By Urvashi Bahuguna

*When they open our bodies, they will find the whales.*
Kallamozhi, Tamil Nadu

We are surprised when they open and find: a length of plastic like a river swimming within us. We did not see ourselves this way.

Hearing them speak, it appears we are to blame. We are trying to remember what we ate for dinner. Who lived within us and took us to shore? We have wives waiting at home. We know better than to wait. They let us sit on our sides like that one ship who lost its way.

We are turning into the boulders, but no water comes to circle us in mercy. We are not sure they sewed us back up. Are we imagining this: small feet climb within us to marvel at complete darkness. As they exit, a guttural sound, close to breathing. A woman is wiping our eyes with a cool washcloth. In the distance, a man opening and closing a white light many times.