

## Poem



# The operation

To help my mother's eyes  
small gold weights  
might be placed  
in her eyelids.

Naturally the eye  
is always open.  
It is an effort  
that lets us sleep.

I imagine the pharaohs  
may have had gold  
in their eyelids, too —  
some high sign of wealth.

The extra weight  
relieving all the small muscles  
of their expectations —

some new medicine  
for the aches  
in the dark temples  
of these gods of men.

My mother and the bent-  
bearded men sharing  
this gold, blinking.

My mother's eye  
a blue beside  
the pull of black.  
Open, a queen of Egypt.

Closed, the eyes  
of her failing nerves.

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