



Beached Hope

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*Amber Moore*

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**Introduction**

This project was approached as an effort to engage in an act of poetic witnessing (Volger, 2003) to, in some small way, honor those who suffer ongoing trauma due to forced migration. As such, this piece was written with an intention to take up Laura's (2013) suggestion that witnessing can be understood as "an act of love" (p. 219). With this intentionality in mind, this poem is particularly dedicated to children and young people who are migrants traveling by water to new shores.

References

- Laura, C. (2013). A love based approach to qualitative research. *Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies*, 13(4), 289-294.
- Vogler, T. A. (2003). Poetic witness: Writing the real. In A. Douglass & T. A. Vogler (Eds.), *Witness & memory: The discourse of trauma*. New York: Taylor & Francis Books Inc.

When we are hurt, our needs mature,  
develop attitudes, and talk back with sharp tongues  
thick with medicine and words unsaid. Our teeth  
almost vibrate, caging in *impatient* huffs.

We are the smart-ass sick, tired and worn out from  
our wounds, waiting to get better. Our jawlines  
are so sore from ranking our pain on a stunted scale  
of 1-10.

We float aimlessly on serum seas and wave to fisherman  
who can't see our yellowed eyes. They hollar a hello back and  
throw the fish back in- it's just a sport to them.

Wash me up. Beach me on a shore where my  
aches might find an anchoring amid small



shells full of squirming, creatures pouring out  
to greet the day. Invite them to my  
reckoning.

I'll use a red bucket  
and make a go at a castle; it  
will have a deep moat to catch the stinging salt.  
I'll have a refuge and it will be worth the effort.  
Bring me some ice chips so I can hydrate myself and get  
started on construction - buzz the nurse.  
The sun is setting and the orange sky is burning  
down into the horizon, so I don't have much time left  
for this redemptive design,  
a home near the dunes to tip  
that scale.

