

The Oak Leaf Trail

By Samantha Longshore

The Oak Leaf Trail meanders along a bluff above Lake Michigan. I walk it in a hoodie, a tank top, or in gloves and a scarf, a big puffy coat with hood up, buttoned tight. The crash of the waves stops me each time. Years of walks in this same place and I'm still struck, still stuck in place by the calm that washes over me with that sound. I look out at the water and feel my inherent smallness, much like others feel when they look at the stars. That smallness doesn't worry me, doesn't bother me. It's a soothing balm knowing that I stand by something so Great. No matter what life brings, that trouble is also small in comparison to this blue and gray enveloping me across the horizon. It's my own private ocean. It's my fresh coast. No matter what comes and goes, this will always be here.