

**#CoronaChallenge/ I Hear Everyone's Doing it**

I almost died alone  
We were in the midst of a pandemic  
So *died* should scare me the most  
But it was *alone*  
It is *alone*  
Alone is supposed to keep you safe  
But alone is what almost killed me  
They say to choose between  
6 ft apart or 6 ft under  
But what if one just leads to the other

Reaching out to people  
Who've been told to keep a distance?  
It sounds like a set up to me  
So while everyone is watching the virus  
Society tries to pick off those of us  
Unfit for isolation  
Those deemed unworthy of love  
"Unessential" is what I hear  
they're calling us these days

So when I needed a hug  
and could find none  
I considered a kiss  
One from death

**For when they do not love you the way that you want them to...**

Love them anyway  
Not the way you love yourself  
That is too sacred

Love them like a sunset  
You know they will leave  
But they are still beautiful while it lasts

Most people will not know how to love you the way you want them to.  
They will love you too soft.  
Or too inconsistent.  
Or too fragrant.  
Or too typical

They may send you flowers  
but they won't be rainbow daisies.  
And they may tell you they love you  
but it will be amidst a disagreement.  
They may remember your favorite song  
but you'll only remember how they sang it out of key.

And when they kiss your tears away as you sleep your fitful sleep.  
You will wake up only recalling a drought in your dreams.  
Because they can only love you the way that they can.  
And it is okay if that is not the right way.  
For you.

**We should probably prepare for the things we pray for/  
Today I got good news and I cried**

I wish that I could say that they were happy tears  
I wish I could tell you that I sobbed because I was grateful  
But I found myself weeping because joy had shown up and I had no space left for it  
I had filled every single crevice of me with grief  
I had only today made space for new pain  
For even when I finally developed a wary type of acceptance for depression and anxiety  
I discovered withdrawal  
Frantically feeding my brain like a feral beast  
Causing me pain when it needs something  
But unable to communicate what that something might be  
I was so consumed  
That a piece of the joy I had been praying for  
Finally arrived but  
It found me unprepared  
I had nowhere to put it  
I had no idea how to let it in  
So I cried  
I hope there is soon space for that joy where those tears occupied

**#BlackLivesMatter\***

When I scream Black Lives Matter  
There is an asterisk in the back of my throat that whispers  
*\*this does not apply to me*  
My life does not matter  
People would barely miss me if I was gone  
Sometimes I wish that I could take their places  
Bring back Breonna Taylor or little Aiyana Stanley-Jones  
Take me instead  
Maybe I could be more useful as hashtag  
I'm sure feeling like a lump hits different from inside a body bag  
At least I won't feel like a waste of a toe tag

It's no wonder that I can't breathe  
when I constantly feel like a waste of oxygen  
Why couldn't they take me  
And leave someone here, more deserving  
It's unnerving,  
The way that I lay in my bed and pray for death  
Yet, cops have murdered better people in their homes without an invitation  
What I gotta do around here to get some damn service?  
They out here protecting and serving my people to death  
And yet, they screen *my* calls

## **Home**

Every day when my dog, Huey and I return to my apartment

I point to the door and say "Home"

I am beginning to suspect that I am trying to teach myself this lesson as well.