

A TRIP TO (SEE OR NEARLY SEE) THE EYE DOCTOR

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Once again,
it's my time
to read the tiny letters
on the distant wall.
It's the torture equivalent
of soldiers playing
Barry Manilow music
at full volume
to break a prisoner.
Really I'm already
willing to surrender
but the doctor insists
my eyes drop to
the next line down
where a blur that
could be a G or a 6
or a P or a 0 awaits.
He won't be satisfied
until I declare,
"Okay, I can't read
the damn letters and numbers.
So shoot me."
Instead, he writes
out a prescription
for a pair of glasses.
More even than
a plastic surgeon,
he's about to change the way
I will appear to
both myself and the world
and he treats
the whole affair
so matter-of-factly,
as if wearing
an optical contraption
on my face
is a lot less demeaning
than not being able

to tell G from 6 or P from 0.

I figured I would grow old gracefully,
not technologically.

I guess I didn't read the small print.

And now I need help to.