



Twenty-Fours

Twenty-four revolutions around the Earth's axis,
Twenty-four morning coffees,
And twenty-four goodnights.
Twenty-four bedtime hugs;
How many more yet to miss?
Only hope they don't forget
Mama's touch and feel.

Twenty-four days of a long-distance family.
Five-hundred and seventy-six instances of
The hour hand crossing twelve on the clockface.
That number times sixty are the minutes
That have ticked by at a snail's pace.
Not enough time to forget, but
Just enough time to fade
Into the background of life
Requiring effort to be summoned
From the depths of the hippocampus

To the surface of a young mind.
A post-factum.
Or is the virus allowing these fearful thoughts
To permeate and skew my reason?

Losing control and power and use,
COVID-19 has robbed me of weeks of
In-person smiles and cries and hugs;
Of witnessing joy and grief and growth.
Robbed of time, but not of my love,
And not of my life, and for this
I'm countless twenty-fours grateful.

—Lilit Sargsyan, MD