List poem

A list of what it have learned in the last 10 years

***The Fifth Decade, A List***

Aging hits you hard at fifty-seven when your smugness is smote by the body that has some news for you

Brevity on the shortness of life digs in at the same time brevity in speech wanes

Consistency is still my core, but it shows up as stoicism more and more

Death visits more frequently and closer and closer to home

Earth-shattering is a term that is rarely used anymore

Falling in love is a fuller, forever process and I’m glad to be in it for the longer haul. I still love deeply and I want to live forever because of that

God is everything and nothing

How feeling young at fifty is no big accomplishment

I still want everything, like I did in my first decade, which isn’t much, just different

JEANNINE- I still love my name and the way it sounds

Knowing more is the gift and curse that aging hands to you

Laughing still comes easily, but loss is more mundane

Mothers and mothering are eternal and forever morphing, from mommy to mom to mother of the bride to mother-in-law, to…I still miss mommy

Nine eleven still looms over us, two decades later. My husband, nine years my senior, saved himself from despair and the lust of hate with a dog and then another and naps and the ocean and a heart that is of love

Ocean swimming buoys me more and more. Mother Ocean allows me to stay longer in her chilly cradle of peace and understanding where I’ve learned a lot about what I’ve always known

Pandemics accelerate and magnify everything in this list of the fifth decade

Quiet is lost to tinnitus and ear worms and helicopters and drag racing and sirens and a world that is spinning out of control

Reciprocity brings me to tears when I swim in the sea, when I talk to the trees, when I have the people I love physically near me

Spines compress sooner than expected

Truth has lost some standing, but not its power

Urgency, urgency, urgency! How much can I learn, do, love, share in this fleeting life?

Vaginas are magical, powerful and fickle

Women’s bodies are not discussed in the aging process. Why?

X words take up one-third of one page in my Websters New World Dictionary printed in 1995, five years after the birth of my daughter and one year after the birth of my son. I praise you XX chromosome

Years behind me now become seconds or decades or dreams, all folded like a map that you can never get back into place

Zzzzzzzz by 9:00 and mornings start at 5:30AM and I am NOT embarrassed by that. With one year left of my fifth decade, that specific self-conscious emotion doesn’t get the best of me as much as it used to.