My Pandemic Life

Sometimes I was happy, sometimes not.

Sometimes restless, sometimes content.

Lonely but I learned to enjoy my company.

I liked the freedom of no plans,

even though I kept myself so busy

it was as if I had plans.

Mostly I tried not to think about being alone.

Days became weeks. I kept days straight with

garbage out on Wednesday,

cans in Thursday,

Friday “Brooks and Shields” on PBS “News Hour”,

Sunday “Meet the Press.”

Rinse. Repeat.

I made rules. Get up by 8. Coffee, eat breakfast, dress.

Do hair. Keep moving. Keep the kitchen clean.

I felt free to break them too, except for

keeping the kitchen clean. I always did that.

I stayed out of public spaces.

Delivery and pick-up filled my needs.

I tipped generously.

News obsessed, I detested Trump, sure he wanted

people to die, especially people of color.

I prayed for Joe. “Keep him safe. Keep him well.

Save us from greed and selfishness. Save our nation.”

I consumed Netflix and Prime like popcorn.

After 5 PM, I told myself, “enough trying to be productive.

Relax. You made it another day.”

One day I read a whole book from beginning to end.

I finished projects. I fixed. I sorted

everything I owned. I wrote poems. I napped

when nights were sleepless.

I made lists: big projects, little projects,

what would make me happy.

I checked them off one by one.

I cooked delicious food.

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Before I went to sleep, I sat on the edge of my bed.

Feelings from the isolation and loneliness poured

into my heart, and in those few moments,

I felt the pain, then pushed it away again

so that the following day I could get up

and do it all over again.

The days were remarkable because it was/is

a remarkable time. I stayed home,

kept a small circle, wore a mask away from home

and car. Now, vaccinated twice,

immunity developed, the past year is a blank

having molded itself into one piece,

like a bar of chocolate melted in the sun.

I made it through, never getting sick,

maintaining some level of sanity.

I live to tell how this pandemic year

made me happier, more grateful,

more in love with being alive.