



2021

## exit the immune system

Kate Pashby

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.butler.edu/thenorthmeridianreview>

---

### Recommended Citation

Pashby, Kate (2021) "exit the immune system," *The North Meridian Review*: Vol. 2 : Iss. 1 , Article 23.

DOI: 10.7825/2769-5115.1059

Retrieved from: <https://digitalcommons.butler.edu/thenorthmeridianreview/vol2/iss1/23>

This Prose is brought to you for free and open access by Digital Commons @ Butler University. It has been accepted for inclusion in The North Meridian Review by an authorized editor of Digital Commons @ Butler University. For more information, please contact [digitalscholarship@butler.edu](mailto:digitalscholarship@butler.edu).

---

**Kate Pashby** (they/them) is a queer Mexican American poet from San Jose, California, who resides in Washington, DC. Their work has been published or is forthcoming in the *Santa Fe Literary Review*, *Genre: Urban Arts' House*, *Embryo Concepts Zine*, *Constellate Literary Journal*, *subTerrain Magazine*, *Northern Otter Press*, *The Confessionalist Zine*, *Burrow*, *Rogue Agent*, and *Rabid Oak*. Kate was nominated for Best of the Net 2020.

---

### **exit the immune system**

I once took great solace in the thought  
that if there were a coronavirus outbreak  
I could be among the first to die  
incapable also of surviving the first wave  
of a running zombie apocalypse  
without the medications that allow me to walk

I wait for the infusion nurse  
to plug my arm into the IV  
find the thick vein that likes to roll  
back and forth,  
a cigarette between my deceased grandmother's  
thumb and forefinger

I run my lotion-soft palms  
over cracked knuckles  
bleeding from cold air and hot water  
and yawn  
waiting for the tragic and untimely death

that was never promised to me,  
the one who could not come to terms  
with the possibility of a long, fulfilling life