

## WAITING ROOM

There are seven of us, practiced sitters,  
disjointed thoughts roaming the channels  
in our outpatient heads. We devoured  
all the magazines several visits ago.  
Tune scraps, phrases, memory bytes settle  
like dust; syllables regroup to connect  
knuckles, elbows, a string of beads.

Naked fluorescent lights bear down  
while our impatient cells quietly divide.  
The teenager stares at brown floor tiles.  
Last week she mentioned they reminded her  
of chocolate she can't have anymore.  
The elderly lady's right foot obeys  
rhythms from her past. Now and then  
she pats her knee to an offbeat drum.  
The bearded man shifts his dentures.  
The young blond stud in bandages  
disconcerts the collective mind  
going numb with faded wallpaper stripes.  
Everything is steeped in familiar scents  
emanating from behind the inner door,  
making sure we don't wander too far  
from the bodies brought in to be explained.

In common we have the big glaring clock  
with its unsteady hum and impaired face  
probably damaged by our eyes.