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The Mermaids Keep Their Own Counsel

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A sonnet by Geoffrey Reiter

The sailors stalk the deck about the bow
And gaze with prurience upon the froth
Of frenzied ocean flinched by the wrath
Of testy tides on wandering rocks. Below
The bleak blue breakers, green glints sparkle through
The wending waves—the sheen of scales beneath
The water: women swimming in a swath
Of current, caught in sunset’s solar flow.

The mermaids do not sing for men; they slide
Through reefs and grottoes, still and hidden, hushed,
The silent sirens of the sacred sea.
They live their lives aloof from men, who’ve pried
In pride and dusty lust: they’ll not be crushed
But thrive through deeps divine, together free.