

**Bourne**  
**toWrite...**  
creative writing  
workshops

## Memory Believes

by Lauren Holstein

**“Memory believes before knowing remembers.”**

- William Faulkner, *A Light in August*

**“The body is a non-neutral archive of living.”**

- Molly Shanahan, Spiral Body Workshop, June 2021

Sand tucked into toenail beds  
Pine sap to fingerprints  
Talcum powder inhaled

Skin soaked in sweat  
    of other spiralling bodies  
Someone else brushing my hair

A street lamp catching  
    keeping me frozen in wakefulness  
Pressure bursting where I took your scalpel  
    A searing itch above my left ear  
    where stitches hold sticky flesh together

Palpitations where I took the three bullets  
    that took you

A burning slap  
An aching grip  
Severed Legs

A silent recoil of anus

A flash. I am watched by three sets of eyes  
where none was wanted

The shaking shock of it all.

Fingerprints.

The Map of Body.

The Record.

Always unfolding  
pathways printed on a solid page

When I knowingly walk them again  
What can I do?

This is true, yes.  
Also,

This biased archive of a life  
breathes,  
still,  
undulates  
with each

And I can open  
I know

The pages flutter  
And a single path  
extends from the print  
Spiralling ever outward

Twisting into a birch root  
Or outstretched hand of oak  
Curving around shapeshifting thunder  
Or the swollen bodies of cloud  
(to pour forth)

I move in waves  
not lines

My neural roads extend  
Far beyond walls of skin  
molecule  
atom  
air

I am mostly made of space

This is not a negation  
But a kind of growth

Where mine  
is not to hold  
Where memory  
is not only script  
Where I choose

Where yours is not mine  
Where mine is not mine

because  
water  
because  
wind  
because  
empty space  
(me)