

Closing In

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HOW TO CITE: Stein HF. Closing In. *Fam Med.* 2024;56(10):678–678.
doi: [10.22454/FamMed.2024.800110](https://doi.org/10.22454/FamMed.2024.800110)

PUBLISHED: 14 October 2024

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Slowly, almost imperceptibly,
The invading foe creeps unopposed
Across the retina—its name,
Dry macular degeneration,
So vapid a term
For so voracious a disease.

Yellow islands of pigment change
Merge into continents—
As they near the center,
All clarity blurs, dissolves into
Grotesque distortion,
Life’s dwelling place, a hall of mirrors,
On a stage set called
The Twilight Zone.

The seeping predator
Devours its prey,
Sneaks its way inward,
Until it engulfs the fovea,
Prize at retina’s core,
And vision’s last hope—
All eyesight lost,
And so much else besides.

No more seasons of the earth,
No more phases of the moon,
No more cycles of winter wheat.
Imagination and memory
Cannot replace all the worlds
Soon to disappear forever.

Light dimming, ever dimming,
Until night swallows day,
No more hope of dawn—
Hell is perpetual darkness,
Not eternal flame.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT: This poem is dedicated to Andrew Hubbard, MD, retinologist, who accompanied me on my journey of dry macular degeneration. When it engulfs the fovea, all eyesight is lost, and far more.