The Mermaid's Revenge

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Abstract
In lieu of an abstract, below is the essay's first paragraph.

"The lake stones were smooth, slippery beneath my leathered feet, but (predictably) rock-hard. The water pulled at the skin of my insteps and ankles, pushed me back toward the shoreline, pulled me out, pushed me back. Some days I could imagine myself a mermaid: Melusine, Sabrina. Some days I could not. I was strong, the pull of the water stronger."

Cover Page Footnote
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Promises

It comes without warning
over the air waves,
Those words we once sang.
Together forever,
that’s what we promised.
Now tears fall down my cheeks,
and only one voice fills the room.

— Jeanne M. Moose

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The lake stones were smooth, slippery beneath my leathered feet, but (predictably) rock-hard. The water pulled at the skin of my insteps and ankles, pushed me back toward the shoreline, pulled me out, pushed me back. Some days I could imagine myself a mermaid: Melusine, Sabrina. Some days I could not. I was strong, the pull of the water stronger.

Breath (not mine) pricked at the back of my neck, arms came around my sides to enclose me but paused and changed direction before they made contact. He knew. The Mermaid’s Revenge. I could forgive him, or it could be Brian’s time to drown. Neither of us moved.

When I felt him decide to turn away, I spontaneously moved my foot between his two, hooked it around one ankle, and kicked forward as hard as I could. As I happened to be the nearest object, both of us went down, plunging into about four inches of slimy lakewater with a variety of yelps and curses.

I was glad that he got wet, but he smiled at me anyway. Simultaneously frowning eyebrows voiced his question for him. I shrugged.

— Monica Bradbury

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