The Crowned Nightmare

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i took some Benadryl last night
because my nightly allergies flared.

but also
to help me escape
far away –
sleep is my only reprieve
from this crowned nightmare;
for, during the day,
i am:
the decoy
the sacrifice
the disposable pawn
the frontlines without a gun,
marching into this unknown void

should i, or my colleagues, comrades without arms, become ill and perish
should we spread this disease to our children, kept fearfully distant
should we infect, from our couches, our beloveds in cold beds
treating others who did not defend themselves at home
[oh, how i begged and pleaded they would!]
and others still who heeded the warnings
but simply could not be saved
[oh, my heart!]
it matters not

i am but a resource –
il-equipped, unprotected,
naked and exposed to the enemy,
a dehumanized shield for those more important
as we are truly valued differently in this world after all

but thanks
for your prayers
and for the free gas station coffee
consider it my Last Supper
before the dawn
when another Jew is crucified;
except, this Jew will be forgotten
as another doctor takes my place
equally scared and unprepared –
not even a mask to filter the dust.

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