

To My Daughters

You were the first I thought of
when diagnosed with what
strikes one in eight women.
It was too soon to leave you,
but I thought it a good sign
that none of us were born
under its pestilent zodiac.
I stared at the stars and wished
upon each one that you'd never
wake up as I did this morning
to one real breast and one fake one;
but that the memories you carry
will be only sweet ones, and then
I remembered you had your early traumas
of being born too soon, and losing
a beloved grandpa too young. I have
this urge to show you the scars
on the same breasts you both cuddled
as babies, but then I wonder why
you'd want to see my imperfections
and perhaps your destiny. I cave in
and show you anyway, hoping you learn
to eat well and visit your doctors, but then
I wonder if it really matters, as I remember

what your grandpa Umpie used to say,
"When your time's up, it's up."
May he always watch over you.