

infectious

By Annika Sage Ellis

i'm in my room with the plague of our generation

the rain falls outside and i fall to my bed after

walking ten steps to get more water

i breathe heavy, i pant long

i live alone, and it has never been harder

in these uncertain times, i know,

in my bones, i'll be fine

but the water lashes down my window

the thunder cracks

i know thousands are not as lucky as me

thousands, speaking lightly

millions, speaking literally

there is nothing i can do for them

there is nothing more i can even do

for myself, simply waiting to get better

(i'm still waiting on the results of my test

though at this point it's hardly more than a guess;

false negatives cancelling out my false positives

so i hope for an answer that i might never get)

am i sick or are *we* sick?

am i broken or are *we breaking?*

in desperate times, the shadows only grow longer

in the shapes of greedy fingers that steal light and color

i hear bones cracking under fists, and gunshots

too brutal to be thunder

look down at the veins in your arms, thin blue lines mean nothing

when wrists are already bleeding and people have *been* screaming

plague of the body, plague of my mind

it seems we've all realized we're

running out of time

so i lie chest-down and breathe

and count all the raindrops i see

and wonder which one of them is me