

Pandemic Living 101
By Margaret R. Sáraco

The snowy scene, dead leaves
and a wire frame fence with wooden spokes

An air-brushed house, once white
with a dark thatched roof

And one window from where I sit.
Is that a barn? I wonder

Good enough to live in
Plant some trees in spring

If it ever gets warm enough
For flowers and grass to push through the dirt

Making a scene of how lovely
The grounds can be.

But this barn and its grayness is beautiful too.
The quiet. The isolated comfort.

Sleep Cycle

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Troubles spread between bedsheets and coverlets
pain of now cuts my back like a sharpened knife,
news reels turn in my anxious mind.

Masked and unmasked children crowd school hallways.
a single ventilator in a hospital packed with pandemic sufferers,
children with cancer waiting for someone to care for them.

Geese walking their young across busy highways,
sanitizer, toilet paper, sympathy cards disappearing from shelves,
relatives grieving for dead in video calls.

On the other side of the bed my love twists and turns,
we wake before our alarm, before
cats cry for breakfast and daylight

hoping for a seismic shift
or a sign the nightmare has passed
or truly a nightmare, never occurred.