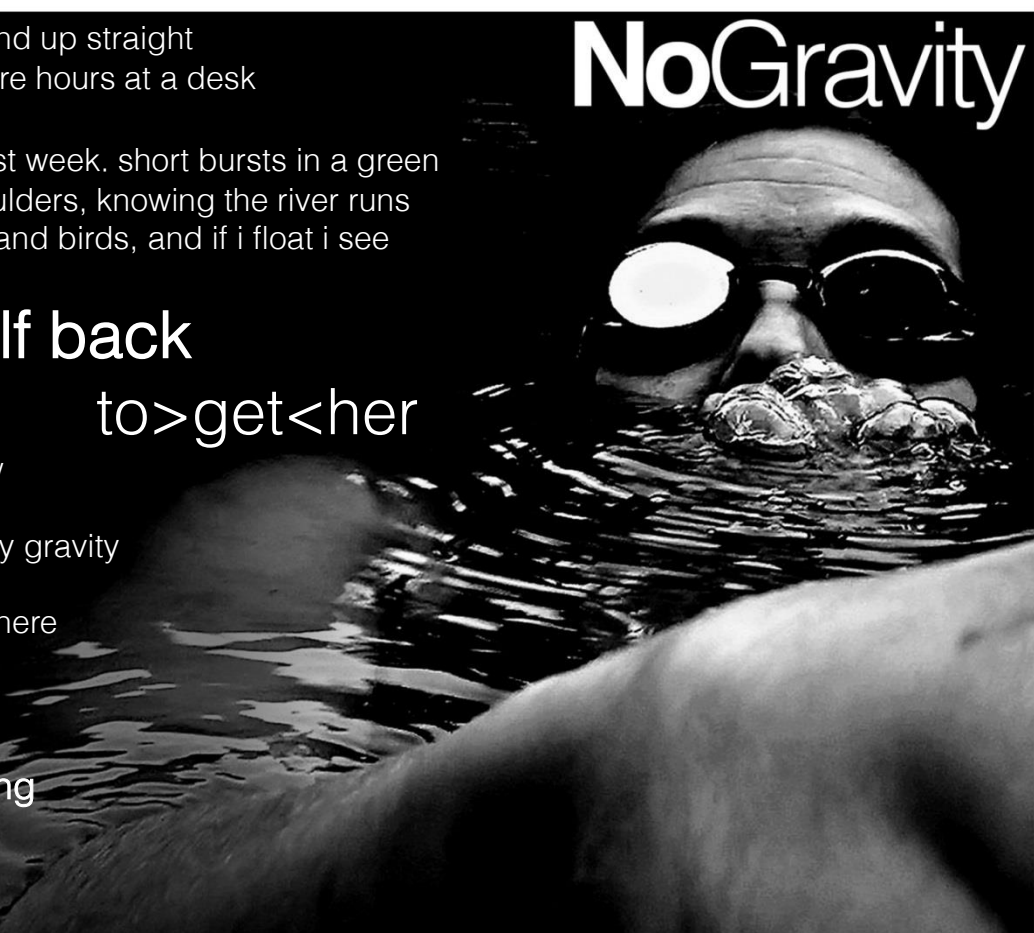
deep

home-rituals n crafty stuff

breakfast-making, walk-spirals, taking photos, swims, run-walks, home-rituals, crafts work, and of course breath, let's not forget breath here people! and we're breathing ...

my thoughts are always under construction

NoGravity



ageing – pain – can't stand up straight
slow bending ... sitting-sore hours at a desk
emotionally can't ...

loving – swum 3 times last week. short bursts in a green
pool, looking out onto boulders, knowing the river runs
40m away. here are trees and birds, and if i float i see
clouds. as a teen i said

swim myself back
to>get<her

and maybe that's true now
... my breathing deepens
i'm not weighted by gravity
vagus nerve finds relief
i want to stay here
to swim through winter
i know i won't

i love the **solitude**
being in **my body** **floating**
sky sounds of **breath**
as **bubbles**
in water

when all is said and
done, what's the point
if i am not **being**

loving to myself,
what's the point of
searching for the

creative when
i'm in terror of the
results. just for today, i
am going to be loving
to myself and

