

## **Skating**

On the pond, all the kids steered clear of dark ice.  
My brother's thick blades scraped  
beneath snow pitched pines  
skirting languid limbs and fractured seams.

He sped past me  
like our barking spaniel snagged  
by the scent of a woodchuck.

He fled blanketed silence  
and the snap of our father's belt  
for the solace of sidewalk hustlers and smack.

And like our spaniel, he came home  
stinking of the entrails he rolled in,  
one fix following another.

He left again before the thaw,  
ice spitting behind his blades as  
he skated past me and  
the roaring quiet of the pond.