


# Outpatient Clinic

Category: Poems

written by Irene Sherlock | September 23, 2022



Her daughter  
drove drunk  
again last night...

Tissues, the box an arm's length away  
from the woman who talks about  
her daughter, my client,

her many relapses, how she did well  
for a time. I nod. Somewhere, a blast  
of car horns. Outside my door,

men are here to paint the hallway.  
"Jerry, get the ladder," one shouts.  
I shut them out, focus on the woman

telling about her daughter, my client,  
who drove drunk again last night.  
Blood alcohol three times the limit.

She wants the details right. Totaled.  
Air lift. The mother reaches for a tissue.  
Perhaps, later in the market,

she'll pick through potted mums,  
choose one not quite bloomed.  
Or maybe this is how she'll be,

her face now forever white  
as tissues in her hands

held 'til session's end,  
dropped into a wastebasket  
I'll later carry out  
to the world.