

## Home and Office

When people leave home and go to a bar, Auden  
Said, they try to make it look like home.  
And I guess what's true of people going to bars  
Is true of people going to offices too.  
At least, I pass by doors along the hall  
To my office and catch a glimpse of a snug boudoir:  
Soft lamplight, carpets, and reclining chairs,  
Cushioned and plumped, inviting R and R.  
And why not, I think: old Auden was an oaf.  
Be comfortable! And if you'd rather be home  
Than working, pretend you're still home and buy  
An upholstered recliner and a tinted lamp.  
I'm just jealous, you can tell, as you walk through the door  
Of my workplace, Spartan and cluttered in naked light,  
With maybe a hair shirt hidden somewhere.  
But Arnold Stein comes back to my mind from Seattle.  
His door was across from mine: the battered  
Wooden desk and chair and an ammunition  
Box for student consultations. I was told  
He was a German POW during World War II.  
I never asked him. He wasn't my idol or anything,  
But he worked hard and seemed to get a lot done.  
It's time to get out of here and try to forget it.  
But first let me mention one virtue of austerity—  
It's easy to leave it, no enfolding and holding,  
Just pack up and get out. So I'm going home now.  
And when I get there, there's one thing fairly sure:  
I don't want to make my bedroom look like my office.

—Edward L. Hart

---

Edward L. Hart, recipient of the Association for Mormon Letters poetry award in 1979 for *To Utah*, is a retired professor of English from Brigham Young University.