

The Divine Image
After William Blake

This old atheist reads William Blake
and finds in each act of kindness
the divine revealed.

Doctors, nurses, ward clerks, receptionists
meet the sick in emergency rooms and
wonder if the one they'll care for

will kill them, wrap their woe and
worry in bandages of love, masks
of care and concern,

pump chests that harbor
an invisible death, reuse
aprons and paper suits,

ride the bus—a petri dish of disease—
to work and wash hands raw,
sleep on their feet,

drop their clothes in foyers
and vestibules so their kids
and partners won't get sick.

Redemption floats in this world
and above this world. Divinity
abounds in the faces of these

men and women where pity finds
its form in mercy and peace and
in the beating hearts of all.

Charlie Brice has appeared in *The Atlanta Review*, *The Sunlight Press*, *Chiron Review*, *Plainsongs*, *I-70 Review*, *Mudfish 12*, *The Paterson Literary Review*, and elsewhere.

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