

The trick to building houses was making sure  
they didn't taste good. The ocean's culinary taste  
  
was growing more sophisticated and occasionally  
its appetite was unwieldy. It ate boats and children,  
  
the occasional shoe. Pants. A diamond ring.  
Hammers. It ate promises and rants. It snatched up  
  
names like peanuts. We had a squadron of cooks  
specifically catering to its needs. They stirred vats  
  
of sandals and sunglasses. They peppered their soups  
with pebbles and house keys. Quarts of bottled song  
  
were used to sweeten the brew. Discussions between  
preschool children and the poets were added  
  
for nutritional value. These cooks took turns pulling  
the cart to the mouth of the harbour. It would take four  
  
of them to shoulder the vat over, tipping the peeled  
promises, the baked dreams into its mouth.

And then the ocean would be calm. It would sleep. Our mistake  
was thinking we were making it happy.

