

## The Donna Summer Operation: A Slam Poem

By Jordan Teitelbaum

Chemo-unresponsive, and radio-resistant  
Recurrent, aberrant  
This tumor seems persistent  
We've thrown quite a bit at it  
And yet its peril is insistent

Last chance is salvage surgery  
The morbidity might be devastating  
Then again, it's life or death  
She hears there's years might be trading

Grading the toughness one to ten  
I'll never underestimate this pest again  
This malignancy  
Will stick with me  
But for now, time to embark on a killing spree

Decimate abnormal cells  
Reiterate: have fun in hell  
Disintegrate, cut out, expel  
Obliterate all margins well  
Then rehabilitate your clientele

Last chance, last dance  
With this mischievous, menacing, ominous lesion  
That defied conventional therapy  
And thus provided us a reason

To go all out to call out  
This cell cycle checkpoint rule-breaker  
I'm proud to say: today  
this tumor has met her Maker  
The healer has become the Undertaker

This was never just some ordinary procedure  
Nor exploration in the OR for leisure

Conquering cancer like this is more than a career

Our team came here with one goal, crystal clear-  
To dance with danger, face all fears  
To make hope once again reappear

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**Jordan Teitelbaum the Rhinology/Endoscopic Skull Base Surgery fellow at Duke University. He was born and raised in Chicago and majored in English at the University of Michigan prior to completing medical school in Harlem, NYC. He is grateful for the opportunity to express his medical and surgical experience through poetry. He also truly appreciates the chance to read others' creative work and to maintain persistent connection to his roots.**

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