

Waiting for the Perfect Boat

Colleen Burnett

She has her ticket in hand, ready for the next adventure. As she sees the boat approach, she can feel a twinge of excitement, like an electric current running through the veins of her body. She had been anticipating this adventure for years and was ready for this moment. She begins to imagine many scenarios, always with a happy ending, always optimistic. Oh, the places she was yearning to visit: the Eiffel tower in Paris, Big Ben in London, the Great Pyramids in Egypt, and the list goes on and on. This boat ride would be the beginning of a great adventure, she continuously told herself. Other people had visited these places before her, and many were younger than her. She was always happy for others when they shared their pictures from their trips, but inside she felt alone and sad, wondering if it would ever be her turn. It was not her time; she would tell herself on each occasion that someone she knew would board a boat and she was left standing on the dock alone. But this time will be her turn, she told herself. She had made sure to have her ticket as well as all the extra preparation that most passengers never even dream of packing, as she had spent significantly more time planning her trip than most people. She had packed a lifejacket, an extra lifejacket in case the first one breaks, raingear, snow gear, scuba gear as well as many other items. She had prepared for every possible scenario and knew everything there was to know about a boat. She was ready.

The boat approaches and docks. Several passengers step on. Suddenly she feels that she is not in the right place. The familiar feeling in her lower abdomen and headache confirmed that her ticket was invalid for this trip. As much as she had spent months preparing for this moment, all the anticipation and excitement was gone in the flash of a second. "NO! Not again! This isn't fair!" she tells herself. Ignoring all her body cues telling her otherwise, she tries in desperation to fit in with the crowd but gets pushed away. She waves her ticket but is dismissed and she is told that her name is not on the passenger list.

The boat moves away, and she is not on board. She cries but nobody can hear her over the sound of the wind and the waves. Feeling alone, she slowly walks on the dock, trying to console herself. There will be another boat, another chance, she tells herself. But when? She wanted to get on the boat today. It was not fair!

Slowly she begins to pick herself back up, piece by piece. She tries to find justice in an unjust situation. Maybe this was not the right boat for her. Perhaps she had the date confused,

or that the timing just wasn't right after all. "Relax and it will happen" and "Things happen for a reason", people were always telling her. Maybe they were right. After all, it was a sailboat. Did she even know how to sail?

And so the search for the perfect boat for her adventure begins once again. She will have to find a way to calm her anticipation for her water adventure as the waiting period will be extended for an undetermined amount of time. With a travel ban now in place due to a pandemic, she will have to wait until she has another chance. She will do an even more extensive research on boats. Sailboats, cruise ships, motorboats, canoes, kayaks and even paddleboards. How quickly does she want to reach her destination? How much money is she willing to spend? Do reviews and opinions matter?

She has now spent months researching every detail, spreadsheets full of information and she feels as lost as ever. Most people do not do this much research and have this much knowledge about every aspect of a boat.

Should she just give up? Is everything always worth the wait?



Colleen Burnett is a Grade 1/2 teacher at Crestview Elementary School in Laval. She enjoys helping her students develop a love for reading and writing. For her, writing is a means of communicating an idea, a message, and a story. She enjoys writing to help capture moments in time as well as the feelings associated with these memories. When she is not at school, she also loves to teach her dog, Maya, new tricks.