

Lisa Russ

Blind Boy On Skates

He stands, a deep mass of shadows on thin blades.
In the air: smoke, voices of the others,
coughing of trucks in the cornfield he came through
with his sister's skates and extra socks
for padding the empty toes.

He's not allowed to be here,
on skates, on the creek become a road,
miraculously accepting his weight —
creek into which arms had let him down
once in summer, screaming — his limbs
breaking the surface, and the cold,
the blue taking his legs away —

He's balanced, safe, but knows that movement
is the only way to remain upright —
he thinks about going forward,
about that risk. For him, it's like
the sentences he types at school:
"You asked about the blue was, well for me
the place the tractor makes in snow,
my head the same, my pillow in the morning" —
He can't say, yet, to the teacher:
but I *can't* go back to see what I've said
to make it "work together" —
what's behind is past,
unravelling, lost.

He cannot say, life for me
is temporal, not a bottle with a thin neck
and a glass for receiving,
not a jar with a waist through which moments
accelerate and then deposit in a reservoir.
Motion is my only chance to be.
What I am is the thread of pulse under wool,

the slight twist of my ankles.
 What I have is the clean,
 blue clip of my own running steps,
 and the screaming, behind me,
 and the truth I put my arms out,
 unknowing, to receive.