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Girl in a Fish Bowl S. Michelle Murphy

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GIRL IN A FISH BOWL

Sometimes she would wake up to see visions caught on the low ceiling, a slide show swinging through the drapes, dead names swimming across the sea-foam walls and sleep was a fish bowl. Round water, fluorescent rock caves. The absolute transparency of air & earth. One morning she sat up full and knew the song of every last stone, could hum every ballad in any key, could taste the baby grand with every blink of her eye and was never hungry again. It wasn't the last time she stared at the ceiling, the slouch of the mattress prevented her from moving too far in any direction. & the shy laugh of her ghosts swung, promised something close to passion, while the chants swam above her head. When moving the bed frame, she discovered a box of harpsichord strings, a tuning hammer, sheet music from several musical comedies, an empty tin of licorice drops. A tape of dolphins singing.