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Wood, Lucy. Diving Belles and other stories

Whimsical, magical, and full of wonder, Wood's stories beguile the reader into a version of England's foggy Cornwall coast in which the unexpected not only can happen but usually does. Characters in these stories live side by side with creatures out of mythology, sometimes becoming those creatures themselves. In the title story, staying husbands have become mermen and their wives must brave the depths to bring them home. In *Countless Stones*, a young woman helps a former lover as he house-hunts while slowing and inexorably turning to stone. In another stand-out story, *Of Mothers and Little People*, a daughter discovers that her mother is a fully-formed human being in her own right, with secret joys that daughters seldom imagine in their parents' in this case, a faery lover.

These are truly grown-up fairy tales, with touches of magical realism and outright enchantment never obscuring the very real stories and characters underneath. There are few easy answers or pat morals in these fairy stories.

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