An Alewife to Bite
Raymond L. Antel III

It's springtime now, but all through the winter months the Elberta and Frankfort piers have been funneling hundreds of thousands of little split-tailed silver shiny fish through their passage.

The beach is now cluttered with wide-eyed-confused dead fish.

Weather-beaten and dried their texture is similar to homemade venison jerky.

Completely dehydrated, they won't even suffice as an hors d'oeuvre for a seagull.

No

They are left to wither away in the hot summer sun or blow away in southwesterly winds or perhaps a wave will reach their en masse grave and snatch some away...

giving them falsified life—bloating their once leathery skin to twice normal size, at least enough to fool the slow low skimming seagull

into dinner.

A Fable of Free Oxygen
Kenneth Ford III

Hydrogen oxide, carbon dioxide.
You can't make us breathe said the animals
And they refused to exist
So after a few billion years
(One point nine or so)
The plants said
We shall exist to make you
So you may breathe
And they did
But the gluttonous iron
Attempting to rust
Stole it as fast as it was made
We still can't breathe that cried the animals

But the plants replied
Patience brother creatures
Soon the iron shall be full
And then you can breathe
And the iron became filled
Its appetite slowly satisfied
And the plants called out
Come brother creatures
We have made you oxygen
We have made you ourselves
Come into being
And so they came
One by one
From the depths
In an explosion of life
Thank you
Brother creatures
sang the animals
Thank you for our lives