

ALMOST A ROWER

I came to the docks 6 years in past
Having worked out on an erg both hard and fast.
I was sure I'd learn to row a single in a lesson or two
I just needed a coach to show me what to do.

So I went down to docks at the club and asked all around
Who's the best one to learn from that each of them found
To a one, they each answered that their number one rank
Was none other than Donald Webber-Plank.

So I tracked him down and told him I needed a lesson or two
By which time I thought I'd learn everything to do
After all of the time that I had spent on an erg
I'd quickly be rowing the waters of the 'Burgh.

When I said what I did to that guy named Don
I got that look -- you have all seen that one.
Of course, I was wrong about the sport of rowing
And in the wink of an eye to all I'd be showing
It was not like on an erg where I would just sit,
The truth of the matter is I didn't know shit.

Well, Don got a wide scull and he helped me to get onto the seat
Then he let go of the scull and my heart skipped a beat
When I sat on an erg, balance was never a thought
But once on the water, the first lesson was taught.

As I sat there, trying to stay upright
The scull kept wobbling and I got good and uptight
Donald stood on the dock, just looking at me,
I was hardly moving at all -- I really wanted to pee.

Well, let me fast forward to my next level met
Up and down the channel, falling in; getting wet.
That is, every time when I was stroking just so
I would err just a little and into the water I'd go.

I rarely succeeded in staying on top
And I got a routine for doing that flop
Glasses in my left hand and my hat in my right
I fell into the water and held my breath tight.

I would stroke back and forth in the channel each day
I was always careful to stay out of the way.
And it seemed like every time that I went into the drink
You guys would come by and wave and my spirits would sink.

Finally, I felt that I could handle a single
So I went out onto the river, my body a tingle.
I was stroking just right and starting to feel
That maybe I could row a single for real

And then I saw it -- a barge coming upriver
I saw its wake and I started to shiver
But I was determined -- I would row over that wake
But that was not the path my fortune would take
Over and over, my balance I'd lose
And I kept coming back, defeat I'd not choose.

Many offered tips to help me row better
But I kept failing in, getting wetter and wetter.
It got to the point that to be my fate's master
When I'd see a wake coming and the impending disaster
I said to myself I won't let that wake win
So as soon as I saw it, I jumped the hell in.

Well, I finally grew tired of climbing back into the scull
And swallowing the river water that tasted so foul.
So I looked for an option and then I saw, out on a rack
An old yellow, heavy, well - used kayak.

I shoved off the dock and paddled a while
I passed over a wake with a bright, happy smile.
So I got out onto the river, and found my own high
But much more important, now I stay dry.

Respectfully and happily presented at the Masters Men Dinner
by C. Leon Sherman
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