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Jubilation

Margaret Robinson

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MILTON KESSLER MEMORIAL PRIZE
FINALIST

JUBILATION
Margaret A. Robinson

1.

one instant I'm
too weak to cut
a frozen lime pie
the next flat
on the linoleum
staring into lights

2.

buzz rumble clunk
in the E.R. all night
head and heart tests
somebody's blood smears
the sink
I should feel
for a stranger's cut
instead dread
HIV, hepatitis

3.

morning
more tests
brain MRI drowns out

HARPUR PALATE

Sinatra
on a screen, pulpy
muscle pumps, looks
diseased
is not

do I trust these results?
will the chest wires chart
my many betrayals
as lines jig down and up?

4.

behind a curtain
my roommate gets bad news
parts of her body telegraphing
defeat from the front
I'm so pissed off! she rants to visitors
speaks on the phone of her garden
I poke my head around cloth
we make small tomato talk

5.

my pal in bed
Hayden Carruth, 84,
survived poverty,
electroshock, alcohol, divorces
his daughter died
he can scarcely breathe yet
stands writes reads laughs

6.

Can't we have happy poems?
students ask

7.

diagnosis *syncope*
loose silken word skipping a beat
door bench smokers wearing pajamas
my friend picks me up
back to the kitchen
pie still in the fridge

8.

dear students
this poem is about
jubilation