

Quarantined, Reaching Toward Clarity
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How many babies do you think will come of this?
My husband asks, curling into me curling into him.
A lot, I say. We laugh. It is only day two.

Everyday, I call my grandma, *Go in your yard and nowhere else*, I tell her.
Everyday, I call my parents, *Don't let anyone in your house, don't play pickle ball*.
Everyday, I call my sister, *Why aren't they listening?* We ask each other. Until, they do.
We keep calling anyhow.

After thirteen days in the same 1,000 square feet, my husband still cannot read my mind.
Instead of refilling my glass of water, he stands by the sink and says,
I read divorce rates skyrocket after quarantines. I laugh, but less than I did on day two.

Every day, at 4:10, I check covid19.colorado.gov.
Refresh. Refresh. Refresh. Until, new numbers appear.
The update always the same. More cases. More deaths.

Every day, I find a new way to drive myself crazy.
Read a novel set in the Great Depression.
Check our bank account, calculate worst-case scenarios.
Scan another article about warnings ignored.
Wonder if I once knew any of New York's now dead when New York was home.

After nineteen days, ones I love are saying goodbye to ones they love over telephones.
The numbers are worsening and, I can't stop crying over all I cannot control.
My husband folds me into him, the weight of death making love more acute.

That night, we notice a vividness, a precision, a clarity in the mountain air.
Details of distant crags and spires explode. We see our world anew.

We are not alone in noticing the absence of humans.
Coyotes, lynx, peacocks, mountain goats, wild boars stroll deserted streets.
Endangered baby sea turtles crowd closed beaches.
And everywhere, bird song isn't swallowed by car engines.

On the twenty-fourth day, we drink vodka on the deck and listen to John Prine.
He sings a tale of Peabody's coal company—*they dug 'til the land was forsaken,*
then wrote it all down as the progress of man.
John Prine is dead. Another victim.

On day twenty-five, the sun rises again. Robins decorate the aspens in our yard.
I call my grandma, my parents, my sister. I hold my husband, squeeze our dog.
And we all say *I love you* between *thanks yours*, a little more than ever before.