

## There Pills by Jessica Pilgreen

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*Take these pills, she pleads*  
and offers up the bitter yellow tablets  
cupped in her hand  
like a broken bird.  
*Take them. I have more.*

She shifts, sifting through the orange plastic bottles  
rattling inside her handbag, that soft leather lung.  
She's inspecting expiration dates and warning labels  
through the fog of her watery eyes.

*With the right one, I can fix you.*  
The words slip out like dust.  
*Trust me. Trust the strength of medicine.*

She knows that God is in those little bottles.  
And she's ready to deliver them  
Like sacramental wafers  
onto tremulous tongues.

*You'll feel better, she promises.*  
Her lips crumple into a thin rheumatic smile.

**Jessica Pilgreen** has an MA in Literature and teaches high school English in Southern Illinois. Her work has previously appeared in Nibble, Dream International Quarterly, and Mobius, among others. In her spare time, she enjoys blogging and all things Shakespeare.