

Lacrimosa
by Kathy Philpot

Neptune cries for penguins
and polar bears, for loss
of their sea ice domiciles

On a sunny beachside this merry
little band of do-gooders gathers
our tools of eco-consciousness

He sobs for dolphins drowned
in ghost nets, sea turtles nearly
decapitated by collars of fishing line

We retrieve discarded cans, bottles,
plastic toys, food packaging, flip flops,
tossing them into bright green pails

Sickened, he wails at the sight of
oil-slickened bodies of gulls
and sea otters strewn onshore

We rake the sand for smaller, broken
plastics, sifting through miniscule bits,
dumping it all into the buckets

Heartbroken, he mourns the death
of his technicolor reefs, now white
skeletal fingers, pointing in blame

Satisfied with our efforts today
we gaze at our good work while
emptying the pails—

into plastic trash bags

and Neptune weeps