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Sea's fool

by A. E. Stallings

I dreamed there was a flower called "Sea's fool"
That bloomed wild, dawdling on the shore, unkempt,
Wind-tousled. Glamored by the name, I dreamt
The pink tinge of a second-water jewel.
With trefoil leaves, in clover-globes, it grew
Along some rocky fringe of coast I knew,
In pockets of sand along a tidal pool.
Dreaming, I didn't wonder what it meant,
But waking, there was no such thing: "Sea's fool"
Was something I had dreamed up. To invent
A thing only to lose it—I could see
The plant clear as its name, could almost feel
The heart-shaped leaves' rough cat-tongue texture, real
As the fool's grief dreaming of the seizable sea.

A. E. Stallings has lived in Athens since 1999. Her new translation of Hesiod's *Works and Days* is just out from Penguin Classics.

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