

a solo LARP to be played near and in the water, by Jeeyon Shim

CIRCLE ONE Are you: A mermaid A selkie A siren

ON THE SHORE, AT NIGHT

[The sea used to be your bower and garden, your hearth and home; no longer, not for a long time.] *How did you lose your place in the tide?* [Standing before it now, feeling the damp crumble of the sand beneath your bare feet, something inside you keens with terrible longing.] *What do you yearn for?*

[You sacrificed everything for them.] *Who did you cleave yourself in two for?*

[In your hands you cradle something:] Your skin Your voice Your lover, what is left of them [It's time. You have to release it. You have to.]

When do you throw your cargo into the water?

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IN A COMMUNITY SWIMMING POOL, DAYTIME

[Physical therapy extended further and further out the more you broke down, until finally it led you here.] *What ailments seeped in to your body over time?*

[The pool is a hollow simulacrum of the vast expanse you used to roam, but the buoyancy you feel in the water comforts you.]

When you close your eyes, what do you imagine around you in the water?

[Tendon and muscle twinge in response the new ways you gently work them. It is not the same as when you streaked, sleek and powerful, through the sea; but right now it is enough.]

How do you settle in, just a little more, into realizing what this body can do for you? [You think about the humans you've seen, from below, serenely floating on their backs. You wonder what that feels like.] *You feel comfortable floating on your back. You do not feel comfortable floating on your back.*

IF YOU FEEL COMFORTABLE FLOATING

[Let your feet leave the concrete floor. Lie back, gently and wide. Feel your ribcage swell and sink with the air you breathe.] *What holds you now, that only you can feel?*

IF YOU DO NOT FEEL

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COMFORTABLE FLOATING [Let your feet find purchase on the concrete floor. Hold your hands out in front of you, cupping them as though you are supporting something very, very precious to you.] *What do you hold, that only you can see?*

EPILOGUE: IMMERSED IN A BATHTUB WITH FRESH, HOT WATER AND EPSOM SALT

The water should be very warm -- not hot, but comfortable to the touch. Add the Epsom salt while the water is running to help it dissolve.

For a standard-sized tub, use the amount suggested on the package, usually 1 to 2 cups, or the amount recommended by your doctor."

[In this frank mammalian body you find yourself craving warmth in a way that your kin would find compromising. You've come to enjoy it. The bathwater covers you like a thick, heavy blanket.]

How did seasons pass in the sea you come from? What did it feel like as the world cooled and warmed around you?

[The sea did not constrain you. Its vistas are limitless and you traversed them without a thought for the meaning of confinement. Everything on land is a plate or a cup or a bowl; a cage, you used to think, but you've learned to know the difference between a prison and a vessel. You feel the walls of the tub around your body. They comfort you.] *How does the bath water feel as you feel it soak into your skin?* [You add salt to all your baths. Your physical therapist says it helps with muscle tension. You like it because sometimes you hold your breath and sink under the surface, and the sting of the briny water at your lash line reminds you of home. Your home before where you will always live in the truest part of yourself; and your home here in this body, the home of this body.]

When do you know it is time to leave the water?