

At McClure's Beach, Point Reyes National Seashore, California

I would ask my family

Wait for a foggy afternoon, late May,
after a rainy winter so that all
the wildflowers are blooming on the headland.
Wait for honey of lupine. It will rise
around you, encircle you, from vast golden bushes
as you take the crooked trail
down from the parking lot. Descend
earth's cleft, sweet winding declivity
where California poppies lift up their
chalices, citrine and butterscotch,
and phlox blows in the wisps of fog, every
color of white and like the memory
of pain, and like first dawn, and lavender.
Where goldfinches, nubbins of sunlight,
flit through the canyon. Walk one by one
or in small clusters, carrying babies,
children holding your hands—with your eyes,
your oval skulls, your prodigious memories
or skills with the fingers. Your skirts or shirts
will flirt with the wind, and small brown rabbits
will run in and out, you'll see their ears first,
nested in the grasses, then the bob
of fleeting hindquarters.

Now come to the sand,
the mussel shells, broken or open, iridescent,
color of crows' wings in flight
or purple martins, and the bullwhips
of sea kelp, some like frizzy-headed voodoo
poppets, some like long hollow brown or bleached
phalluses. The X X birdprints running

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across the scalloped sand will leave a trail of stars,
look at the black oystercatcher, the scamp
with the long red beak, it's whizzing along
in its courtship dance. Look at the fog,
above you now on the headland, and know how much
I love the fog. Don't cry, my best beloveds,
it's time to scatter me back now. I've wanted this
all my life. Look at the cormorants,
the gulls, the elegant scythed whimbrel,
do you hear its *quiquiquiqui*
rising above the eternal Ujjayi breath,
the roar and silence and seethe and whisper,
the immeasurable insweep and release of ocean.