

after the biopsy

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this ragged scar
on my right breast
red and burning
and i
so tired and weepy

you bring me
white roses
tell me I am beautiful

the roses like pale cream
perfect
and i
so not

not such a scary word
rhymes with prancer
and dancer
could be another of santa's reindeer

the sign
my friend was born under
sign of the crab
a joke really
their silly sideways walk

if i changed just one letter
then it's cancel
null and void
erased and gone for good

so close to *canker*
just a little sore
that disappears in no time

a small annoyance
nothing to worry about at all

carla and veryl and i
laugh over my swollen breast

how i don't need
my push-'em-up-to-jesus bra

don says my scar
looks like a thermometer

i say a centipede

katherine e-mails
i hope your boob isn't being a boob

a year after the biopsy
i am once again at the screening program
where the young technician
white-coated and busily efficient
is ticking off the information
on the form in front of her

family history mother
she writes first diagnosed age thirty-seven
deceased maternal aunt also deceased

any breast surgeries
she asks looking up at me
over her stylish glasses
and checks the box marked yes

i'll need to see it she says
so i lower the blue hospital gown
now that she tells me *is a good looking scar*
and i laugh because

what else is there to do