

## *Rocket Man*

PETER E. MURPHY

I'm not sleeping  
good and my gut  
feels like it's emptying  
out on the sheets,  
so I turn on the light  
hoping it's a dream  
but it's not a dream  
and—I was afraid  
of this—it becomes  
sirens and needles  
and body scans and  
adventures in pathology  
and oh god, the end  
of the present tense.  
They plug me to a drip  
I can adjust when pain  
comes which it does  
and I do and then I'm  
teary over living wills  
and grief support  
and coffin tape

and Elton John—  
*all this science*  
*I don't understand—*  
and then I'm sitting  
in the limo next to  
his sad princess  
as it enters the tunnel  
and then crash—  
I'm lying with a girl,  
a magnificent girl  
who sang when we  
made love—  
the more excited  
she became, the more  
beautiful her singing.