

John Hopper

Beached

Motionless on tidal flats at low water,
lies a big bottle-nosed fellow, maybe two metres long,
the dorsal fin lodged in wet sand.
One black eye gazes skyward,
watching for gulls and ravens.
The mouth gapes slightly,
displaying a rictus of well-worn teeth.
Grooves and scratches cover his body,
enigmatic graffiti.
Sand stains like paint splatters
where back and tail nestle in the rich slush.
Waders forage in his shadow.
Southeast and above, a gibbous moon bleaches the sky.