

KATHERINE COTTLE

## Anesthesia

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*—for my son at eighteen months*

The nurses take your tiny limp body,  
place it flat on the operating table  
like a fresh and willing kill.

One quickly leads me  
out of the cold, sterile room  
before I have a chance to look back,

to see the curved, silver needle  
pull the first black stitch  
through your inner ear.

They are mending a wound,  
bringing the skin flaps back together  
like two lost siblings.

*It will only take a few minutes,*  
the nurse assures me.

The warm air of the waiting room  
hits me, and I cannot breathe.  
Your breath is under their control now.

A few minutes is too long  
to be without my life.