Disobeying the Stay at Home Order

I went out to get
a package of frozen spinach
from the big freezer
and there they were,
Craig and Mitzi,
from Minnesota,
wearing boots and backpacks.

Avid hikers, they’d heard tales
of the trails winding
through our garage, and felt,
during this time of pandemic-quietness, now would be the
time to have the trails
to themselves.

Hey, Mitzi yelled at me,
watch your distance.
You’re way closer than 8 feet.
Get back! We got here first.
Mitzi made her point
by poking at me with the end
of her hiking stick.

I moved backwards toward the door
that led into the house,
holding my spinach
in front of me like a small, cold
rectangular shield.
Got it, you go on ahead,
I said.

I know these trails well, how they
run through mountains of
Christmas decorations and
hills of bins full of memorabilia,
and the final canyon,
where the trail narrows, passing
between racks of earthquake-preparedness supplies.
Had they been nicer I would have warned them of the pitfalls...the precarious stack of empty Amazon boxes, the rakes and hoes propped along one pathway, tines up, awaiting a misstep.

Instead, I ducked into the house, quickly locking the door behind me. I set to making the lasagna and acted like I hadn’t seen a thing.