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For Aylan

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For Aylan

I awake from dreams of the body of a three-year-old
washed up on a beach in Turkey. Little Aylan,
you haunted my sleep. It was wishful thinking
when I saw your eyes blink open, your hand push back
the blanket someone draped over your prone body,
your little tennis shoes move ever so slightly.
No, said a man as he picked you up, cradled you
tenderly against his chest. It was a trick of your eyes.
He did not move. Aylan, you were dead, drowned
in the unfeeling ocean, drowned by waves of global neglect.

I awake as disturbed as the waters of the Middle East.
I want to call for a moment of silence in your memory,
a cosmic lament against forces of hate and fortified borders
keeping out the war weary, the disposed, making you disposable.
It is too late to lay a blessing between you and the sand,
but not too late to ask how many more? To ask when will we care?
When will we decide if we really believe the Golden Rule?