

## shadow world monsters

the child sits alone on a frozen lake  
fireworks come out of his head  
two days of ice and kleenex  
*the man and the woman are coming again.*

the man and the woman live in the lake  
under the ice  
the boy put them there long ago  
because they hurt him  
now he watches over a hole in the ice  
like a wary winter fisherman  
fishing for nightmare memories  
wondering where they are.

everything above the ice is frozen  
everything below the ice is shadow  
the child lives in the frozen world  
sits alone on the ice and guards the hole  
waiting to catch a glimpse of  
the shadow world monsters.

who are they? he cannot remember  
*a man and a woman*  
someone close  
someone very close  
too close for memory  
perhaps if he looks into the hole deeply enough  
he will see their faces  
perhaps they have no faces  
perhaps if he gets too close  
they will pull him in again.

he wants to touch them  
he wants to love them  
he wants to kill them.

he wants to tear them to pieces  
rip out their hearts  
if they even have hearts  
he wants to cover himself with their blood and  
dance in big crazy circles on the ice  
he wants to toss their flesh and bones all around him  
like broken trophies of  
a life without childhood.

but they always fool him somehow  
they sneak up on him while he sleeps

they come up through the hole in the ice  
    and touch his private places while he dreams  
they speak in voices he cannot understand  
    and call him names that make him ashamed  
then slip back through the hole into  
the shadow world.

they touch him and leave him alone  
    shivering with fear anticipation and shame  
wanting to live  
wanting to die  
and wanting to know  
    *who did this to me?*