

## Poetry

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The flowers are numbered  
in pictures you no longer remember.

*I'm glad you're doing well.*

Other messages emerge and you sit  
by her breath in the dark. Waiting,  
your voice becomes  
quiet when the shades rise.

*I'm sorry, I'm really not.*

You worry this will last generations.  
That each day, the world is being made  
of less and less.

*No pain? Great to hear.*

Someone with a stethoscope pokes  
and prods your body. She talks without  
looking. You ask if anyone is available  
to pour the morning coffee.

*Please help. I need help.*

Some days a young man sits with you.  
Opens the juice cartons and unscrews  
stuck-on plastic caps.  
Speaks in fewer words than you.

*You remind me of my son. I miss him.*

When the room is empty you begin  
to cry. Let the tears roll off your gown.  
Air moves in and rests. As if  
you have found a home.

*Don't leave me. Don't leave.*

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