The Poem
*For Dunya Mikhail*

There was a poem I started, it had one good leg.
The poem I lost.

There was a poem that surfaced between breaths, in the grounds of my coffee pot. The one that seemed to want to run, the one that had no shoes. The poem that went its own way and never came back. There was the poem he wanted me to write—or she, or them. The poem that everyone hated and kept at a distance.

There was the poem that came disguised as spam, the poem that got stuck in my teeth, and no one bothered to tell me. The poem that I scraped like burnt toast into the trash.

There was the poem that sounded like a bed hitting the wall, the one that everyone thought was something else.

There was the poem with too many tropes, the one that danced for the wrong audience, the poem that expired before we could drink it.

There was the poem that needed birds or something wet to finish it, the one I ate with the smallest spoon.

There was the poem my friend told me was waiting for me. I saw it in the window, slowly lifted my hand to wave, but the light changed and one of us looked away.