
Pro Rege

Volume 24 | Number 2

Article 4

December 1995

Cocoon

Lorna Van Gilst

Dordt College

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Recommended Citation

Van Gilst, Lorna (1995) "Cocoon," *Pro Rege*: Vol. 24: No. 2, 5.

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Cocoon

Lorna Van Gilst

Old dry cocoon—
Clinging smudge of sticky mold—

Why did you not release
the fat green worm, red horns flashing,
that slimed its way
up the corner post
the last warm day of autumn?

Just before dark
its green fatness reached the joist,
spun out the magic gossamer,
wove itself inside,
and went to sleep.

Old dry cocoon,
Sticking to the porch,
Why did you turn into a tomb?

I spoke to you each day
when I came home
through winter's bite,
Hoping, hoping
for rebirth of spring,
for the wet unfolding
of Cecropia wing
that never came.

When painters come
and scrape you off
the corner post,
Will they find
a dry old worm with horns inside?