

In a precinct where we clean air,
 I walk through a maze of small homes
 and seek

<i>fever</i>	Boards cover windows on veteran buildings without a gap.	N O T	One area — several blocks — can't be reached — houses gone — remnants	Sore
<i>fever</i>	The street becomes a hallway. It ends. Retreat. A new	M Y	of factories — a few scattered warehouses	
<i>fever</i>	hall gray+shiny pulls me. I run. on polished	S E L	open — barely used — overgrown — green bushes — a marsh —	Throat
<i>fever</i>	concrete. Where does this tunnel Lead? A turn?	F B U T	rusty fences bar entry — no one there — Turn back.	

In my apartment I find → guilt's → questions lurking armless,

 eternity	 resigned	 grab me.
 isolated,	↓ readiness	 I
 a much	adds	 falter,
 larger	endurance, resistant	↓ sink
↓	endurance.	sink

eternity — wears masks, → myself one, loosely tied, → sink.

↓

like this cloak which brings varied futures.

↓

useful for past roles → lived and nonexistent.

↪ 10 years ago
 I enter —————→ dressed tragic
 ↪ 10 years from now
 for
 display.
 Arrogant faces (leopard-low) approach,
 each lip muscle, every eyebrow cell
 > out of control <
 flirt toward a largest (and "We don't know you") disaster.
 ↓
 quick glance
 ↓
 ahead of ↔ behind
crowds.

They've worn the same coats
 ↓
 for weeks. Their masks show themselves,
 grandly repainted daily.

I recognize — their constantly disturbed → movement
 ↓
 gravity time's
 ↓
 as a pack.

when eagerly — rampant changes → vivid
 ↓
 they saddened as a
 ↓
 step selves — in spring-labor's → closed

] I keep them from me
 and far apart ... cough
 a warning. [

on fractured (last)
 ↓
 its — toward a bottom-of-the-lungs → preference.

a distant drum wends its tempo around buildings loses origin elusive marchers
 I fear she-will-get know she-will-get fear she-will-get know she-will-get dread she-will-get it it it.

I tell her —I *have a sore throat*→ “Stay away”.

I		“NO — she says,
<i>value</i> her	We cannot	We’re
	bear	
and	to not	In this
↓	hug,	↓
worry. —How can we survive→ together.”		
	must ↗	

The ordeal	others have suffered
world-common,	worse
anonymous	statistics,
with fake rubber gloves	held by death.

Filled by a cold, overcast sky —mostly outdoors,→ the apartment

with		appears
	ourselves —ourselves→ ourselves	
movie set	,	unceasing,
↓	only we	
houses, —broken and abandoned, our rooms become→	as a	nowhere
fates	shock	
truly	↓	in every
↓	realize us —and have→ shared, survival hastily stored ↗	↓
	our	corner.

I a fighter, sit on a curb
 before a days-long bout
 breathe breathe and breathe,
 many inhales will be done
 while I fail, struggle but must.
 Over my curb, my stool, my bed,
 balloons float high, then sink,
 gather around me. "Place names
 for your new pains inside us,
 one in each [thousands]. We
 arrive here as your audience,
 relief for your being alone
 in the ring." *Wrong*, I whisper:
 Nancy's resolve brings help,
 |
 insists insists insists insists
 we must survive **together**,
 persist persist as unity.

U				
N		Nancy: denial – her personal risk		
C		↑		
O		holds – holds without		
N				
D		me, a terror a show;		
I				
	T	all her hidden.		"Many
I				
	O	world {I might}		have
	N			
A		here, a doom the virus		
L				
		our lives learn healthy,"		
	T			
R		joined as done. her concern		
U		↓ ↓		
S		extremely well, —herself→ a gift		
T				completely.

LOVE – CONFIDENCE – RESOLVE

I get better. Aches abate. Throat opens. The illness not

"You ↘ covid 19.

never

inferior

the *virus* — another ↗

risked you had ↓ [I am accused.]

a *danger* — infection ↘

never

experience."

Fraud ↗

Guilt and relief mixed = forgiveness and gratitude.

Out the window, leaves claim higher ↑ higher realms
 from [some] retention of patience in shade below.

V a n I s h e d f u m e s

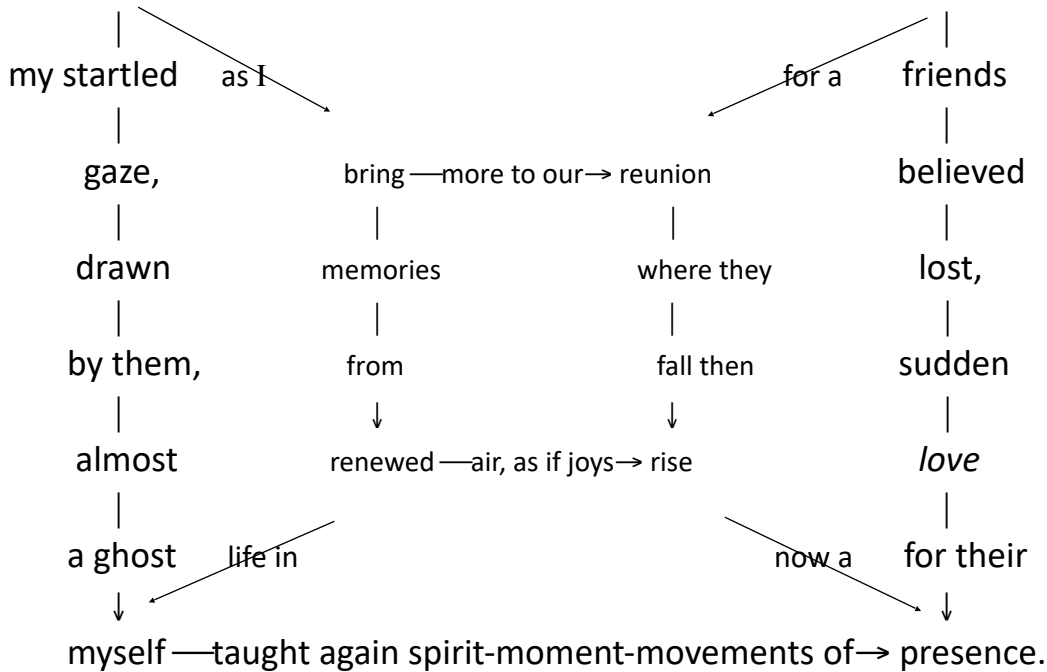
g o n e c i t y s m e l l s

f l o a t t h r o u g h c l o s e d w i n d o w s —

a n d f o r m

a l i n e o f p h a n t o m s — (w h o) — t w i s t t h e i r s l i p p e r s ,
t h r o u g h t h e k i t c h e n , s w i n g t h e i r s l e e v e s ,
t h e l i v i n g r o o m , s w i v e l c u r i o u s h e a d s ,
f i l l t h e n a r r o w h a l l s e l f - c u t h a i r d i s p l a y e d ,
a n d o u t t h e [l o c k e d] d o o r .

I r u s h — a n d g r a b t h o s e f a m i l i a r , g a l l a n t l y p u l l a f e w → a s i d e ,



P u l l e d u p a n d d o w n ,
w e t u m b l e t o g e t u p ,
r a g s w i t h o u t a s o l i d o c c u p a t i o n .

The line departs. The last phantom polishes her exit.

I am alone.

Nancy considers then deletes messages.

April 18-21, 2020