Pandemic

Haiku

Gregg Bordowitz
Virus variant
Becoming dominant strain
Pasta for dinner
Food delivery
Box left outside doorbell ring
Privilege greets air

Therapist session
Climate change catastrophe
Pandemic spreading

Breath on cell phone glass
Electronic devices
Autumn cold alone
Cold air coffee date
Smiley eyes social distance
Warm brown stimulant

Candid as a nude
Survivor amidst wreckage
One lonely figure
Chewy candy drops
Winter bare branches fig tree
Leafless. Still, there's buds

I recognize this
First the piano then horn
Smoky atmosphere
Masks wet with hot breath
Double layer cotton veils
Whole mind feels muffled

Frying potatoes
Mushrooms, tofu soaking oil
Wait for heat to work

You’ll sew and I’ll mend
We swap gripes like poker chips
And angrily cope
My dry sinuses
Cause irritating headaches
For me and others

Bedside lamp on bright
Snuggling under down blanket
Together reading

A group together
Each in their own rectangle
Studying Torah

Fear the slightest drafts
Old window insulation
A wood-frame house tilts
Time to be alone
To listen to my music
No interruptions

Birds, insects, and fish
Disappear from the planet
We watch old movies
Writing without thought
Pen to paper, shaky hand
Snow melting off trees

Nature is beyond
What’s seen through steamy glass panes
Sock feet on cold tiles

Fiery snowfall ash
Cold and heat are similar
Both can burn the flesh
Cold snowy lockdown
Listening hard to stillness
Distracted by thoughts

Second dose vaccine
Arm stiffening, ache spreading
Quick reaction time
Bodies heal themselves
Drinking fluids. Taking naps
And sometimes they die

Winter brevity
What’s left unsaid on corners
Lest we freeze to death

The frontline workers
Should get the support they need
But rollout is slow

Viscous density
Nightmare walking through water
Airless gelatin
Black Lives Matter march
Evenly spaced protesters
Gathering safely
Walking, sad, near tears
Can’t fully comprehend this
Accumulation

Dry heaves this morning
Cold beads of sweaty fatigue
Dozing on and off
Sum total of loss
It’s unquantifiable
No way to measure

Electric grid fails
Water contaminated
People are freezing
Forgotten artists
Empty museum hallways
Neglected pictures

Eleven months in
Virus variants appear
Waiting for vaccines

COVID pandemic
Repeats AIDS crisis problems
Who owns the patents?

Herd immunity
Conjures images of cows
Chewing grass slowly

Worrying the sheet
A dog’s paws circle and dig
Into bed mattress
When a poet dies
City lights surge against dawn
Just before sunrise
Greenland is melting
Pollinators are dying
Hellebore fighting

Terrible losses
Each suffers grieving alone
A void where he was
Winter becomes spring
As a checkerboard pattern
Rolled upon itself

Contact tracing list
City Health Department texts
Notifications

Two friends find lovers
Pandemic times are lonely
People find their ways

We’re separated
By vulnerability
Into groups and waves
Passover seder
Held on Zoom during COVID
For the second year

Celebrate the dead
Welcome them into the home
Hold conversations
The fig leaves spiral
Out of the knobby green twigs
Surprised it survived

Long haulers suffer
Fatigue confusion short breaths
For several months

Anniversary
Blossoms bursting amidst blight
Soil alive with grubs
At the mountain's base
Forever chemicals pool
Pandemic planet

Nothing more thoughtful
Than the daffodil turned down
Pondering the soil
“Unseasonable”  
(As if seasons still exist)  
The plants hold secrets