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Icarus

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Icarus

Icarus
sucked into the sun
by pride until his
class struggle until his
wax-built wings
were suddenly a sin which means
he didn't get to heaven but
if flying too close to the sun
melts a person into hell
then maybe hell is not
less bad than sex, a transportation
which Cleopatra knows and tells
is much more useful than wax feathers,
not to mention just as warm.
"poured out in looseness on the ground"
pride pride pride
which is beautiful and real
flaking into a fresco
golden music lifted
to slippery thirsty lips
Cleopatra again would kiss the snake
not to be paraded through the mocking
streets of Rome
spitting citizens
who never sought the grail,
ruled Egypt or the Sun
would they love Cleopatra?
or catch the blazing son of gods
as he fell to their rock-filled arms?
then poison her with a phallus
then burn the skin from his stretching arm
for giving up minivans

Folgers coffee and the home-shopping network
citizens of Rome
reject them the way they rejected your family
photographs locked between plastic and paper
mashed into albums,
mortality books
you pick up at K-Mart for 6.99
citizens of Rome
learn humility
citizens of Rome
learn the principles of home equity
citizens of Rome
learn the pages of your TV guide
to see that you don't miss your favorite movie.
citizens of Rome
all learn your Icarus.
As Icarus has learned all of you.

– Carey Christie '95