The Blossoming

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THE BLOSSOMING

. . . I realize
That if I stepped out of my
body I would break
Into blossom.
—James Wright

Icy air
drawn sweet into my nose and throat
as my skis pump and glide
tracking the valley

between spruce and fir, some cedar where a creek
trickles past humped white cornices
banked on either side of its flow.
And the cold on my face

increases as I pole and sway
out of the woods onto an unsheltered
white meadow or marsh
open to the wind

so the wax under my boards
stutters a little in the increased coolness
and then breaks smooth again
where the trail returns to the forest.

But as I steadily traverse a straight run
sheltered by evergreens on one hand
and on the other an unbroken expanse
above a pond,
a red–gold ovoid
expands within my chest
to fill the body cavity: I sense the rounded surface inside me
layered with glowing leaves
like scales, or overlapping
feathers, or small gilded ruddy plates
of armor. The ovate object
transmits, incarnates, an exultant
happiness: not sensual but kinetic,
an ecstasy of motion,
of function.
This delight is the pleasure
provided to an angel by
its body: nothing of soul
but the blessing of
an unearthly corporality
suspended now within me
—a ring of petals
merged tightly around their core,
a taut mass, with short tendril–like extensions
that insinuate their way
into my four oscillating limbs.
This manifestation proposes
the flesh of a peach
—that sweet, sun–warmed, juicy pulp—
were desiccated, wooden,
compared to the teeming fluid miracle
of its stone.