

MELISSA GINSBURG

SQUAB

I was in love in the library. I had a perch, and a future
life in symbols. I'd been listening to the radio.

The kitchen bubbled a bath of wilting leaves, a sauce
thick with blood and a half spoon of vinegar.

In the hall of books the swinging perch and doll eyes wobbled.
A song came on. A dove song.

Empty of bones full of liver without gall my heart
open, the blood clot which forms in the middle removed.

Arrange my heart on a round plate. It is a small heart
and a small plate, the doll's a girl at the window plays with.

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Stop, warm library. Stop, square window, tender symbol. Stop
little girl the peacemaker, wooden grip and polished nickel.

She was going to miss me, miss all of us.
She was hungry; it was late.