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American Idol

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AMERICAN IDOL

I bought an electric toothbrush
because the dentist said I wasn't thorough enough
& wants to see me in two months.
The therapist prophesied a near-recovery,
predicted love would come eventually.
When the conductor asked for my ticket,
the reality was he'd been working
for ten hours straight & could use a smoke break,
but I had nothing to offer.

Now at night, I brush & brush to the whir
of the small machine, screen my calls,
put lettuce on tomorrow's sandwich.
I imagine I'm being interviewed
on a leather couch on a talk-show set
& when I tell a story about middle school
haircuts, everyone laughs. Outside, two teenagers
argue over video game graphics. On TV,
the finalists are forced to sing for their lives.