



Image from Josephine's World

Cathy Porter

Two Poems

In Fairness

Early May: winds stalk this old house,  
the last days of normalcy as far away as the sun.  
We are statues inside our home.

We had plans—and when plans get killed  
off, we become as lost as a turtle in a convenience

store. The worst of the past suddenly  
becomes desirable.

Tomorrow will mimic today soon enough—  
as reliable as the drunk uncle who crashes  
every holiday party, uninvited. We become  
jaded philosophers, conspiracy hacks—  
anything to make sense of insanity.

I'm glad you aren't here for this—  
nights that fire the brain into overload;  
days that drag us around like a ball and chain.  
Our best guess is no answer at all.  
Your peers have taken the hardest hits.

What to make of this new normal?  
Your last years were anything but fair—  
the mind gone well before the body.  
You're not here, but you know.  
I look for you in the lost minutes—  
weigh options that make no sense.

## I Stopped Counting

at day 38—time no longer  
relevant in this new nightmare.  
Lost in my own house, I miss  
people I don't even like.  
When this is over, we promise  
to eat more ice cream, stuff  
ourselves with pizza—book  
that trip around the sun. When  
mountains crumble, promises  
become armor. My cousin tests  
positive, joins the family of new  
cases. She texts me her fear,  
too winded to call.

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Cathy Porter's poetry has appeared in *Plainsongs*, *Homestead Review*, *California Quarterly*, *Hubbub*, *Cottonwood*, *Comstock Review*, and various other journals. She has two chapbooks available from Finishing Line Press: *A Life in the Day* (2012) and *Dust and Angels* (2014), as well as two chapbooks published by Dancing Girl Press in Chicago: *Exit Songs* (2016), and *16 Days* (2019). Her latest collection, *The Skin of Uncertainty*, is now available from Maverick Duck Press. Cathy is a two-time Pushcart Prize nominee, and serves as a special editor for the journal *Fine Lines*.