

glowing forward

one foot before the other,
then again and one more
let the balance shift into a forward-tip, and catch
heel to toe, or is it toe to heel?
i want to run away, instead i hear my mother
frozen in time she is telling me that
my stride is her mother's
we coincide, as i walk the stage
receiving some academic award, years after she was gone

i carry her in my steps
my mom can't remind me any more of who i remind her of
and so i choose to remember myself
and i step uneasily forward
my hair brightened, my nails sparkled
a velvet dress reminding me of long ago theatres and the ears of wild
rabbits
and i am shaking, trembling, willing myself
still here
all the cards spread and me hoping not to draw any stage

may the word of the day be safe
may my mom's voice echo in mine
as, with clarity in my mind, she says
i can breathe myself an ocean, slow and deep
let the light shine into and through,
i am illuminated, all my selkie skin shed
openly undone, looking otherly than i am
glowing, iridescent, irradiated
lifted up in starlight in this absence of arms
and it is sharp and tender
cast in patterns of light
a lifeline of mothers asunder and shining
all remembering each other
calling up our everyday bravery

curiosity tipping toward courage
i pull myself out of the ice cold water shock of waking
and follow the rabbit forward
into falling, through my velvet and roots
and wonder what possibilities i will tip-toe forward into

warmed gel, warm blanket, an encouragement of arms in the afters
remembering myself, glowing forward
may i continue to walk with her stride in my own steps