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St. Lawrence River

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St. Lawrence River

Abstract

In lieu of an abstract, below is the essay's first paragraph.

"The boat thrust forward under the power of his arms as he pulled back the oars. Smoother, harder, faster as he went. He had no intention of stopping. He was in his own head now. Harder, faster, the oars back and forth, harder, faster. In his own head not seeing, not hearing. The ripples and the waves that he created were crying out to him, "Stop!" The river helplessly cried out for his attention but the river's concerns were not his. Not now."

Cover Page Footnote

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ST. LAWRENCE RIVER

creative prose by
LAURA DONK

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Harder. Faster.

The ripples screamed. They splashed over the sides and into the boat. They sashed against the sides of other boats and the bank begging for help. The river ran faster, desperately trying to get away from the pounding of the oar, yet all the time knowing that it only made it easier for him, better for him, to move forward. Harder, faster. Rubbing, scraping.

If only the river could get him out of the boat, she could overpower him, she was stronger. They both knew that, but he had her pinned. Pinned so she could do nothing: so vulnerable, unable to slip away. Unable to help herself. Unable to be helped.

Harder. Faster.

Help. She needed help. And then the rain, the rain that had overflowed her banks with its warmth, rain that scratched her back on rough days had come. The rain fell maliciously into the boat, filling it to the brim, filling the river with strength she couldn't conjure on her own.

Softer. Slower.

The boat was full. Right to the brim. Full and sinking.

Abandon ship.

He jumped into the river. Exposed himself to the power he had felt so proud of conquering only minutes before. Boatless he swam for shore, but now unafraid, the wind took its place against him. Now the waves in the river were of strength and fury, not of pain.

Higher. Higher.

Over his head.

Flailing he made toward shore, but he had no boat and no oars now. And the river was stronger than him.

They both knew that.

Harder, faster.

So much water. Water everywhere, unstoppable, thrashing through the evening, all night until dawn when the thunder stopped. As the sun rose, the wind died down, the rain left the river alone to lick her wounds, and the swollen body calmed. Her surface was glassy.

Done, finished.

He was found floating, face down. That was his last boat ride, though it had unfortunately not been his first. But he was gone now, overpowered and the river gave him up, unchanging as they pulled him out.

No boat. No oars. Driftwood. They had once been weapons against her, but had endured the same fate as he they belonged to.

No more pounding, harder or faster. Ever again.

And the river flowed on, calm on the surface but swirling underneath. Wary of those seeking adventure on her surface. Never trusting, but never cruel. Never again. The boaters knew her strength, but respected it. They were not afraid because they were hers. And they rowed slowly, gently, when that was what she needed.

And the river flowed on.



WATER TOWER

BORIS SAPOZHNIKOV