

Quarantine

I remember it like it was yesterday
Rowdy freshman bustling noisily through the halls
Some nervous and some filled with excitement,
And me, feeling somewhere in between
And the upperclassmen were filled with dread
You learn some things very fast,
(like that the only thing scary about a freshman
Is their innate ability to determine your whole mood)
And as I walked among the freshman,
destined to be lumped in with their antics,
I didn't know how soon things would change
How soon my first highschool experience would be cut short
And how I would spend my time looking at my teacher
Through a small computer screen.
Or that people would be dying by the hundreds of thousands,
And stores would be clean out of supplies
Hysterics would ensue and we all felt so sure
That we were going to lose our minds.

As I stayed home for months
Familiar numbness in my head starting to get old,
A darkness unfurled inside of me
And seemed to blanket my inner world
What must not be left unsaid, as it often is,
Is that at my worst I learned more
Than I ever did at my best.
I learned how to sit with myself,
And face my darkest depths
It was one of the hardest times in my life
Yet, without it,
I wouldn't be quite who I am now.
I don't wish the darkness on anyone,
The darkness I, we, faced
But it was inevitable, no choice but to be grudgingly embraced.
A celebration not of a pandemic,
But of what I and others have made it through
I feel grateful to be here today,
Able to remember everything and everyone we lost,
So that we can tell their story;
The duty is mine, and it's yours too
We keep those lives from fading away,
Reverence in the certainty
That their lives will never be erased.