

### ***Plastic Planet***

In 1950, the pliable polymer  
emerged. A solution to preserve ivory,  
intended for the market,  
essential from the start.

Soon, production unfolded before our eyes  
but waste folded within sea waves.  
With haste, we praised the popular polymer  
to savor the taste  
of progress  
of impact  
no economic setback.  
The taste of a plastic planet.

As garbage trucks paraded the streets,  
We dreamt soundly in our sleep,  
knowing that tomorrow,  
the waste we heaped  
would disappear, disintegrate, evaporate.  
Whatever it was, wherever it went,  
our responsibilities with it were sent.

But a world away, waste will not simply  
go away. On streets, by homes, through rivers, to the  
beach, plastic suffocates each.  
Green bottles glitter beneath  
beating sunlight, iridescent in our eyes  
our currency, our prize.  
But by Kenya's sight, they  
rise like the tide  
invade like ivy  
disperse like dengue  
unwelcome, unright.  
Every family, the children, the elderly  
greet a destiny determined by piles of plastic  
the breeding grounds of mess and disease  
Each meet a fate diminished as they ate  
more plastic than they pleased.

Year by year, the injustice becomes clear.  
Where waste flows, civilization is caught in the throes  
of a climate challenge larger than their poverty.  
While our economy booms exponentially,  
there, plastic pollution looms incessantly.

But this twisted reality formed from the divide  
of Global North from Global South  
of Earth into a dichotomy  
Surely there is something we can do, you and me  
for recovery  
for unity

For the sake of humanity.

Take a look, where you are  
The small city of Stanford  
becomes large in the lab, every  
illuminated idea  
an attempt at finding  
a panacea.

Take another look, in your hand, at the plan.  
Find syringe, needle, pipette  
born from plastic, wrap after wrap.  
Find your actions ill-aligned  
with what you stand for,  
for in our society, how easy it is to become blind  
when we cannot handle the truth with candor.

Perhaps this sculpture can break our trance.  
Given a chance to change our ways,  
it is time we take a second glance.

*In our economy, we are consumers.*

*On our Earth, let us be stewards.*

As human beings, to our loved ones  
we show gratitude, we expect greetings.  
How different from our loved ones is our Earth,  
providing sustenance and beauty, keeping us breathing?  
We have a responsibility outside of ourselves, yet  
intertwined in our lives  
to keep Earth's loving heart beating.