

The Heron's  
Pebble

The  
Heron's  
Pebble

*Somewhere in these words is  
the truth*

*I think*

*I believe*

*there is such a thing as truth,*

*but it is hard,*

*impossible,*

*I think.*

*to reason your way to that belief.*

*Descartes, who was  
much smarter than I,  
worked hard at it and did  
an admirable job,*

*but even he is not  
fully convincing.*

*Still, I feel that*

*somewhere*

*there is some small stone,*



*rounded and worn*

*from aeons*

*of*

*rounding*

*and*

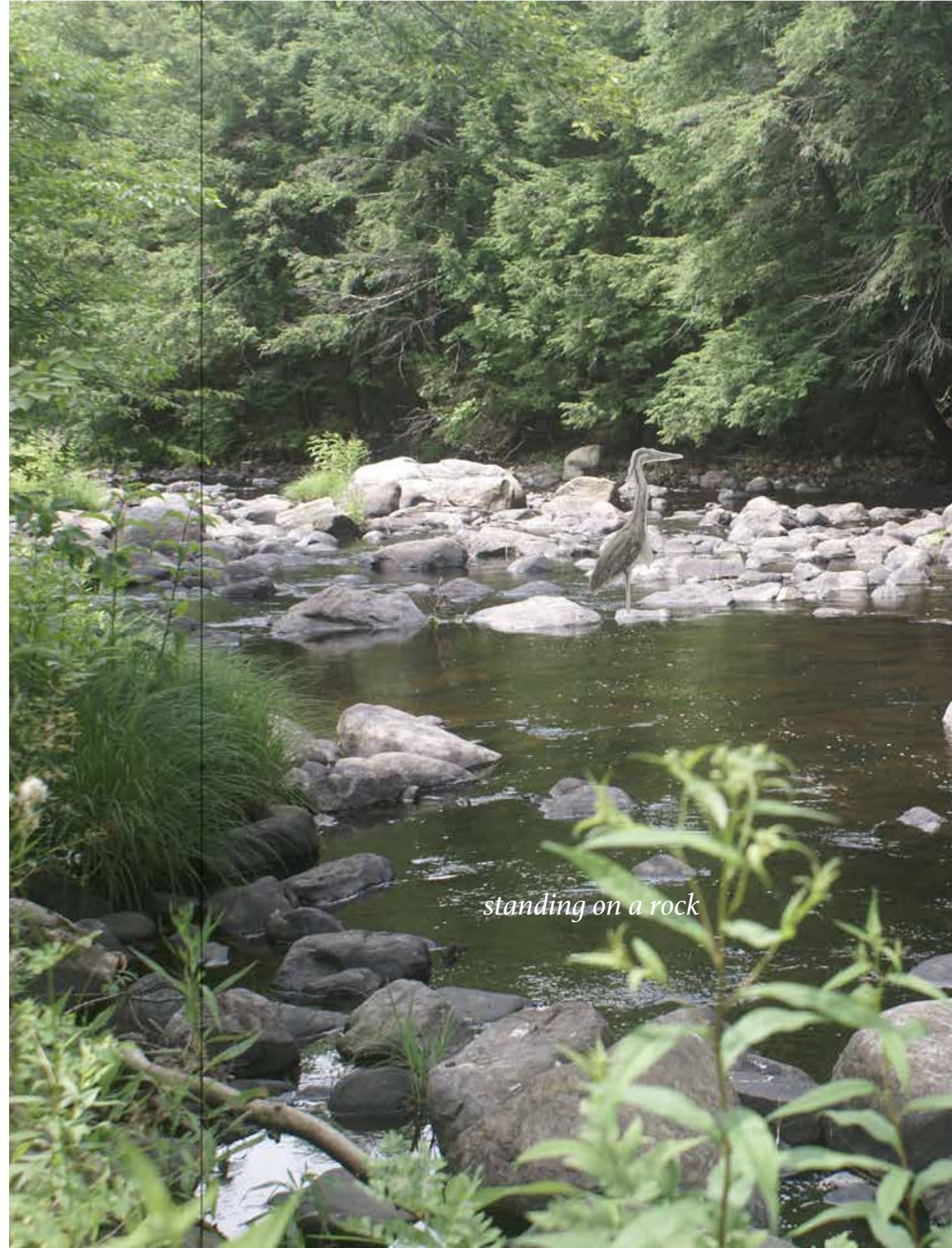
*wearing*

*– somewhere  
there is some small  
pebble of truth.*

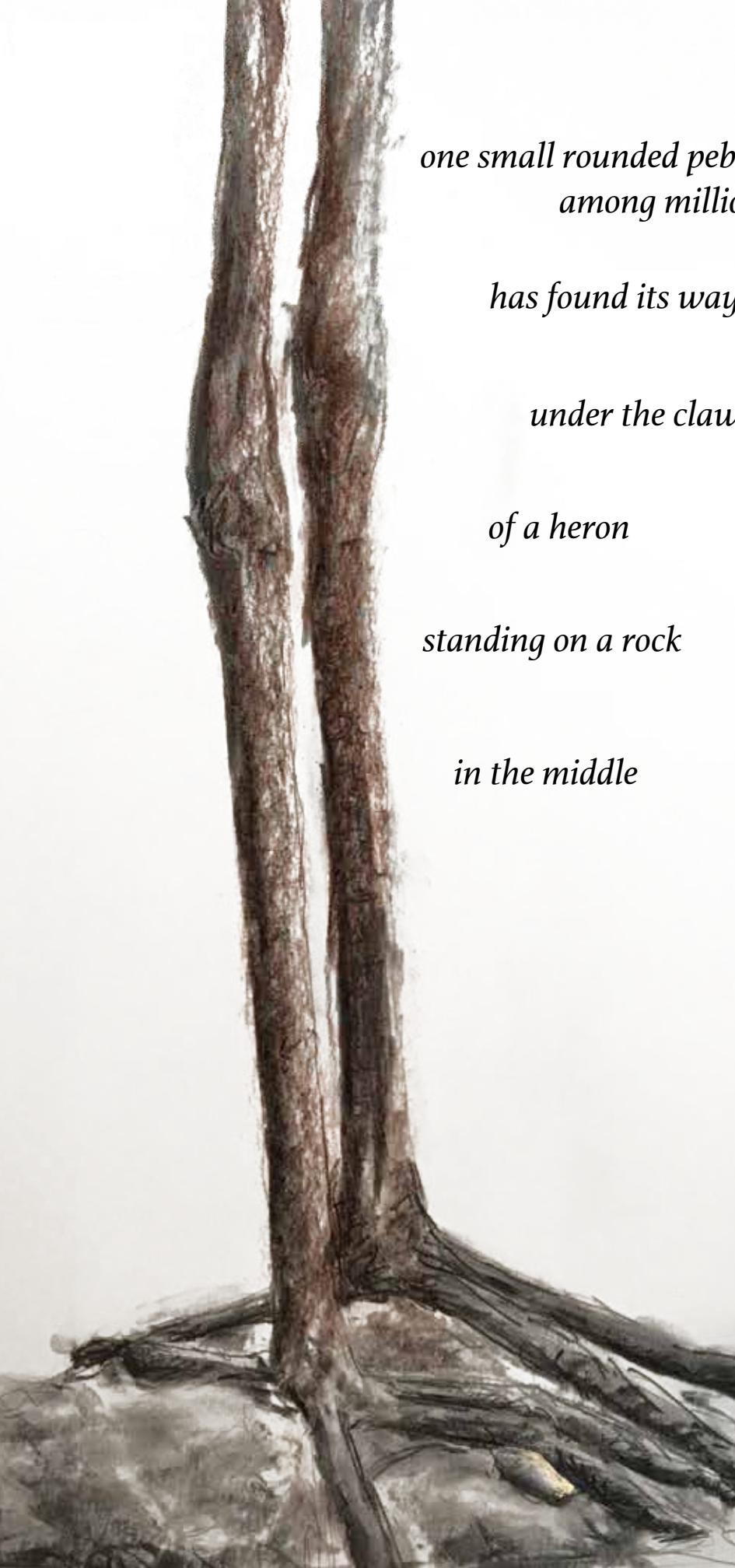
*(Quick, said the bird.*

*Find it! Find it!)*

*Perhaps under the claw of a heron*







*one small rounded pebble  
among millions*

*has found its way*

*under the claw*

*of a heron*

*standing on a rock*

*in the middle*

*of a stream*

*teeming*

*with rounded,*

*forever tumbling rocks.*

*Except for its desire to fool some frog  
or crayfish*

*into thinking it is a stick,*

*it would move to dislodge the pebble.*

*But its mind is elsewhere*

*and it doesn't move,*

*pretending instead*



*to be a stick.*

*The motionless heron,*

*after seven heartbeats within its chest*

*(how to count the heartbeats of a heron?)*

*turns its head to look at me*



*a pebble of truth under its toe.*



*Finally,*

*it turns its head back to its business*

*and, abandoning its hunt,*

*raises its heavy wings –*



*and slowly flaps off*

*like an ancient and majestic  
pterodactyl,*



*leaving the pebble of truth*

*to drop*

*back*

*into the stream*

*from which it came.*



*How many millions of years*

*(pebbles and crayfish  
know nothing of years)*

*will it be*

*before that pebble is once again*

*isolated and visible?*

*And will a heron once again*

*capture it?*

*so I can capture that stone*

*and pause in my fishing,*

*Shall I be a heron in a next life*

*to look at a small, rounded stone*

*beneath my toe?*

*Or will I fly off*

*And will I know its value if I do?*

*to be about my business?*



