

KATHERINE COTTLE

Anesthesia

—*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.