

Wishing You Well in These Unprecedented Times

I'm sorry we are talking about this again & again
except what else is there to talk about?

No, my parents don't have it yet,
and yes, we have enough toilet paper,
no, our sourdough hasn't yet started.

On a 70-degree day in early February,
when I sat atop a mountain with a friend
& said "soon this will all be different"
I meant "soon, I will be pregnant"
not "soon the world will come to a grinding halt"
the day was warm enough to eat ice cream
& walk in the woods, had I known then
what I know now I would have never said
"well I need to get home to my husband"
precisely at five, we would have watched the sun set
& talked about nothing like best friends do,
until it was too dark to go on.

Last night I made a list of all my loved ones
for writing "in the event that I should die" letters,
each name fell off my pen like beads of gratitude
dropping one by one, the list expanding far beyond
what I could expect. I wonder which of you
was the last person that I hugged &
if we probably knew then hugging wasn't a great idea
except how could we stop ourselves
from one last final touch
before touching was no longer allowed.

As I write your names
I imagine you as points in a constellation
connected by the opaque line of me
(would you still be connected even if I died?)
I want to call you each to say
"you are essential to me"
if only to hear it back
and soften this universe
in which my husband and I
are still trying to plant new life
like fanning embers of hope.