

Between the Trees:  
Scotland Island Illuminations

Eunice McAllister



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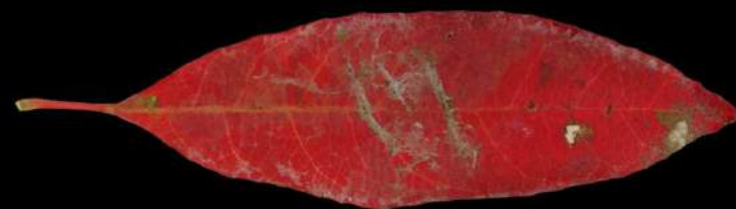


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These texts and the images they illuminate are inspired by the landscape of Scotland Island and the singularity of daily life here. In this form, they resemble a medieval devotional book, meditations where the first letter of a thought is a miniature illustration in itself. Rich in complex imagery, an alternative world can be contained in a single letter. Instead of the ivy vines characteristic of medieval European rinceaux, I use *Smilax australis* - lawyer vine or barbed wire vine - to adapt the book of hours to a later century, a different country and a secular purpose. If we are no longer so devoted to God, we can still appreciate what God is professed to have made.

eunice mcallister



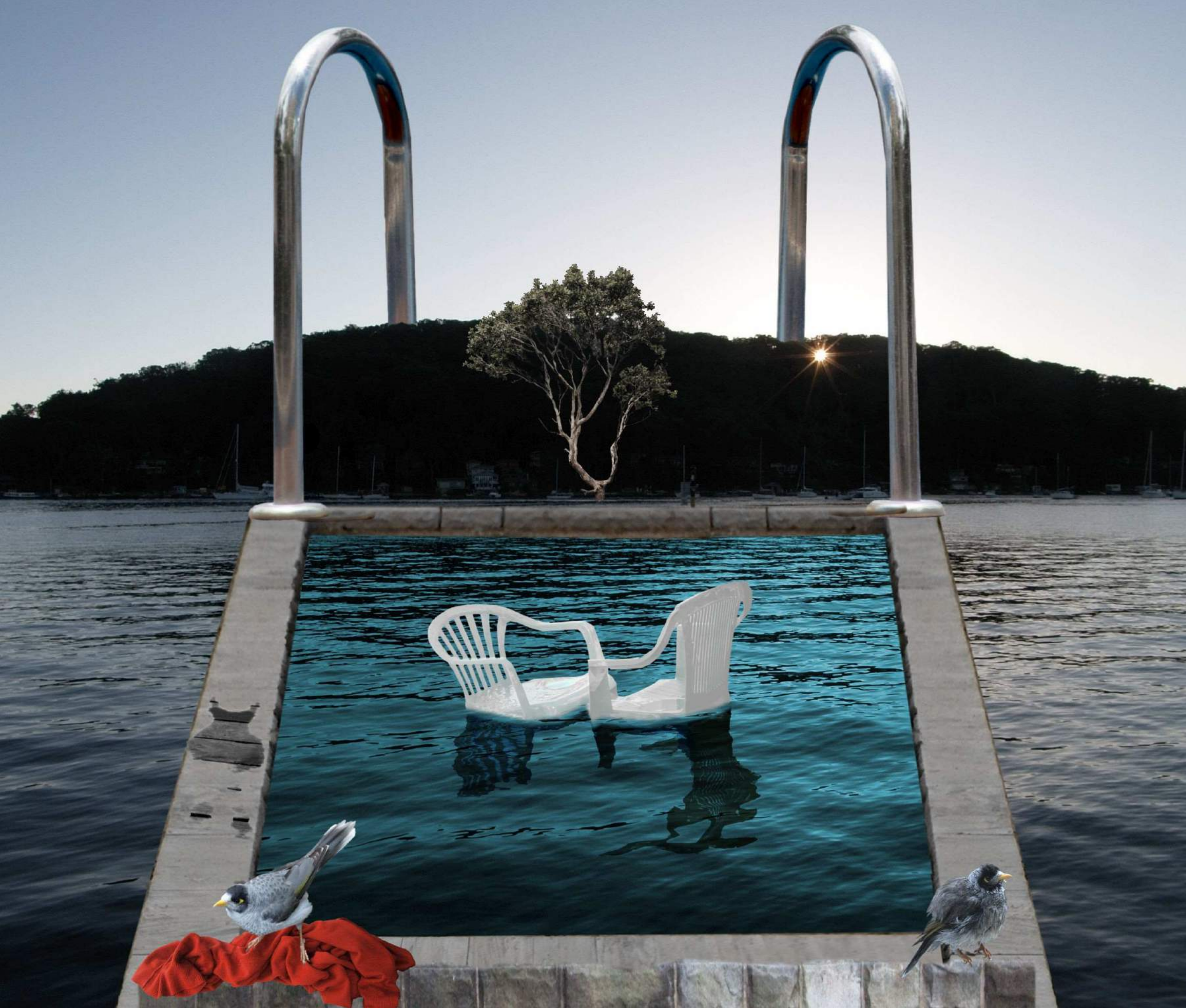


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ittwater is a giant pool,  
an enormous bath,  
warmer than the  
ocean. I walk down to  
the water in my bare  
feet. When I jump in,  
the fish scatter. When  
I leave, they return.

