

The News

2021 JANUARY BY VAIVA GRAINYTĖ

Vaiva Grainytė is a Lithuanian writer, playwright and poet.

Every year it's the same:
The colder weather doesn't bother to ask,
And ignoring the concept of borders,
It drives the spiders into my home.
The pregnant ones get first picks:
Almost as soon as they break in
They take up the best corners
Or the warm bathroom ceiling,
And
Give birth, give birth, give birth.

The colder weather isn't inclined to cool down
The night moths' passion for illusion:
'Light is our natural ID card,
Our special invitation to a wellness celebration!'
Or so they think, as they fly into my home and
Flutter, flutter, flutter
Until they sizzle
In the suicidal sauna of the lamp.

But here now is a landscape new to this year:
On the window sill, the inflorescences
Of face-masks stretch and air themselves out.
Those who don't know the news and context
Of the relatively new pandemic,
Might see them as
The shells of some kind of nuts—already husked,
Or as old, abandoned breast implants,
Or even as an extinct colony of expired protozoans.

But really—
Masks are a kind of police patrol.
And they regulate not only the length of my own life:

If I didn't come home each night,
Or fell seriously ill,
There would be no one to open the windows.

Entire generations of spiders have reason to honour these masks.
Entire generations of moths now have reason to curse
Not only the light of the lamp.

Translation by Rimas Uzgiris of Vaiva Grainytė's 'Naujienos'