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HIEROGLYPHS

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*The Egyptian original Per- $\langle$ o, written  $\Xi$ , meant simply “Great House” and was one of the many ways of referring to the royal palace. Then, in the reign of Tuthmosis III (1490-1436 BCE), the term began to be used for the king himself. . . . Hence the word Pharaoh passed into the Hebrew scriptures.*

**KING:** Larger than life my last statue  
stands colossal in this valley  
lionized beyond my dreams  
by my last architect  
before he found between  
my granite flanks a place  
of honor where the great ones  
stare down eternity

**SCRIBE:** In profiles on these walls  
all Egypt stands reduced  
to ranks of one-eyed servants  
conscripted by the deathless art  
that lets the great ones  
keeping granite vigils  
face to face like gods  
stare down eternity

**MASON:** The day the great one died  
the sky was no less blue  
stone cooled no quicker  
the night they checked  
the tally and found me gone  
from the ranks of servants  
called to help his house  
stare down eternity