Routine check

Once again, I've persuaded a piece of myself
to keep me a place in the queue.

Empty head, almost. Nothing needs thinking about.
That's done already. Not much at stake today.

So : count the leaves on the spider plant.
How many offsets ? How many stripes ?

My watch says Greenwich, the wall-clock says
Hospital Time. They look the same times, but they're not.

In here we're all disconnected. From one another ;
from the car-park ; even from the offstage phone

That keeps trying to play the theme from Captain Pugwash
every few minutes. All sitting here empty,

full-sized, but turned right down to our pilot lights,
keeping our real selves' places in the queue.

But the second my names comes up
it'll still be a shock -

my real name suddenly breaking in
to my pilot-light existence.

Roy Fisher

Poems for… is a Hyphen project. "Hyphen-21" is a company registered in Cardiff no.2925831. Registered Charity no.1040077. www.hyphen-21.org