

NARRATIVE ESSAY

Nothing More

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When there are no further treatments to offer
 Nothing beyond the third or fourth line
 The algorithms have run dry
 No tablets or capsules, nothing left to run through veins
 Empty bottles bear witness to all that was tried

Once the stethoscope cannot declare further truths
 And vitals become values without worth
 Examinations yield no solutions
 There are frayed edges in the weave of our collective knowledge
 We may play God but there are limits

When the body has been jabbed, weighed, gauged and leveled
 The scrutiny turns inward
 Guilt lies as a weighty cloak when no answers are found
 Still, your children's faces turn toward me, as flowers to the sun

When I can do nothing else
 That is precisely what I do, caring in the absence of treatment
 There is mercy and compassion in stillness, in calm
 Beauty can blossom in the pause of the battle
 There are no words so I make room for silence
 A touch, a hand Human reverence for a fellow man

Though the slip of power is a heavy burden
 Acceptance opens many doors
 Peace is granted to us both as we release our grips
 Yours on life, mine on guilt
 And through last breaths and wishes
 Humbly,
 I will remain still to honor your vanishing whisper