

Seagulls

Sometimes I dream of Seagull Harbour.
I'm standing on the promontory
staring out over the Bristol Channel.

Seagulls skitter like memories
over the horizon
and I realise I can't move.

I see my reflection
tearing away with the ripples
of the ocean surface.

I am Verity; naked, open,
proud but unfinished,
craving sea and salt on my skin.

I used to dream
they filled my cot with seaweed,
that they had to strip scales

from my selkie skin,
that whales swam beneath the house,
always calling me home.

This place is no Atlantis,
sand dulled by the creak
of stubborn time.

My memory of you
falls like a gold coin
to the ocean floor.

In my dreams of that day,
the tide creaks to a halt,
and I still can't believe it didn't.

The sea didn't turn brown,
didn't bubble, didn't burn.
Whales weren't beached.

The tide kept on folding
its pages while I capsized
over and over,

and the seagulls kept
drifting above the stubbornly
glittering sea.