

Lighthouse

By Ashley Victor

I lost my first patient long before I donned my white coat
And she taught me the ease with which you can get lost within another
Finding yourself adrift in a sea of suffering that isn't yours to navigate
Pulled under by riptides of their creation

The well intentioned crew long abandoned
Left just the two of us in crushing vastness
Her searching for the message in a bottle
And me desperately trying to keep us afloat

What kind of captain would I make
if I didn't go down with this ship?

It's a salty kind of fraudulence that fills my lungs at the thought
That if I couldn't save the first patient given to me
Do I possess the qualities needed to weather more storms?
Do I deserve to try again?

And it wasn't until my feet were back on solid ground
Staring at the wreckage I had no hope to prevent
That I was struck
By the stability of the lighthouse

Safely guiding countless ships home from the darkest of places
Taking the waves of each sorrowful sea
but never allowing herself to be consumed
For then

All would be lost.