

During Viral Outbreak

Mother River
washes clothes,
rearranges cabinets.
Mighty Mother Maple extrudes sap
from dark security rooted,
to fly flags in spring's
blue winds.

Awash in seeds, buds, viruses, bacteria, fungi, body parts of others' nocturnal meals, life flows.

I fall to my knees at Mother Maple's trunk, on the bank of Mother River.
I say, "I am afraid. I
don't want to die."
Bark scrapes my cheek.

She chuckles,
"Death is transformation. All growing things outstrip their spans to burst
toward the pull
of hereafter"

She rushes past, splattering me, her skin speckled
with floating birds, turtles, and
arcs of fish exuberance.

I trek red-mud footprints home, hand fisted tight around
a small branch of magenta maple buds for a vase in the window.
As true a red
as blood. Mine
and the maple's.

***Rachael Ikins** lives by a lake with her dogs, cats, salt water fish, a garden that feeds her through winter and riotous houseplants with a room of their own.*

~ *♦*❁*♦* ~

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