

First suture

The mother shakes
but the child flails
with terror
a four-inch gash
on her perfect brow
The father waits outside
pacing, raging
his answer to fear
Hold her
still please
My junior hand
trembles under taut rubber
to small choking sobs
My needle much too close
to that sea-blue eye
Her mother sings a lullaby
to calm us
It goes
in and out until
I cut the last knot
I am
not breathing

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