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On Chronobiology

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They sit alone, the lost, the blind, the broken
Who cannot feel the tolling beat of time
Adrift upon a vast uncharted ocean
The cellular flotilla out of line

For we are made of many different drummers
To each his rhythm; each his lonely beat
They march together, synchronizing functions
Or else run free: a metabolic feat

Our clock is set each morning on awaking
As light informs the brain that it is day
With interlocking loops of gene expression
and delicate synaptic interplay

A gentle shift in light, a subtle lesion
Night work, shift work, jet lag, modern life
The clockwork stutters and from weakened signal:
Insomnia, fatigue, internal strife

I diagnose the cause of moving rhythms
The why of lack of exercise and light
Neurological examination
Melatonin levels in the night

The timeless searchers can be called to order
Artificial signals for the blind
For those that see, bright light and early rising
To draw the lonely dancers into line.

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