



## **Pandemic Baby**

*By Katie Shea-Moskop  
For Addie*

My little rough and tumble pandemic baby  
Covered in dirt and mud and making the best of it  
When you were 8 months old  
learning to crawl  
ready to break free from the stroller  
and explore the world  
the world stopped

There were no  
museums  
indoor play places  
Exploratoriums  
zoos  
tots gym class  
play groups  
libraries  
story times  
mommy and me music class  
or laps around Target to kill time

You learned to play in the dirt of the baseball diamonds  
when the playgrounds were closed

“Going out” means getting a cake pop  
at the Starbucks drive-thru  
and then driving aimlessly  
because there is nothing else to do

Your first birthday was at the kitchen table with just us

There are no pictures of you with the Easter Bunny  
We waved at Santa from afar this year

Your first word was “Peppa” because  
well  
the TV has been on for a year straight

You are invisible to the world  
Everyone loves to tell me how “adaptable”  
and how “flexible” you are  
About how you “won’t even remember anything”

But I know better  
It’s been terrible and unfair to you

But I promise one day when you smile at a stranger  
you’ll see them smile back

Everything you missed out on is starting to open

We will do it all

# Screen Time

By Katie Shea-Moskop  
For Momo

There were grand plans  
No more plastic junk, we said  
No Amazon wishlists, we said

Instead there would be “experiences”

Memberships to the Botanic Garden and Arboretum  
Trips to the zoo and aquarium  
Irish dance and ballet  
Splash pads and sand pits  
The park district brochure had something circled  
on every page

But that never happened

On a whim, we bought a Nintendo Switch

As Lions Park stood still  
covered in caution tape  
you helped to terraform our Animal Crossing island  
You found fruit and fossils  
and delighted in seeing  
what Timmy and Tommy would be selling that day

As Big Surf sat drained and barren  
you went on an odyssey with Mario  
collecting moons  
and saving Princess Peach

You haven't made a friend at Westbrook yet  
because you've never been inside  
Instead, you found Donkey Kong  
and raced with him  
through Rainbow Road and Grumble Volcano  
usually coming in last place

but so happy  
to be exploring worlds  
free of masks and filled with happiness and fun

