

Relic

*I found this jawbone at the sea's edge:
There, crabs, dogfish, broken by the breakers or tossed
To flap for half an hour and turn to a crust
Continue the beginning.
The deeps are cold:
In that darkness camaraderie does not hold.*

*Nothing touches but, clutching, devours.
And the jaws,
Before they are satisfied or their stretched purpose
Slacken, go down jaws; go gnawn bare. Jaws
Eat and are finished and the jawbone comes to the beach: This is the
sea's achievement; with shells,
Vertebrae, claws, carapaces, skulls.*

*Time in the sea eats its tail, thrives, casts these
Indigestibles, the spars of purposes
That failed far from the surface.
None grow rich in the sea.
This curved jawbone did not laugh
But gripped, gripped and is now a cenotaph.*

— by Ted Hughes

ICSF is an international NGO working on issues that concern fishworkers the world over. It is in status with the Economic and Social Council of the UN and is on ILO's Special List of Non-Governmental International Organizations. It also has Liaison Status with FAO. Registered in Geneva, ICSF has offices in Chennai, India and Brussels, Belgium. As a global network of community organizers, teachers, technicians, researchers and scientists, ICSF's activities encompass monitoring and research, exchange and training, campaigns and action, as well as communications. SAMUDRA Report invites contributions and responses. Correspondence should be addressed to the Chennai office.

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