

Nature Shows No Mercy (Inspired by J.M.W. Turner's painting *Slave Ship*)

First glance reveals intoxicating waves of color swishing on the canvas,
Warm yellows and bright oranges melt into the rolling waves of gray on the horizon,
Leading the wooden ship away to its destination, the heart of a swirling tsunami.
Clutter and debris leave a trail following behind their wooden mother,
But on closer inspection,
It seems to be leaving things behind.
Not things but alas people.
Slaves.
Barely alive or almost dead,
They are clinging to their last bit of life,
For their freedom has long been stripped away,
Along with their clothing and dignity.
The waves knock around the bodies
As animals of the sky and sea feast on their remains.
Limbs break through the carnage,
Stretching towards the glowing sun,
Reaching for some kind of reparation for this agony.
Their arms are extended in despair,
Calling out not for the return of the ship,
But for redemption from their merciful God.
Reaching for rescue,
Reaching for an end to this agony,
Reaching for eternal freedom,
As the water consumes them in one last wave
For Nature shows no mercy.

Written by Caroline Mitchell