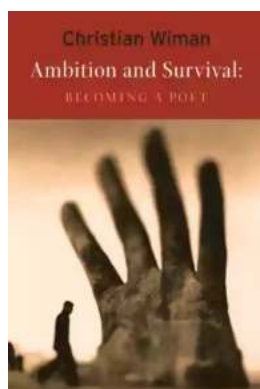


Ambition and Survival: Becoming a Poet



Becoming a poet is an adventurous journey



Ambition and Survival: Becoming a Poet

by Christian Wiman (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

Language	: English
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Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 274 pages



Are you intrigued by the magical world of words and longing to express your deepest thoughts and emotions through poetry? Many aspiring writers dream of becoming poets, but only a few are determined enough to embark on this captivating journey.

In this article, we explore the intersection of ambition and survival when pursuing a career in poetry. We delve into the challenges faced by poets, the necessary skills to thrive, and the rewards that await those who dare to make their mark in this timeless art form.

The Path to Becoming a Poet

Becoming a poet entails more than just writing rhymes or adhering to specific poetic structures. It is a deeply personal and introspective journey that requires dedication, perseverance, and a profound connection to the written word.

While there are no set rules or qualifications to be labeled as a poet, honing the craft requires constant practice and refinement. Reading, studying renowned poets, and attending poetry workshops can all contribute to one's growth as a wordsmith.

Moreover, developing a unique voice and perspective is crucial in distinguishing oneself from the vast sea of poets. Find inspiration from your surroundings, emotions, and personal experiences, as they are the wellspring of poetic creation.

The Power of Ambition

Ambition is the fuel that propels poets forward, allowing them to persevere through the inevitable roadblocks along their creative journey. It serves as a

guiding force, turning dreams into reality and transforming words into powerful expressions of the human experience.

Having ambition as a poet means setting audacious goals, constantly pushing the boundaries of creativity, and refusing to settle for mediocrity. It is the relentless pursuit of self-improvement, as every new poem presents an opportunity to evolve as an artist.

Moreover, ambition drives poets to seek recognition and share their work with the world. Whether through publishing books, performing on stage, or participating in poetry contests, poets strive to leave a lasting impact on society, touching the hearts and minds of readers everywhere.

The Challenges

While the poetic journey is undeniably rewarding, it is not without its share of challenges. Aspiring poets often face self-doubt, writer's block, and the fear of critique. In a world saturated by the written word, standing out can be daunting.

Financial stability is another hurdle that poets must navigate. Poetry is not typically known for its lucrative opportunities, and many poets must find alternative means to support themselves while dedicating their time to their craft.

Additionally, finding an audience for poetry can sometimes be challenging. However, the rise of social media and online platforms has considerably expanded the reach of poets, allowing them to connect with like-minded individuals and share their work with diverse audiences.

The Art of Survival

To overcome the challenges and preserve their passion, poets must develop a strong mindset and adopt effective survival strategies. Here are a few key

elements:

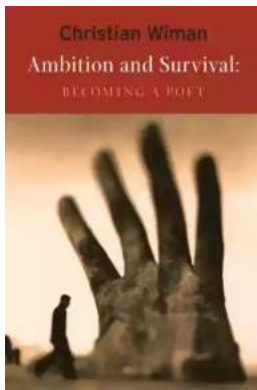
- **Resilience:** Embrace failure as a stepping stone to success, learn from setbacks, and never lose sight of your passion for poetry.
- **Community:** Surround yourself with fellow poets and literary enthusiasts who can provide support, feedback, and inspiration.
- **Adaptability:** Embrace new technologies and explore innovative ways to share your poetry, leveraging the digital landscape to your advantage.
- **Self-belief:** Stay true to your unique style and voice, believing in the power of your words to resonate with others.

The Rewards

The rewards of becoming a poet are as vast and diverse as the art form itself. Through poetry, you have the ability to touch hearts, evoke emotions, and challenge the status quo. Your words have the power to inspire change, offer solace, and ignite a sense of belonging in others.

Furthermore, the poetic journey allows for immense personal growth, deepening your understanding of yourself and the world around you. It is an art form that defies boundaries, transcending time and cultural differences, leaving a lasting legacy for generations to come.

, becoming a poet is a courageous endeavor that combines ambition, survival, and unwavering passion for the written word. It is a journey marked by challenges, yet the rewards are immeasurable. So, if you yearn to express yourself through poetry, embrace the adventure and let your words shape the world.



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"That calling, at once religious, ethical, and aesthetic, is one that only a genuine poet can hear—and very few poets can explain it as compellingly as Mr. Wiman does. That gift is what makes *Ambition and Survival*, not just one of the best books of poetry criticism in a generation, but a spiritual memoir of the first order."
—New York Sun

"This weighty first prose collection should inspire wide attention, partly because of Wiman's current job, partly because of his astute insights and partly because he mixes poetry criticism with sometimes shocking memoir ... The collection's greatest strength comes in general ruminations on the writing, reading and judging poetry." —Publishers Weekly

"[Wiman is] a terrific personal essayist, as this new collection illustrates, with the command and instincts of the popular memoirist ... This is a brave and bracing book." —Booklist

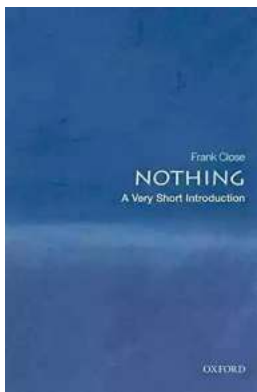
"Blazing high style" is how *The New York Times* describes the prose of Christian Wiman, the young editor transforming *Poetry*, the country's oldest literary

magazine.

Ambition and Survival is a collection of stirring personal essays and critical prose on a wide range of subjects: reading Milton in Guatemala, recalling violent episodes of his youth, and traveling in Africa with his eccentric father, as well as a series of penetrating essays on writers as diverse as Thomas Hardy and Janet Lewis. The book concludes with a portrait of Wiman's diagnosis of a rare form of incurable and lethal cancer, and how mortality reignited his religious passions.

When I was twenty years old I set out to be a poet. That sounds like I was a sort of frigate raising anchor, and in a way I guess I was, though susceptible to the lightest of winds. . . . When I read Samuel Johnson's comment that any young man could compensate for his poor education by reading five hours a day for five years, that's exactly what I tried to do, practically setting a timer every afternoon to let me know when the little egg of my brain was boiled. It's a small miracle that I didn't take to wearing a cape.

Christian Wiman is the editor of Poetry magazine. His poems and essays appear regularly in The New Yorker, The Atlantic Monthly, Harper's, and The New York Times Book Review.



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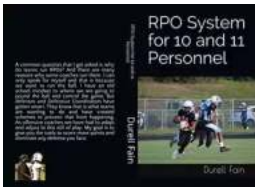
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