Seal Woman

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Seal Woman

Ebftides tolerate no magic
Coming from the ocean
in whose depths live monsters
she eats blowfish whose flesh is poison
treats it as a delicacy
still dangerous
cooked exactly the right way
Every year she risks giving up her soul
face tingling with the cold
toes growing numb
feet less willing to dance

Until a suitor catches her by surprise
touches with warming hands
tugs at her heart with springy fingers
tosses poems—
she catches her breath
unexpectedly buoyant again

Moving water feeds the ocean
streams, creeks, rivers
condensation and rain
On foggy days
the seals quietly bump up against a rowboat
strip off their skins
leave them in the bottom of the boat

live on land for awhile as women
moon-pulled
dreaming of undercurrents
webbed feet remembering how to dance
like flippered seal pups
barking and playing in another ocean