

I Put My Hand in My Father's Glove

-Tori Amos, " Winter"

Father, if I could stand all day at the shoreline with a shovel for you, I would know myself as a shadow stick among icicle chandeliers like I did when I was twelve while you and my brother skated Wood Lake as soon as the snow weighed the rosemary's branches and you had tested the thickness of the ice. It had been ready for the weight of a man and a boy. I have always been ready for you to tell me not to follow. I was guardian of the edge holding the shoulder-blade of an ox while you carved forward and backward crossover patterns on the ice cover. Who else would have done anything to save you if you had fallen, trapped below the ice-pane? Moving toward the lake's center, my brother's legs were a dividing compass drawing circles on circles. I have never built a clock, but I have been within the seconds through which you have also passed across a water we both have known.

by Jessica Conley



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