breathe deeply
and invite all parts of
me to make something
singularly me

bridging

longevity & justice

CRANE

we spiral in

wall and spiral inhale

exhale gentle twists and body turns and yearning

these parts of self that help no matter what you feel

celebrate creation

vibration heart pulses outward

OUT OF THIS WORLD

Recovering what is spirit

Living our way... back... towards

heart to heart

you are but one of whole remembering -

and can't help but spiral outwards

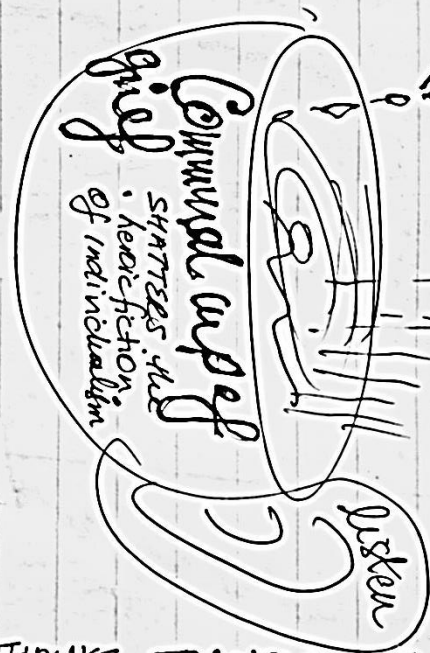
CRANE

commune

- ① Everything I ♥
I will lose
- ② Pts that
never knew
love
- ③ Sorrows
of the World
- ④ What we
expected &
didn't get
- ⑤ Ancestral

from Clouston: the out of the box courage

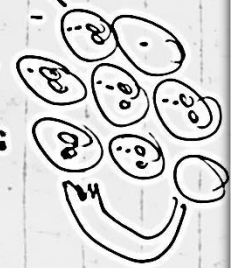
→ (Gable 2009)



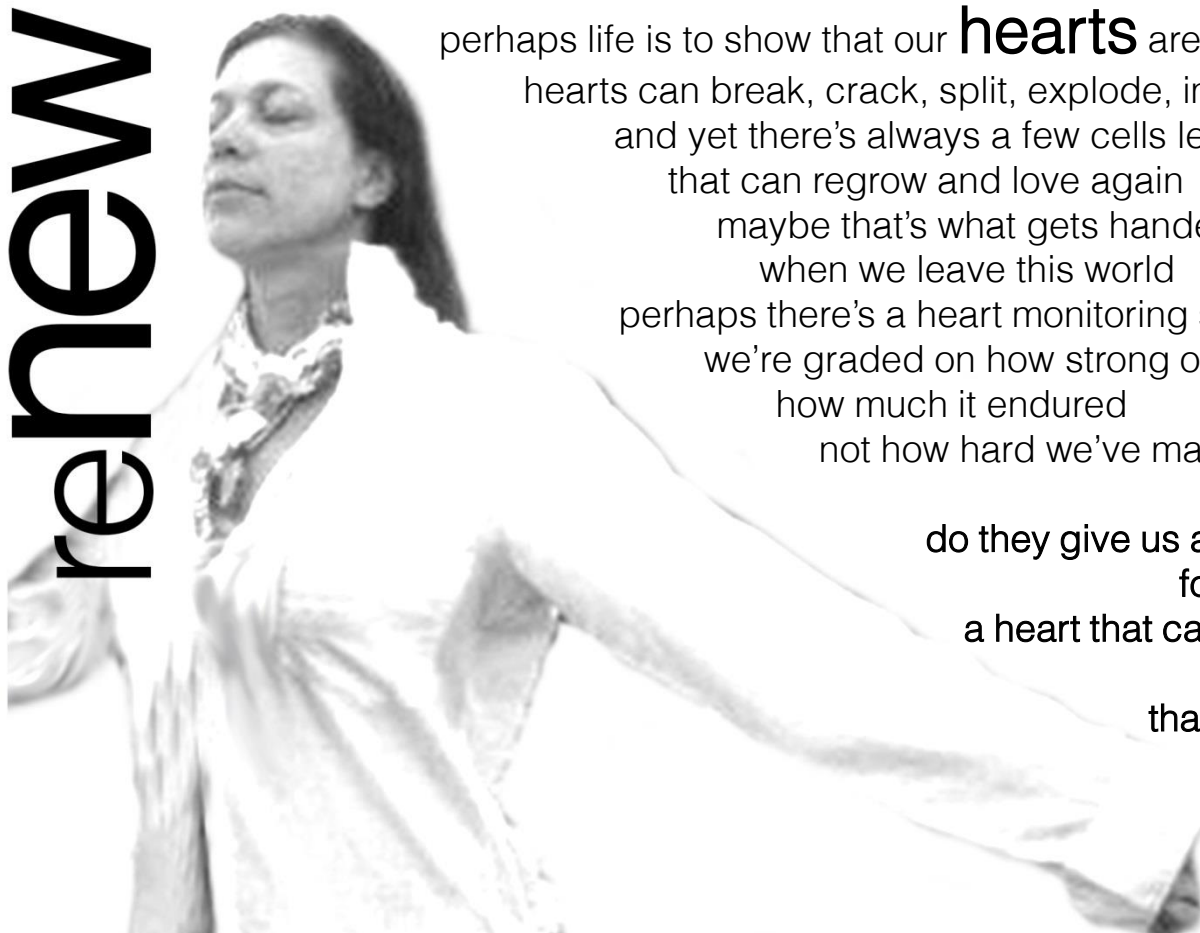
GRIEF SAYING - IN your wound is your genius.



