



Prayer in the Waiting Room

Banished from health I enter the unknown
As the Two did stumbling from Paradise.
Never in my life have I felt so alone.

In this doctor's waiting room, many-eyed,
My censored secrets are married to my fears
Like a shot-gun bridegroom to his bride.

When I was a child I thought blue, I said green
And with a magician's sleight of hand, jubilant,
Would squeeze apple-pips from a tangerine !

Now, doctor, magic me. Let me be released
From clawing ills, let home be Eden-like
Where, thankfully, I may fast for God or feast.

Danny Abse (1923-2014)

This poem was commissioned by the poet David Hart on behalf of the Arts Council. It is one of a collection of fifty poems by different UK poets - each on the subject of waiting. The poems are for display in waiting rooms.