



2021

On the Day the Pandemic Was Declared

Elizabeth Weir

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Recommended Citation

Weir, Elizabeth (2021) "On the Day the Pandemic Was Declared," *The North Meridian Review*. Vol. 2 : Iss. 1 , Article 19.

DOI: 10.7825/2769-5115.1055

Retrieved from: <https://digitalcommons.butler.edu/thenorthmeridianreview/vol2/iss1/19>

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Elizabeth Weir grew up in England and lives in Minnesota. Her book *High on Table Mountain* was published by North Star Press in 2016 and was nominated for the 2017 Midwest Poetry Book Award. She received four S.A.S.E./Jerome awards, and her recent work has appeared in *Evening Street Review*, *Gyroscope*, *Turtle Island Quarterly*, *Talking Stick*, and the *Kerf*

On the Day the Pandemic Was Declared

March 11, 2020

Beyond breakfast and my kitchen window,
a Red-tailed Hawk landed, awkward, on the lawn.
I watched it hesitate, spring upwards, legs extended
to clutch at something unsuspecting in the grass.
The hawk rose with a garter snake writhing
in its talons, flew to a bare branch and tore
at the head. The flailing lash of tail stilled
as the hawk ripped and gulped down
chunks of flesh. The snake had been basking
in warm sun when death darted in.