Icarus Survives

I knew I was bad and I knew he was wrong —
two truths that fit in the same palm.

His eyes met mine —
his son too close
the sun too close.

Each dive I tried
to rinse warning from my wings,
to feel morning in my wings.

And the farther I flew
from my father I flew,
in that beautiful burning

there is no melting, just
one bright truth, too big to hold,
pulsing with hurt:

sometimes guilt is the price of warmth.

For the Dumpster Floating down the Ohio River April 7th 2025

She, big and unmovable, watched the barges, even bigger,
glide past down the river
and she, stinking and landlocked, dreamed.

Rain was a tease,
one cool moment of heavy, wet
that left her molding where she was.
But this time the rain didn't stop —
it filled the Ohio until the Ohio was at her feet.
And the river said "are you coming"
And she thought, "what would they do if I leave?"

They'd live, she decided, and they did.
For the first time she was weightless,
for the first time she was clean

For Evelyn McHale

May 1st, 1947, Robert Wiles walked by the Empire State Building and saw the body of Evelyn McHale who had landed atop a car after jumping from the 86th floor observation booth. He took a photo of her and sent it to Life Magazine who published the photo and called it The Most Beautiful Suicide. *Printed alongside the photo was Evelyn McHale's suicide note:* I don't want anyone in or out of my family to see any part of me.

I am afraid
that art is bodies,
born to be looked at
in adoration and disgust.

Because artists and God
fall asleep the same way,
wondering what the eyes will say
about what they made.

Evelyn, I am sorry and,
Evelyn, I am afraid.
I am afraid that art
belongs not just to the hands that made it
but to the eyes that watch it die