Immersion





n summer, lerps falls on the veranda. If it gets into the tank, it fouls the water. Up close, it looks like a summer snowfall.

Snowdome







he island has few cars but the city's traffic worsens each year. On weekends, cars fill the roads across the water, their owners out here for a day with the trees.



Fairy Lights





he bird's nest fern signposts the start of my path. I feed it with banana skins which I throw from the veranda.

Feeding the Bird's Nest Fern





Christmas beetles glance off the kitchen window at night. In the morning, one lays on the washing machine, apparently dead. But when I touch it, its saw-like feet dig into my fingers.

Night Kitchen





igh above near a cockatoo's nest, this tree eye was part of a gum bough that fell onto my power lines. Now it looks up, an empty socket.

When the Bough Breaks







etals and mud are the materials of child's play. Children's tea parties serve mud balls decorated with wildflowers on rubber tree leaf plates and scratched picnic glasses full of sand instead of wine.

Island on a Plywood Swing

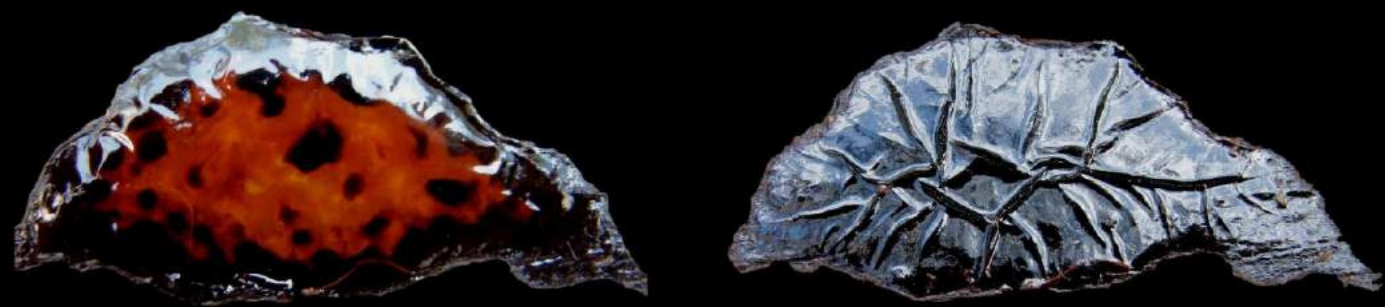
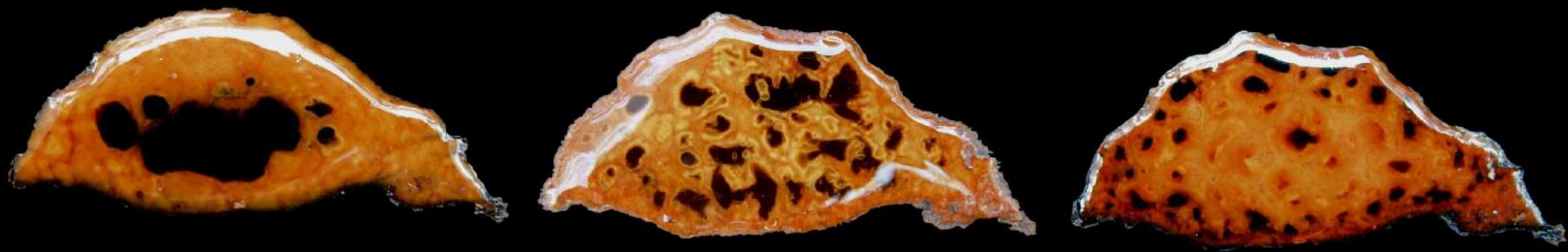




bead of gum resin fell on my veranda. Before it could dry out, the rain renewed it, making it glossy and viscous again.

Eventually, it crystallised and only its outline remained.

Resin Morph





nder the house, I found a newborn miner that had fallen from its nest. My daughter made a box for it on the veranda and lined it with tissues, she-oak needles and leaves. Grown miners tended the fledgling while I was indoors, but flew off when I came out to watch them.

One day it was gone, blended back into the population of miners that visit my veranda.

Early Morning Dream





s we go through our daily routines, summer approaches and the evacuation bag must be packed. The thought of fire is never far from my mind, especially when I go out on the veranda in the morning and smell smoke from a controlled burn.

Passing the Dragon







rossing boundaries, nature often comes indoors. Into the circle of light cast by the end table lamp, the weevil is a ringmaster with clown feet.

