
Pro Rege

Volume 49
Number 2 *Fine Arts Issue 2020*

Article 6

December 2020

Symptoms

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Recommended Citation

Dengler, Mary (2020) "Symptoms," *Pro Rege*: Vol. 49: No. 2, 6.
Available at: https://digitalcollections.dordt.edu/pro_rege/vol49/iss2/6

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Symptoms

Mary Denger – September 2020

“We need to leave right now! I’m feeling strangely
Ill: my head is blasting, ears are roaring, and I’m shaking
With a chill despite the fact it’s hot as hell outside.”
“Okay, I’ll finish up this hand of cards and leave.” That
Dark, long, lonely road I’d traveled countless times
looked weirdly foreign, with its stops and turns. I grew
Confused. “I think this road is where I turn.” Alarmed,
He turned to me: “You mean you’ve lost your way?”
“I think I have. This doesn’t look like where I turn.”
“You can’t just back onto the highway. And besides,
Here comes a car. Drive further up this road and turn
Around.” “Okay. Yes, now I think we’re right. But hand
The water over, quick. I really need a drink.” And then
I coughed and prayed nonstop until I got us home. I felt
As if possessed. Had alien somethings slipped inside
My brain? The coming feast of pizza and a glass of wine,
Which usually gave me simple joy, now sounded like
A bloody and decaying beast. Collapsing on the bed, I slept
Three nights and days. “You’d better have the Covid
Test,” he said as I swooned back into the dead of sleep.
The clinic couldn’t see me for another day. But when
I did go in, I suddenly felt better, temperature was down
And head had cleared. That little stick rammed up my nose
A half a dozen times, while I held tightly to the chair as
If in ecstasy, was followed by a strict decree: “Be sure
To stay in quarantine until you hear from us.” So home
I went, convinced I had the virus but surprised I really didn’t
Need my bed. Instead, my head felt fine, and I was ready
For my coffee, fruit, and egg. In several days I learned
My test was “Negative.” “So what exactly does that mean?”
“It means you’re free to go about your life again.” Would
Someone please explain? I only know I felt too sick and tired
To move, and now I’m fine again.