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Ariel's Daughter

Devon Miller-Duggan

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Miller-Duggan: Ariel's Daughter

ARIEL'S DAUGHTER

Devon Miller-Duggan

Not knowing what I come from—
Man, woman, sprite,
Flower, spume, or mist.
Egged or seeded in a tree
Lullayed by bees,
Suckled on the spit of hummingbirds,
Delivered by dragonflies
Already old, and dripping honey
From my breasts,
Wombless, willow-haired, six-fingered,
Barren keeper of a fertile isle.
The rocks here move on feet,
The trees uproot
And root themselves on reefs around the isle
To keep the sight of ships
From us, the story-wrecked.
All alone with monsters,
Flowery fish, fishy trees,
Wingy flowers, I learn
To catch and eat
The still-beating hearts of birds.
And when I sleep
The dark draws in its fingers
Cutting off the color of my breath.
I do not sleep.
I open oysters, slit their hinges,
Lay them out beneath the moon,
Watch them glisten at the stars,
Then shrivel in the rising sun,
Dead around their pearls.