

Pandemic 1: Close call (March 2020)

When the pandemic came,
the doors of the houses
closed/ then the restaurants
closed/ the doors to the schools
closed & the shops & salons
closed/ then the places that never close
closed/. We went home took off our real
clothes put on pajamas & sitting
close, read the news. It said not to stand
too close the space prescribed was
—6 feet—
but every distance
seemed like an opening
it filled with our longing
we couldn't stop
looking at each other
as we always had, but more now
averted eyes, downcast
walking the bike path we held
our breath as we passed
we wanted to know
strangers, we thought about all the
strangers every night as we read
we were good citizens
we washed our hands
we thought about bodies
& missed all the people
we knew & didn't know

The distance is closeness: it's
Proximity. It's danger or it's safety or
it's love, or sickness
or if not—it's a
close call