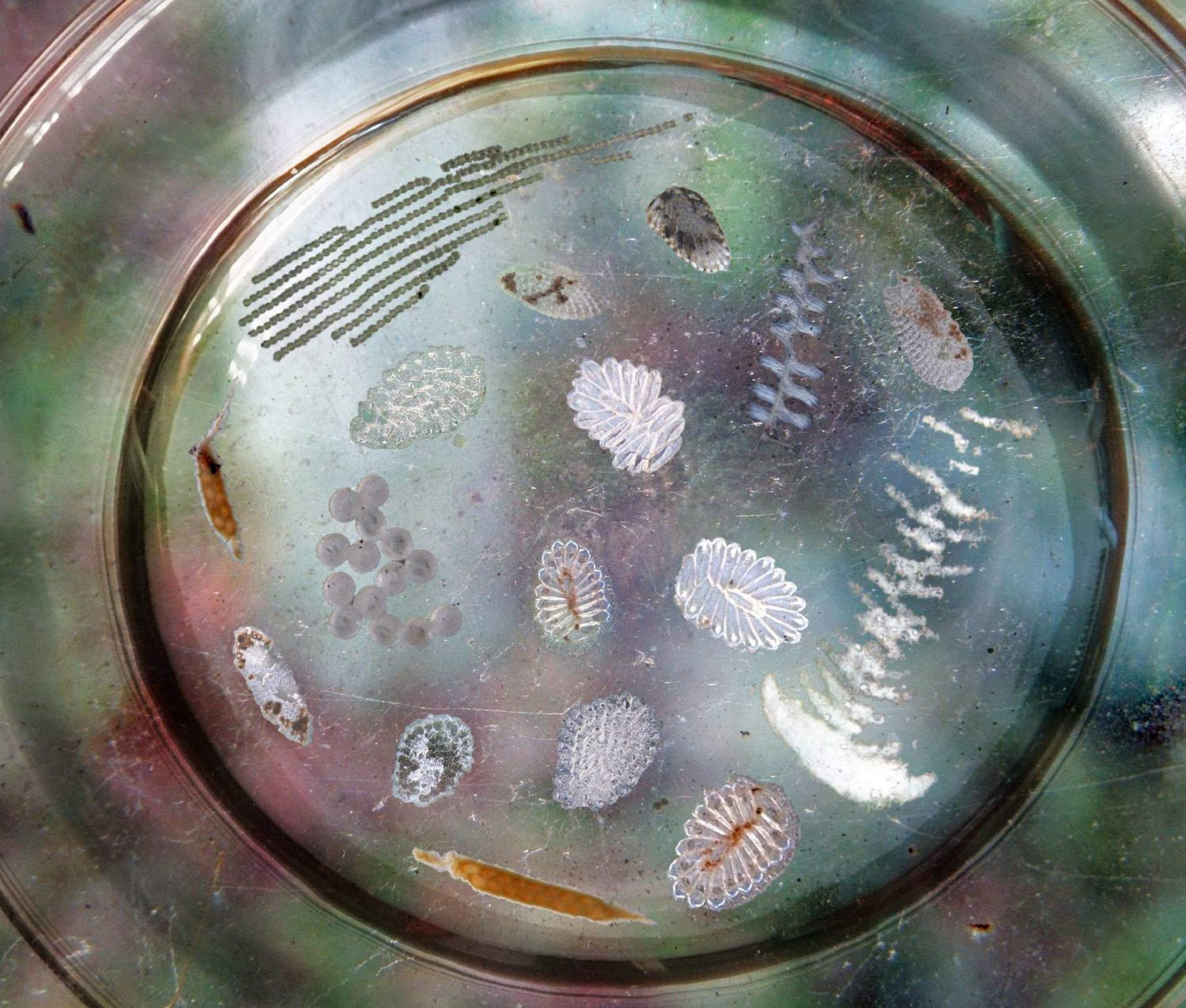
The Weevil





hen the sun pours through them, the windows of my house are a petri dish of small organisms, insect casings: microscopic, diatom-like creatures.

Diatoms





T

rees rustle lightly  
behind me when  
I walk past.

Masks





ity lights can be seen across the water. The pink forest in the reserve has lights of its own, illuminated by phosphorescent fungi after the rain.

Night in the Pink Forest







cean species diminish with time. One day, there will be nothing left but jellyfish and bioluminescence; anything else will go deeper to escape us.

Bioluminescence



bioluminescence



he toadfish who live near the wharf investigate  
a newcomer.

Toadfish





f our waters were inviting to all species of fish, we wouldn't have to travel to see them.

Among the Bream





p on the high tide, rusted pieces from derelict boats float over their gunnels and settle on the bright green rocks. Every piece changes our beaches forever.

Rusted Beach

