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Some children are stuck in a bottle,
not the kind you rub —
for three wishes.

The kind that tears families apart,
the poison filled bottle
in which broken ones
drown their trauma in
O Canada
we were once whole.

Other children are stuck in needles,
not the kind that build immunities,
the needles that
make mommies and daddies
beg, plead, and give anything for.

The needle that will follow those children

throughout their lives.

O Canada

we were once free.

Some children received love,

not the warm hugs or the sweet cheek kisses.

The invasive and unwanted love

passed down by the “well meaning” wearers of the cloth

or from survivors of residential school

The kind of love

that leaves deep ravine like scars on the spirit.

The scars that kill.

O Canada

we were once a fulfilled indigenous nation.

Other children become adults

struggling with their trauma.

Anxiety and panic ridden,

some of them follow

the addict path, others

are burned in the memories of their families

because the pain was too much

the rare few go through their life

struggling with Identity.

O Canada

we once knew who we were.