**Lizzie Pinches (Grandmother’s Skates)** *by Chris Kinsey*

You find them abandoned by the frozen lake.

The men are still at war

and all week

mistress and children have squealed out in skeins

like earth-cursed geese

flapping

jerking

failing to glide.

Your rough fingers caress the foot-stock’s smooth grain

trace curving steel blades.

Frost bristles irresistibly.

The world holds very still.

Cinderella of the sedges,

you fasten the straps in a trice,

rise to the runners,

steady yourself with an ash whip

catapult

onto the ice.

Three times you nearly spill your heart

to the glazed-over lily pads

until it beats for you hold it high.

Your spine lengthens

hips drop,

ankles fuse with the blades

find poise,

propulsion,

power.

Lizzie Pinches you’ve never known such ease

spinning across the landlord’s lake.

Your pirouettes around Swan Island

hold their score until the thaw.

Everything, that hour, rings like fine china

sings like the glass you polish.