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Things turned upside down *by* Virginia Jealous

I

A woman dressed as a tree
tap dances at the fish market.
Not as odd as it might seem
in this town on the edge
of a continent, edge of an ocean
where breezy twigs of leafy sea dragons
wave in the water.

Fish stare wide-eyed from the slabs.
Her heels splash the wet floor,
echo off-shore shoals
where gannets drop plumb lines
and fish-flash mirrors the dancing sea,
the dancing tree-woman
Saturday shoppers weigh shining scales
buy lemons and think,
like the gannets, of lunch.

II

On the headland a very pregnant woman
rugged up against the cold
hugged up against her beanie-wearing lover
watched the whale, then reeled and baited,
threw a line and waited for smaller fry.

There was some strange sense
in that sodden breathing birthing air
of things turned upside down
as the humpback breached
and the woman fished
and the waters broke around them.

Virginia Jealous is a travel writer, mostly. She lives out a suitcase and on the road when not at home in Denmark, WA