

“Boatbuilding” by [John Sibley Williams](#)

And yes, we all learn to be boats by
navigating our mother’s sleeping
chests. Calm sea of linen on lung.
Two tiny oars growing less useless
every stroke. And yes, our fathers
stand taller than a hundred masts yet
tremble when handed the frailest of
bodies. Their heavy silence is a net
dragging empty behind us. And yes,
we’ll end up casting it all back to the
sea someday. Someday it will be our
turn to grieve, to distance. But how
close skin feels, briefly, now, as
we’re learning its edges.