



Nineteen Lines

Nineteen times you shouted, Lunch time !
Nineteen people queueing to eat
Nineteen peas on my plate
Nineteen minutes before I go back.

Nineteen times you shouted, Medication !
Nineteen people queing to medicate
Nineteen tablets passed over the counter
Nineteen minutes before I go back.

Nineteen times you shouted, Smoking !
Nineteen people run to the door
Nineteen cigarettes lighted up
Nineteen minutes before they go back.

Nineteen times I wished I was there
Nineteen times I wished I wasn't
Nineteen times it's been a second
Nineteen times it's been an hour

Nineteen times I thought I could cope
Nineteen times I realised I couldn't

Because I'm only nineteen.

anon

Written in a poetry workshop for psychiatric in-patients in Brent, London. Reproduced here by permission.

Poems for... Self at Sea

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