Polar Vortex

Laurie D. Morrisey
Polar Vortex

Far to the north, a whirling mass
of arctic air sheds sheets of itself southward.

I pull my fingers out of their wool sheaths,
curl them into my palms for warmth,

and follow your signature in the snow
through the field, through a break

in the stone wall, where last summer
a garter snake and her heaped-up hatchlings

lay on sunbaked leaves.
Now they lie below, slow but awake.

I trudge onto the frozen lake,
Thoreau’s quiet parlor of fishes,

and stand as far as I can from any shore—
while down below, the spotted turtle rests

beneath a blanket of mud, his heart
beating once every eight frozen minutes.

Laurie D. Morrissey

Laurie D. Morrissey’s poems have appeared in The Worcester Review, Poetry East, Blueline, Acorn, Frogpond, Modern Haiku, The Heron’s Nest, and many other journals. Her collection of haiku, the slant of april snow, was published by Red Moon Press (2019). She lives in New Hampshire and is a poetry editor at The Worcester Review.