

Louise Moises, On the Edge
Ankle deep in the chill waters of the Pacific,
I watch the waves roll in and out,
fine lacy foam collecting about my toes,
hypnotized by the motion,
glint of sun on the rippling tide,
enveloped by the roar of crashing,
I inhale the scent of the briny sea—

When my eye is caught by an object
washing back and forth in the surf—
not a shell or a length of kelp,
not a crab scurrying
or a piece of driftwood—
A cap-less plastic water bottle,
half filled with sand.

My mind wanders to the frightening
news story: the Great Pacific Garbage Patch,
an ever expanding island
of discarded plastic drifting on our
once unspoiled ocean, a 79,000 ton-mass,
an area three times the size of France,
trapping unsuspecting sea creatures
and birds that land on the nasty net of debris.
I envision micro-particles of eroded plastic
swallowed by fish, their futures unknown.

Mesmerized by the ebb and flow of the bottle,
a small reminder of a large nightmare,
And in my car, a plastic water bottle
which will be tossed into a recycling bin—
will it too end up as part of that loathsome island,
or be eroded into invisible granules?
I bend to retrieve the rolling bottle.
One less piece of plastic in the surf.