

*The Unnatural and Accidental Women* by Marie Clements

REBECCA: I'm dancing in Pigeon Square. It's not a dream, it's a memory. I'm four years old, and I don't have to ask why they call it Pigeon Square. There's pigeon shit everywhere. At four a genius ... I know. A row of old men are sitting like stumps ... smoking, laughing, tilting their heads back in a chuckle or a slug of rum. They are talking to the Character--my dad. He's playing the harmonica. I'm pretending I'm a dancer. We don't know who's pretending more. Me, or him. But my feet are hitting the squares like I know what I'm doing, and he's hitting all the notes they can hear. They take their pennies out and splash them down around my dancing feet. The coppers fall ... it is the most beautiful sound you can imagine, because you see I am very special, and talented, and the "poor bastards," as my father would say, are happy, clapping. I bow. My dad takes my hand. We say goodbye. Some of them touch, remember a daughter, some smile and wave a mitt, not a glove ... and one reaches his glove to surround my braid. My dad--the Character--takes his hand and says to the man in the clearest loggia "I could kill you": "Enough." The man lets go of my braid. My father, in the clearest "I love you," squishes my shoulder in a hug and says, "It's time to get the chain for the power saw. It should be fixed by now."