Girl Who Sculpts a Lion

Allison Wilkins

As child, she played with dragons
store their fire, replaced it

with florescent tin & a single
apple tree for each charred ember.
She liked to drag her fingernails through

the heat & burn telegraph lines onto her skin.
When she was a teenager, she coveted
the strut of the scorpion, picked it up

by the tail to extract the poison.
She planted yellow flowers & learned
to read cardiac rhythms.

Now, adult,
she sculpts a lion
from Aegean sand, like a chemist

trying to calculate the formula for desire.
Each day she feeds her lion
octopus & chickpeas, waiting for

him to break out in hives.
But he only grows stronger, harder,
more measured in his movements.

So she braids her hair, plunges into the sea,
discovers a child in an oyster shell.
She knows that soon the North Wind

will start to blow away all the sand
& what will remain is marble.