

A Sailor's Son – A Measure of a Man

Water washes over me; it's the only
thing that keeps me from drowning.
Suffocating screams stay in my head,
silent for everyone but me.
Safeguarded by apron strings in a
palatial paradise that pains my skin.

Whirling around in a kitchen of care;
creating, loved, expression always there.

SLAM *click* *Thump*

His Steps quicken and a
tongue lashes out labels:
"queer," "fruit," and
eyes roll like fists.

Enough jabs to leave me bleeding,
a matriarch sewing mends where she can.
A safe space created from cast-offs
of chaos and control in
patriarchal purgatory.

An empathetic embrace,
whirling through woes with a
woman full of love.
Somehow surviving misogynistic matters
while wearing a fashionable smile.

Always an ally, letting light-in-the-
loafers-me dance freely.
Picking pansies with mom is dandy;
safer spaces are people, humanity.

Saltwater streams down my cheeks,
born next to the sea.
Healed, cleansed and free,
drawing strength from perceived inadequacy.

Poem by Stephen Colwell