

Long After The Ban

Perhaps  
if they were  
cleaned  
they  
would appeal  
to a collector,  
these vessels,  
slim  
as Cycladic  
dolls,  
tar-spangled,  
vaguely familiar,  
some a little  
more pneumatic,  
all precious  
because we  
have no  
plastic.

A spring tide,  
pigged on wrack, has strewed  
its picnic,  
hard-sucked  
orange bleach flasks,  
peppermint  
cream-cleaners, abraded  
lemon grime-  
removers, red bitten  
teats of sports drinks,  
suntan lotions,  
weather beaten  
toilet ducks  
along the beach.

We'd need  
the old  
capacious  
baskets  
folk called creels,  
sturdy and curved  
as clamshells  
to gather  
in the spill.  
But we have only  
swimming bags  
we've woven from  
flag iris leaves.  
And then we see  
the whale.