

Falling for Icarus

He reassured me that the sun is safe and his wings are stealth;
his feathers are a skin of radar-absorbent material,
with steel buckles and aerodynamic restraints.
He will be suspended but moving upward with calm velocity.

I stayed behind in the trailer, which he parked close to a deer crossing.
He taught me to shoot; I had plenty to eat.
He instructed me when the propane tank is empty and the lamplight
goes out,
to look into the sky to see a star that is not a star:
That will be me, he said. Coming home.

When he returned, he was badly burned.
When he returned, every organ was pierced by solar arrows.
He was terrified of fire and refused to ignite the pilot light.
He gnashed his teeth and snarled at me when I told him I was cold.
Woman, he said, if you think you are cold then go to where the sun
does not shine.
Then you will really know how it feels to be in hell.

I'm still waiting for him to come home.
The woods are dark and the last of the snow has melted.
Icicles drop from tall pines and pierce the ground.
I see him falling, everywhere.