

Tuesday noon, again

Weary bones line floral sofas,
walkers parked, but close at hand,
grey heads drifting, nodding off.
Dulcet rhythm of soft requests enfolds me—
"Always," "Deep Purple," "Embraceable You."

Disconcerting sidle, ornery Agnes
leans in close, rough
counterpoint to reverie.
Hisses usual demand to scram,
and play some place where she is not.

Melody beneath my fingers falters,
stomach clenches in her wake, familiar
struggle. Toughen, carry on.
Flash of satisfaction lights
her pickled, pale, bedraggled face.

Shoo, vamoose, get outta here
Agnes only speaks in minor keys.
Leave, skedaddle, go away
Clench. Toughen, carry on.

My rankling déjà vu gig:
A room of peachy listeners,
one hell-bent crabby apple.