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COVID CHRONICLES SUBMISSION:

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Longing In the Time of Coronavirus
(Weeks 1-2, March 16-March 30)

“We are confident the state of California will abide by the order and do the right thing. They’ll meet this moment in time.”
--- Gov. Gavin Newsom

Social distance, shelter-in-place.
Inconvenience, disappointment, longing

I count my blessings...
healthy, happily retired and financially stable.
Not out of a job and filing for unemployment.
No balancing work at home while schooling kids
and explaining a pandemic.

My husband and I...so much togetherness,
thankful to not go through this alone.
But I long for when we left the house
on different schedules.
Solitude was oh so sweet.
Does he have the same wish?

No quick trip to Safeway anymore.
Rising early to shop with fellow seniors,
I find it’s as crowded or worse than a later hour.
I put on my gloves and don my mask,
but as I breathe my glasses fog up.
Should I be risky with my health

or see who I need to dodge from six feet away?
Toilet paper this week but not last week.
I hit the jackpot today, hand sanitizer!
More work once the groceries are home.
Bag outside, carry in items, disinfect, wash.
Let's try Instacart.

I miss the diversion money can buy.
Dining out, not in. Margarita happy hours.
Coffee with the girls at Cat & Cloud.
Movies at the Nick.
First world desires.

No concrete plans in the works.
Asheville trip cancelled.
Family birthday parties tabled.
Hamilton tickets refunded.
A new outfit waiting a hanger.
Volunteering put on hold.
No structure to my days, but they fly by.
Nervous energy,
Read, phone calls, emails, Facetime.
Cook, garden, hike, bike, ride.
Paint a room, clean out the shed.
Netflix binge.

Zoom is now a household word.
Was a verb, now also an adjective.
Let's zoom a neighborhood happy hour.
I have a zoom meeting and a zoom class.
Connect with people the virtual zoom way.
Better than not at all, but still not the same.

No grandkids at my home.
I long to hold them in my lap,
smother them with kisses,
watch Frozen again,
read The Little Engine That Could.
The older ones understand the distance
but the one year old does not.
Why isn't Grandma holding me?
It breaks my heart.

Constant reminders they're not here
spending the night.
No Hotwheel cars scattered in the living room.
The Skippy Peanut Butter jar still full.
The sweet scent of the baby's skin.
A quiet house.
Car seats empty in the Suburu.
Facetime helps but a screen doesn't hug.

Time to reflect.
Another week begins.
Will our lives return to what we knew?
What we expect. What we desire.
I will never take a hug or a kiss
from any loved one for granted
ever again.

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