Because I

(The importance of accountability, self-improvement and amazing friends)

In rooms filled with the possessions earned, the same place where friends would gather to share laughs and troubles. One lies, aching in their trauma, beginning to shatter. Shadows closed in from every direction—the residue of unwanted touch, the loneliness of abandonment, and the dread of the unknown when the past offered no comfort, and the future held no hope.

The walls crashed in, and there was nothing left: safety, security, possessions, a cat, gone. Alone, carrying the weight of all they've lost, heading to an isolating place. Defeat? For now. A return to the town, to a small room, a house of small rooms filled with people, also defeated. A neighbour, a love, a manipulation, a betrayal. Defeated. A loss, a loss, a loss AGAIN, a loss harder.

Defeat? No... Hope returned. Why? I'll tell you why... because I pushed, I fell, I trusted, I loved, I found, I tried, I apologised. During all I endured, I pushed for the Waves. I looked within and began to find myself. A string of support from the first counsellor to truly listen and understand me wraps around my heart even more in the event of her sudden passing. A mentor held me up to make the right choices. A hub of people who only supported me, pushed me further, and gave me a greater purpose within, to help others hurt like me. Friends rallied together from different places to bring new experiences and laughs. A hand to hold during troubles and a shoulder to cry on when old friends are lost. A mother, who did the best she could with the cards she was dealt, gave an apology for the damage she could have prevented and took accountability with a promise to be better, with actions to support. Two new qualifications, a small stack of achievements, a hope for the future with my wonderful friends and my cat right back home.