

'The Thickness of Ice', by Liz Loxley

At first we'll meet as friends
(Though secretly I'll be hoping
we'll become much more
and hoping that you're hoping that too)

At first we'll be like skaters
testing the thickness of ice
(with each meeting
we'll skate nearer the centre of the lake)

Later we will become less anxious to impress
less eager than the skater going for gold.
(The triple jumps and spins
will become an old routine:
we will become content with simple movements).

Later we will not notice the steady thaw,
the creeping cracks will be ignored.
(And one day when the ice gives way
we will scramble to save ourselves
and not each other.)

Last of all we'll meet as acquaintances
(though secretly we'll be enemies,
hurt by missing out on a medal,
jealous of new partners).

Last of all we'll be like children
Having learnt the thinness of ice,
(Though secretly perhaps we may be hoping,
to break the ice between us
and maybe meet again as friends).