

## THE MIRROR AND MAP OF MEMORY

By Allyson Horton

Some folks ain't cut out for indigenous stories.  
Mississippi has my granddaddy's name on it.  
His mother steeped her calloused heels in its marshy  
flesh. Black salt still troubling the waters to this day.

Choctaw Indian swims downstream  
with varicose veins visible in the legs  
of great-granddaughters.

Her canvas is deep red clay  
oiled with black mud. Hair—  
bone-straight, thick as blood.

Up close I studied  
the carved bones pillared beneath squashy cheek,  
the pebbled necklace  
rivery eyes,  
flatland lips,  
hilly breasts  
each telling its own history.

The deep-rooted face  
is both mirror and map  
window and door  
I do not see me in her  
I see her in me.