

## Lost in the Shuffle

Ten hours in the surgical waiting  
room. We had to arrive  
an hour before the light

and two hours later I was sent away  
from the pre-op cubicle after  
the resident anesthesiologist

tried four times to insert the IV needle.  
You turned your face to the wall.  
A single tear rolled down your cheek.

Ten hours. Checking in and out  
for too-large cups of Starbucks, trying to pretend  
I was interested in my knitting,

while I sideways watched a man who'd had the sense  
to bring a deck of cards. There was an enviable order  
in the way he laid out rows of solitaire,

shuffling, stacking, sorting, collapsing,  
somehow having been wise enough to learn  
a means to pass the time alone.