

Pandemica

A panorama
of pain and tainted teardrops
pooled in outstretched palms.

A gray bar-graph forms
a staircase of tragedy.
Angels help us down.

The smile is unmasked,
gentle fingers ungloved.
Nursing illusions.

Black beans, pinto beans
on piles of privileged white rice
avoiding the fork.

A queue of exhaust
fumes rise in silent protest
of rumbling stomachs,

Oatmeal boils and burps.

Bills scream unpaid in red ink.

Cell phones are silent.

Tables feel the dust,

grieve for phantom servers

who may not return.

Masks move through the aisles,

stop behind plastic divides.

Who'll mourn the cashier.

The saws are silent.

Farmers do the calculus

to slaughter their dreams

Open up—not now.

Angry mobs carry firearms,

soldiers of false choice.

The text reads, I'm here.

A Closed sign on the front door,
the back door opens.

Stubborn viral weeds
poke through cautious Spring flowers
social distancing.