HEALING ARTS

Materia Medica

The Mariner

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The infant struggles for breath
in the isolette,
a solitary mariner
caught in a tempest.

Two nights ago
they cut him out from a mother
who knows nothing of his existence,
still submerged in her own boggy lungs.

I steady myself astride his vessel,
gloved and masked,
my stethoscope a tenuous buoy
as he floats atop a raft of pressors -
tubes and pumps
scattered about him,
displays glowing like beacons
to a ship lost at sea.

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