

MY FATHER, THE CAPTAIN

Offshore, ten Sunday yachts rocked
on bright ripples. But there was one,
tall-masted, farthest out, pointing to heaven
like an angel's benediction, or maybe
St. Elmo's gnomon marking the horizon
with certainty. And I thought of you, Dad.

Minutes later, the sky was sullen. Small boats
aimed their bows homeward, sails straining.
Wise, I thought, watching a quick squall build,
wondering why the admired craft
was not beating canvas for the harbor.

Then I saw the tiny catboats yawing
with inexperience. Like a shepherd,
the deep water sailor herded them, big wings
outstretched. My metaphoric angel true to form,
was last to dock before the storm broke.

I smiled at the heroship. All evening
my thoughts were yours. However distant you are
or how many jibs wave nearby, still
it's your sure shining I look to, your unwavering
course, and your wake I'll follow.

--Glenna Holloway