Arts & Humanities

Poem: “Becalmed”

By David Yezzi '95SOA

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Rachel Wetzsteon

for Rachel Wetzsteon

is anything but calm. Relict of wind, you are left to the waves’ whims. An indolent rocking works slack canvas free. For weeks you had foreseen a mangrove harbor, though fearing the worst — that storms would rob you of the dreamed chance to breathe again the pine-dank hills of home. You had it precisely plotted, despite the risk. Now the wind is out, and all the tools of reckoning fall senseless. The teacups of the anemometer dip this way and that and come up dry. At night in your dark bunk,

you hunker down and pray that tomorrow brings the slightest stirring, a ripple on the feckless swells. A great force can whip a hurricane to land. A greater one sits like an anvil on the sea’s bruised surface until the zephyr fails. She exhales then goes calm.

— David Yezzi ’95SOA is the author of the poetry collection *Azores*, named one of the best books of 2008 by *Slate*.

Rachel Wetzsteon ’99GSAS, a poet, died in 2009.



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