

*Parallel Waters*

We plunge into their touch,  
They have all been here before,  
They've uprooted islands  
From flat sand  
They've heaved through  
The salt, like giants  
Dragging one foot  
After another,  
The sea foam  
Cackled with them,  
And the seaweed brushed  
Up to welcome,  
They have all been here before,  
You can tell from the dust clouds of sand  
that once outlined footprints  
  
You enter dragging one foot  
After another  
They've been here before you,  
And you are before many more,  
This is their history,  
This is their art  
And you are but another wave  
In the masterful cycle

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we plunge into their touch,  
they have all been here before  
they've buried islands  
in festive garbage  
they've heaved through  
the sculpted heaps, like giants  
dragging one foot  
after another,  
the tin cans  
cackled with them  
and the plastic bags brushed  
up to welcome;  
they have all been here before,  
you can tell from the turtles  
washed up dead on the shore

You enter dragging one foot  
After another  
They've been here before you  
And you are before many more  
This is their history,  
This is their burden  
And you are but another wave  
Thrashed to retrieve the trash

## Reflection

When I found out the theme involved oceans, I was reminded of this poem 'The Waves' by Ned Parfan, which was part of his collection of poems called 'Murmur Asylum'. The message I got from his poem was that the ocean was some sort of a melting pot of legends, of histories from all cultures. Our Earth is 75% water, so it makes sense that when people from all over the world tell stories, the oceans overhear it. In a way, we bond with every single existing culture when we plunge into the ocean.

I used this as inspiration for my poem. I took the idea of the ocean being communal and incorporated the theme 'Our Oceans, Our Plastic' into it. My poem is called 'Parallel Waters' because it is divided into two ways that the ocean collects people's dynamic. The first side shows the beautiful way, in which there is a physical bond between human and ocean, and both appreciate each other's presence. The second side shows the more crude way, in which, instead of a bond with the person, the ocean becomes intertwined with the trash the person leaves behind. My poem aims to show that if we continue to soil the ocean, the ocean will only know us by the names of the junk food wrappers we throw. Before all this pollution, the ocean collected our cultures, and now it only collects our trash. Maybe presenting this issue in a poem can help stop this.