Tu fui ego eris

Nora, I bathed you in light
like Katherine said to, but your kind
of pain leaks.

when i first learned the cello what i remember
is that my hands always smelled like brass
and i liked that and i liked to feel the calluses forming
on my finger tips; my skin toughening, thickening,
changing.

I have had to remind myself
that you are dead.

have you been getting my postcards?

I often don’t remember until I’m in the bathroom,
looking in the mirror,

the leaves lining the track
all reds and oranges

Today I wait in line at the sandwich shop
and think of you and what kind of dressing

it was a beautiful day.
i could have run forever
Alyse Knorr

When I see the two girls walking by
holding hands, I think, which one is Nora?
a whole orchestra lying on the ice.
the violinist skating on her back,
the trombone player curled fetal,
flecks of snow or ash from their cigarettes
and a man in a suit singing with his hand over his heart,
a crack running through him

Was it like that tiny mountain pond
in Vermont? Did it sting like the freezing
water my brother and I would jump into
for a quarter from my father?

the drummer’s drums are collapsing in on her
—cello fill, cello fill—
the couple’s blades carving into the ice
and you are the voice of an anonymously beautiful woman

Nora, what color
were your eyes?

can I paint you? you would look nice, your skin,

Nora, I am ashamed at the questions
I want to ask you.

she is wearing a leather jacket and I want to
make love to her on the ice
if that is possible
The reporter said this was not possible
it was an accident it had to be.

six people skate in a circle around her
i can see every finger of her hand against the white
her palm feeling the ice delicately, like it is a lover's flesh

They are both Nora and we are all
Nora and none of us is Nora.

something is scratched into the ice but it is illegible or i am illiterate or both:
the way singing can sometimes sound like another language

to write you a song, Nora

no one can get up
no one can move—
the strings of the violin are freezing
all of their lips are chapped
snow is still coming down

like flakes of skin