I Talk Too Much

During this pandemic my chattering self

talks too much to echoes, listens earnestly

to random noise bouncing back

off the walls of my brain

Replies come in Spanish and French,

once in a while in German

I’m amazed at my mastery of swear words,

little obscenities that slip out

and tiny bits of knowledge and wisdom

retained within the softness of my mind.

I hold grand conversations with nobody

check to see that somebody isn’t listening

which, of course, somebody is

and shaking her head at all this drivel

held within the envelope of my brain

I seem to carve chatter out of this confinement

without tipping over into insanity

Perhaps I am staying sane, remaining healthy

by carrying on these endless discussions in my mind,

In this pandemic pantomime of normal life

I have become both erudite and crude,

a coarse reflection of hidden parts

of myself, kept safely in the netherworld

out of reach of my personal censor.

My husband’s voice often startles me

with words from outside my own skin,

tiny love arrows aimed at my whole person

I shudder with the transition from inside to out, [shiver, tremble]

from the soft matter living within my skull

to the firm warmth of human companionship.

Paula Miller 10/20