

Numbers

Joy Kuang

are well named, really.
From checking headlines everyday,
to not checking at all.
Leaving my phone face down in my room,
only to walk into a 3:00 PM update
crackling through the kitchen radio
reporting the predictable exponential growth
that no one expected.

Numbers,
they float around
and pile up unnoticed
until one sticks out,
setting off the cascade
of pins and needles
that build up stealthily with every second
in my legs
and when I try to stand
after Zooming left and right,
I swear
my feet get more sleep than I do
and still more
than my friend in Taiwan
with her 10:30 AM PST lecture,
wishing it were the dreaded 8:00 AM one instead.

Numbers,
they were around before too.
I guess this new set just feels worse,
but only until I inevitably
forget them again.