

## Ghost light

by [Steven Peterson](#) in the [May 6, 2020](#) issue

We've closed our theatres—a silence rules.  
Homebound with Internet and iPhones, stocked  
with everything we'd want as hoarding fools,  
we double check to see our doors are locked.

Elizabethans closed their theatres  
in plague years; Shakespeare scribbled poems for praises.

Today each playwright (one is me) utters  
in keyboard clacks: free verse or formal phrases.

Yet theatres keep one bare light bulb burning  
on stage, illuminating emptiness.

Tradition calls it a “ghost light,” discerning  
substance from shadows—like our faithfulness.

Let's ask the ghost light of our soul: Explain  
this wait for life, or death, or deathless gain.