

Thin Ice

Ken Raines

I watch two girls on wheels.
Four neon-green wheels
on each foot. Rollers

in the shape of a blade,
they schuss and stall,
and hesitate, and slalom;

Stutter down the easy dry slope
of driveway concrete
fresh poured last summer.

On the hour, the radio reports
sixteen degrees and falling
in a steep chill-factor wind.

But the hurly-burly ballet
continues undimmed in Lycra-
bright enthusiasm.

They skate with the grace
of those unhobbled by concern
over false starts and faux pas.

With no signs posted
to advise skaters
of their own fragility,

or caution them that their egos
may one day give way
with only an ominous crack

of belated warning,
They roll on
with bolder and bolder strokes.