
POETRY | SPRING 2021

This Time Last Year

By Chloe Vaughn

I was not expecting my first COVID-19 patient to be a mother of four
Not much older than I

Just as I was not expecting her husband's words
In response to any update—hopeful or grave—
One thousand thank you's for taking care of my beloved wife
Blessings of protection for you and your families

Just as I was not expecting to arrive home and be
Greeted at the door by a child in a bathing suit and berry-stained lips
Who already knows—without reminder—
Not to touch me until I have changed and showered

And I was not expecting the cherry tree in front
In the span of hardly a day
To have burst into a mighty, riotous bloom

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