

## 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.