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## Holy

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# Knechtel: Holy

## MILTON KESSLER MEMORIAL PRIZE FINALIST

HOLY

Jane Knechtel

At first I was perfect.  
I spread myself out like a forest  
And hardly thought of home,  
Until she hung a star on my head  
And draped my limbs in fire.  
My needles dropped like bombs.

*The old dream, the old dream:  
A child in the living room,  
Wise men adrift on the roof.*

The hours drag by here.  
I am as beautiful and useless as manufactured snow.  
I annoy her now with my endless cries for water.  
At night she steps into the living room  
Like a girl looking for a dance partner—  
We sway in my imaginary arms.

*All the world is fast asleep  
Except the tree, except the tree  
And three lone wise men and me.*

My days here are numbered.  
She no longer comes to me at night.  
She wants to be unstirred again,  
Like a child who has given up believing in Santa,  
Or a woman who has stopped counting wars in her head—  
The idea of a tree consoling her unbearable.

*I am crying in the dream,  
Into the arms of a tree.  
Wise men are trawling the gutters.*