



LANDFALL

Mary Frances

*Landfall*  
is the fifty-eighth  
in a series of texts and chapbooks  
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# LANDFALL

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**landfall** / 'lænd.fɔ:l

a sighting

the first land reached or seen at the end of a long journey

arrival

They are there, and not there.

These miniature landscapes were found in old walls and at the edges of paths and steps. The next time I pass, they may have disappeared.

Rain can darken and blur them like an overloaded watercolour brush on a wet page. Frost might shatter them as the fragile surface breaks up with the thaw. Moss dries and fades in the sun, it can be scraped or worn away. A dry hot spell bleaches out colour. Season by season lichen slowly covers the details. Time passes, stones crumble, they take their tiny visions with them.

A moment later I might pass a wall I know well and suddenly find a portal to a winding river and misty hills. I have never seen it before. I know it was not there the last time I passed.

As a child I read books about other children who wandered, not far from their home, and found secret and special things - a lost key, an old map, rare coins, clues to follow, small mysteries. Inspired and magicked by such stories, I wandered wide-eyed on the grubby streets of south London looking for any kind of street treasure - bottle tops, pigeon feathers, nondescript buttons, scraps of gold and silver paper from cigarette packets.

And I still wander, in towns and cities, now with a very small camera that fits in the palm of my hand. The images are as I found them - I occasionally kick away a crisp packet, but that's it. I love it when people mention my 'country walks' not knowing that this is an urban project. I am out in the streets looking for things we have missed, here in the middle of the land-map, listening for the sea, looking for landfall.

These small, transient worlds are, in a way, pictures of time. I catch them and print them. I cut them up and make collages with them. Like backdrops for a toy theatre, they become as familiar to me as memories of places I have visited, or the landscapes I know from the windows of my regular trains.

They were there, though they may not be there now.  
Now, they are here.

— Mary Frances





































