Speak out
Speak out



THANKS FRANCIS WALLER!
By Spades GRIEF



renew

perhaps life is to show that our **hearts** are renewable
hearts can break, crack, split, explode, implode
and yet there's always a few cells left
that can regrow and love again
maybe that's what gets handed-in
when we leave this world
perhaps there's a heart monitoring station where
we're graded on how strong our heart was
how much it endured
not how hard we've made our hearts

do they give us a better model
for the next trip?
a heart that can endure more,
or a life
that breaks it less?



shadow
wobans

dear earth
i'm sorry,
i now take full
responsibility for my
actions.
thank you
i love you
one thing i can do for you
today is ...

we can only
pick up a foot
breathe_abreath
in the deep pain
there is the absolute
miracle of life itself



Photo credits : i've photographed most images. i've collaged original dance photos of myself taken by Ludger Storcks. Olivia Flowers' image for **breathe** breath. My father is credited with the image for **spiral** spiral out. No photographer credits for : loom, hide, renew, belonging, a pantry.

Glossary/ definitions :

*Anima mundi "A principle regarded by some as animating the universe much as the human soul animates man's body. The notion of an organic and living world ruled by spiritual forces rather than by mechanical laws" ("World Soul (Anima Mundi) | Encyclopedia.com," 2019)

*Definition of anima mundi : a vital force or principle conceived of as permeating the world ("Definition of ANIMA MUNDI," n.d.)

"... a sense of personal wholeness that involves physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual aspects of human experience....: Healing is the personal experience of the transcendence of suffering." (Egnew, T. R. (2005). The Meaning Of Healing: Transcending Suffering. Annals of Family Medicine, 3(3), 255–262. <https://doi.org/10.1370/afm.313>)

Trauma: "An experience ... that we perceive as overwhelming. It may feel inescapable and it occurs outside of our control. At some level conscious or unconscious trauma feels life threatening even if it does not actually put our lives in danger." (Mead MD, V. (2018). The Chronic Illness & Trauma Connection Series Book 1.)

Os coccygis: "The word luz in Hebrew and Aramaic ... associated with the coccyx. The belief that this one was indestructible and would give rise to the resurrection of the dead in Psalms 34:21 (1) ...

indebted to embryologists ... the coccyx contains the vestige of the primitive neural tube" (Robert Shapiro, 1987). Luz The Mystical Bone of Resurrection. RSNA, VOL. 163(3). Retrieved from <https://pubs.rsna.org>)

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My beloved parents Pat & Neville, who saw me into the world as i saw them out
 loves i've lost - furry and non-furry
 and all sentient beings, and minerals
 and the stuff we can't see and the stuff we can
 and Life in general and specific
 and you and me and Life as sore and magnificent as it can be
 and Mother Earth and the miracle of creation

Nurturers of this MA process: Quentin Foster for dream seeds & space, Stacey Rozen for watering, weeding & endlessly nurturing them. Vanessa Pike & Michelle Simpson 4tissues-n-bubbles. Aurora Vaughan for keeping me out the pantry. The many friends across the world for words of support and gestures of love, and always my darling sisters, nieces, nephews.

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