

Insignificant

By

Kaitlyn Bancroft

WHY I LIKE IT: Poetry Editor HEZEKIAH writes... *Kaitlyn Bancroft's 'Insignificant' is strikingly forged, as she nautically explores what she's not, with an unwavering metaphoric majesty. From "shining yachts" with "bird-wing sails" to "salt-cruled...lumbering, dutiful freighters" to, wait for it, "the rebel-hearted valiance / Of a splintered rowboat struggling towards shore" Ahhh, again, "the rebel-hearted valiance / Of a splintered rowboat struggling towards shore" Here is where she and I disagree, the final lines, her self-assessing confession: "I...Broken against indifferent rocks / A message in a bottle no one reads."*

Insignificant

I am not the proud glory of a fine shining yacht
Nor the bright, bird-wing sails of those boats
Who cut through water as easily as laughter
I am not the salt-cruled dignity
Of a lumbering, dutiful freight
Or even the rebel-hearted valiance
Of a splintered rowboat struggling towards shore
I am merely this:
Tossed about on voices and faces and names
Missed only by lightning, called only by thunder
Broken against indifferent rocks
A message in a bottle no one reads.

THE POET SPEAKS: *I can't remember a time when I didn't have huge, intense emotions. It's taken years of unnecessary crashing and burning, as well as some professional help, to successfully recognize and manage my irrational thought processes. Thankfully, I've found that conquering my emotions often comes down to defining them — their specific dimensions and contours — and wrangling that exactness onto a page. For me, then, writing poetry is the act of defying myself; it's the way I insist on creating meaning out of the internal chaos that too often overwhelms me.*

I began playing with the imagery and phrases in this poem during a meeting where I felt very, very small and unimportant. It seemed like everyone else in the room had something I didn't: fearless ideas, exciting experiences, blindingly bright charm. I knew my thoughts were trending towards the irrational, so I opened a notebook and started writing.

This poem also grew out of my imposter syndrome. I've spent much of my life juggling a number of writing hats — reporter, journal-keeper, (aspiring) author — but “poet” is still a fairly new one to me. Despite successfully landing my poetry at multiple magazines over the last year, I still feel like a child playacting when I tell someone that I write poetry. Mary Oliver is a poet, Edgar Allan Poe is a poet. I'm a 20-something with a beat-up notebook and a few scraps of sentences floating around my head. This particular piece, then, was an attempt to acknowledge and let go of all the ways I feel like a pretender when I'm tapping into this thing inside me called poetry.

AUTHOR BIO: Kaitlyn Bancroft is a reporter with KSL.com in Salt Lake City, Utah. Previously, she's written for The Salt Lake Tribune, The Spectrum & Daily News (part of the USA TODAY NETWORK), The Denver Post, Deseret News, and The Davis Clipper. Her poetry has been featured on Every Writer, in *Illumen Magazine* and in Wingless Dreamer's 2021 Halloween anthology *Whispers of Pumpkin*. She also has poetry forthcoming in *Hole In The Head Review*, in *Tiny Seed Literary Journal* and in the *Ocotillo Review*. Follow her work on Twitter @katbancroft or on Instagram @katbancroftreports.