

—+ **JILL STEPHANIE MORGYN** | bone-garden

You do not remember why you left your home, what drew you from your bed (from its warmth) perhaps it was the moon but one night, you found yourself alone on the dark sea—

small wooden boat creaking beneath and around you (or maybe it was your bones that whined) but since you were there (in your boat in the dark) you did as you knew:

fumbled with bait and hook, cast a luminous thread out into the void, and dreamed.

You cannot explain why you brought the creature home from its bone-garden, perhaps it was the moonlight gathered in her skull-socket eyes? or maybe the sweet pain of her tiny coral teeth in your flesh that moved you to feel, but since she was there—

(by the fire in your home) you did as you knew: sang your moon-songs to shadows, untangled the line from her ribs, and lay down beside her to sleep.

(She cannot translate the colours of your song, the magic of your longing). Perhaps your heart's drum called her flesh in long thin cords like eels reaching to cover her bones. Maybe your lips, fire-lit, made her hair grow long and thick as kelp—

but since she has hips and breasts and love, she did as she knew:

wove your line into nets, sang the fish to your boat, and burned alongside you at night.

feet on feet. sighs of a spiralling sleep.

Hook and eye unclasp with ease, an experienced hand,  
you note, while thanking the gods it is dark  
and he cannot see your neck—not yet  
though he may feel the gills you’ve carved to breathe  
pulse as he kisses you, so you slip between his legs  
to deflect the light of his touch . . . you suck,  
he sighs, “Baby, where did you ever. . .”  
You want him to want to know about your life  
underwater and that your love of turtlenecks  
was born of gill-camouflaging necessity.  
Ah, but your desire to please, your fear, strings you  
taut as cashmere’s loom, won’t let you dream  
of being seen and held, drops gently  
as a slipped stitch onto his lips, unsure  
he will dive to meet you on the ocean floor.