

**MY  
DARLING  
WRECK**

Notes on emotions and affections in archaeology

You are a rotting asshole



KATARIINA VUORI

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**WRECK**



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in archaeology

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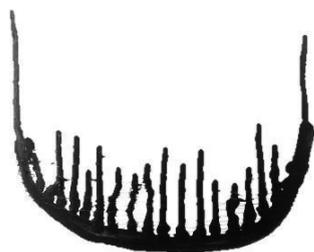
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Don't touch it!

That's what I'd like to say, really scream, and shovel sand back on you.

Cover you quickly like a child covers a particularly fine treasure. Small and pretty or big and ugly.

You gleam in the August sun, dark as a negative grid on the inside of a seashell. Rainbow flickers on the west side of your rib cage.

The smoky, licorice-like scent of tar and pitch rises from the bottom of the pothole - your den - and suddenly I get the urge to taste you.

You glow in the slanting sunlight, splashing and rippling like an oily miracle, an illusion.

I'd like to lick your surface, clean you from bow to stern, side to side.

Clean as a mother cat cleans her blind kittens. All that sand and sawdust from the gaps between your futtocks, the grooves in those planks, the clinker seams.

You would itch and hiss and when I had finished my cleaning, we would lie in the tar-scented August sunshine and we would think good things of each other.

**They are so very technical.**

They treat you like a commodity.

As a persona non grata, a running meter, a throwing cube, a stack of boards.

You are measured and described and classified.

They want to date you

(So do I: teetering candle light and pink champagne).

Simplify you to something assessable.

They don't understand that you have the spirit of the forest in you, that the old resin in your cells, still pulsing as the moon grows full, tiny pathways for the sugary viscose of life to travel.

They don't understand that creatures like you can miss the life they once lived.

In your shape and in your silence I hear the melancholy of the sea.

**You are a great enigma.**

You are a ton of question marks.

An excavator has chased you, underneath asphalt,  
sand,

gravel, a tightly packed layer of sawdust and centuries.

You wake up in the center of Oulu, sleep-deprived.

Like a coma patient.

All around you there's havoc; machinery pounding the ground, satellites pulsing masses of information, electricity stuttering and creeping inside tight wires, exhaust gas vapour, billions of humans inhaling plastic air, drinking plastic water, applying plastic on their skin and someone talking on the phone, an invisible wave travels in her ear and comes out of her mouth, describing you to a marine archaeologist in Helsinki.

"She's like a princess, perfect, fragrant, sculpted by God or something, maybe a Poseidon's arbor, a bastard at least."  
That's how you should be described, but you're not.

You are judged by your form and how old and how deep you are.

You're one of the oldest of your kind in northern Finland.

19.6.2023

*I WENT THROUGH MY PROCESS DIARY ENTRIES.  
ALL OF A SUDDEN I NOTICED, THAT MY EMOTIONS TOWARDS YOU  
FOLLOWED A FUNNY PATTERN.  
FIRST THERE WAS A SUDDEN BURST OF FEELINGS, MIXED  
FEELINGS.  
A CRUSH.*



LOVE BOAT EXPOSED – OVERLAPPED,  
CLINKERED FEELINGS  
(KATARIINA VUORI 2023)

**MY DARLING WRECK** is a lyrical voyage to emotions  
and affects in archaeology and in academia.  
It is a tale of an old, nameless wreck.  
A poetic survival story.  
A love letter to a rotting muse.

Katariina Vuori is a Finnish author of both fiction and non-fiction, a bibliotherapist and a creative writing teacher. She is a PhD candidate in archaeology in the University of Oulu. Her research focuses on creative approaches to maritime cultural heritage, emotions and inclusion.

