

Crop Rotation

by Janna Miller

We grow root vegetables and legumes in the oldest bones,
calcified in yellow cracks and spurs. Carrot tips trail
into femurs. Rib cages enclose russet clustered new
potatoes and longer, pale fingerlings. Peanuts are difficult.
I must go underneath, though the splintered, whitewashed door
at the base of the hill to untangle pods and roots from metacarpals.
I rebury them later, after separating tiny segmented fingertips
that match the color of composted peels.

I am the most careful of teeth.

They tend to loosen and imprint themselves in turnips,
imposing an unwelcome surprise at supper. Though we are
allowed to keep what we find in the field to string into
necklaces or windchimes, we must find them before the
kitchens do, or risk extra chores.

I don't care to help with the corn, which grows tall
and green over the fresh, deeply tilled earth. Instead,
after filling the wheelbarrow with dense root-flesh,
I rest with the hardy leeks and cabbages. They only
smell of the cinnamon tea my mother waters
them with — her grandmother's favorite

