

Shipwreck

A Villanelle

by [Cristina Nehring](#) (August 2025)



The Wave (Ivan Aivazovsky, 1889)

To Angelo Fuller Ossoli

My angel, Angelino, you are loved through and through
At one year old you were your mother's joy;
But when it came time to depart, you went down with the crew.

On the way from Italy to New England, you
Were on a freighter full of fans, fifty yards from shore;
My angel, Angelino, you were loved through and through.

Homeless in Italy, homeless in the States

You were at home in the hug of your mother,
But when it came time to depart, you went down with the crew.

A hero in the making, the son of Margaret Fuller,
Brave as she was and brilliant, and every day she said
My angel, Angelino you are loved through and through

She gave you to a shipmate with whom to swim to land,
But a current tore you under and you didn't want to live,
When it came time to depart, you went down with the crew.

Your body was the only one swept onto the shore
Your mother's man, manuscript, and corpse were gone
Our Angel, Angelino you were loved through and through
But when it came time to depart, you went down with the crew.

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Cristina Nehring's most recent book is *The Child Who Never Spoke: 23 1/2 Lessons in Fragility*. She is also the author of *A Vindication of Love* which made the front page of the *New York Times Book Review* as well as two books in French. She writes for *Atlantic*, *Harper's*, the *New York Times* and the *Wall Street Journal*. She lives in Paris with her daughter. See more at www.cristinanehring.net.

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