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A Piece Of Lightning Hermine Meinhard

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Hermine Meinhard

A PIECE OF LIGHTNING

On an ocean voyage we once took, the captain became ill. Outside, tourists lay like pancakes, the stewards laughed. I am sorry, we have no cold compresses.

The fish held messages in their mouths. Parting their lips carefully, they said, "The reef harbors many living things."

When we got home, there were new messages under the bed. "The land of the living." "Stamp of time."

We could not sleep.

One night a fish flew in the window. He dropped rain from his mouth. But we love each other, we said.

The fish made promises. "A great wave will envelope you. You will fall into a deep hole."

Our island is a cottage and a backyard of concrete.

When the child comes, it will have the head of a fish. My husband will say it is a mistake. But I will lay it in its cradle and sing to it.