

“Mourning or Mooring”

a poem inspired by Mimi Little's Painting, *7th District Work Boats*

by Laura Webb

Casualties don't always shriek;
sometimes they creak or take on water.
Wounds aren't guaranteed to gape;
seeping happens all the time.

Our elemental hurts won't warn us with flashing lights;
instead, they roll in fuzzy, soft and glowing
a hanging fog that never burns
or the tipsy friend that won't go home.

Yet, when we discover Iris root in the water
and the unfailing truth of horizon
we conscript
to get drunk on salt and air

recall the rebellious art of floating
or better yet, an insurrection of wading
climb inside two vessels who would hold hands
if only someone had left behind oars.