

Essay on The Waiting Room

I staggered into the waiting room.

My half-closed eyes could make out half a dozen or more people already seated on the chairs in the waiting room. I staggered to the reception counter. The nurse took one look at me and pronounced, "toothache eh?". I nodded dumbly in reply. She asked me for my identity card which I took from my shirt pocket and gave it to her. She noted down the particulars, returned the card to me, and told me to take a seat.

Fortunately, there was an empty chair. I flopped down on it gratefully. All I had to do now was to wait for six people to see the dentist before my turn. Six people, I thought. How horrible, it would probably take hours. I sighed, sat back, and prepared for a long wait.

How I wished I had got the offending tooth patched up months ago. I kept postponing and postponing and this was the result a horrible toothache. I had not slept at all the previous night because of the pain. Pain-killers helped a bit but they did not solve the problem. Only the dentist could solve it. I had to wait for him no matter how long it took.

There was music coming from a stereo set near the receptionist's desk, but it did not sound soothing at all. The waiting room itself was quite well decorated with posters of country scenes as well as cross-sections of various teeth. There was also a large cartoon of a man holding his cheek in obvious pain with the caption beneath it "Don't wait until this happens to you"! It described my condition very well, but I could not help but think that such a poster in a dentist's waiting room was very inappropriate, or the dentist must be

a sarcastic fellow.

All the other people in the waiting room exhibited a common characteristic they looked glum. I guess nobody liked seeing a dentist because nobody liked anyone else probing into his or her mouth. But some unpleasant things had to be undergone, so the glum look was excusable.

More glum-looking people appeared to take their places after me. Slowly the people ahead of me became less. I noticed that it took from fifteen minutes to half an hour for each patient to be with the dentist. However, one chap, in particular, must have been with the dentist for at least forty minutes. It did not do much good for my patience.

Finally, after much squirming on my chair and short walks to take the kinks out of my muscles, my turn came. I was actually glad that it was my turn. At the least, I would not have to wait anymore. I got up, exited the waiting room, and entered the dentist's surgery.