“Gills”

The sun is being stored in the stomach of a   
fish.   
Each morning,   
it bursts out of the river and reflects off of the quarter we pasted to the cardboard model you made of the universe as a child,   
writing predictions on the inside of your desk,  
half-listening to your teacher   
spout ideas and theories   
about the earth and its shape,   
her long fingernails dragging across a spinning globe.   
  
that the was fall you decided against playground games.   
You did not want to kick a ball and roll the ocean out on to the soccer field;   
afraid the Atlantic might spoil your fun, that the other children would resent you for over watering the grass,   
afraid that your mother might be angry   
if you ruined your only pair of jeans in the mud.

This is just another piece of the childhood that you have lost.   
The light is still being stored in the stomach of a goldfish you couldn’t win at the carnival,   
because you   
never went to carnivals.   
and the fish,   
he rests at the bottom of an already polluted river,   
where the old man who never tore your ticket, because you never had one,   
 likes to fish.   
 the man with his cotton candy and his line of gold  
 steals your light,   
pulls your astrological god out of his home,   
 breaks the reflection and ends the day   
with his temptations   
and his worms.

Later, out of guilt,   
and because you never came to claim your prize   
 he throws the fish back, and we are safe again.   
 your change   
 falls from the sky.  

you  
have   
saved us.