

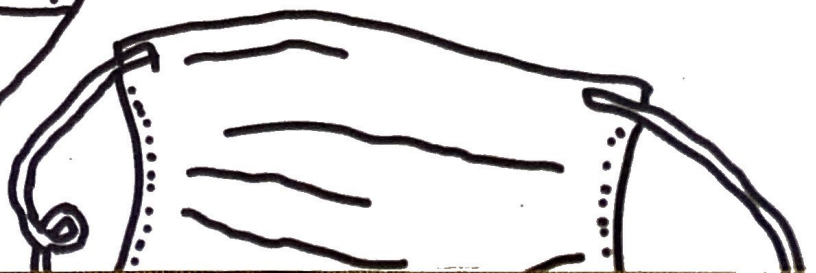
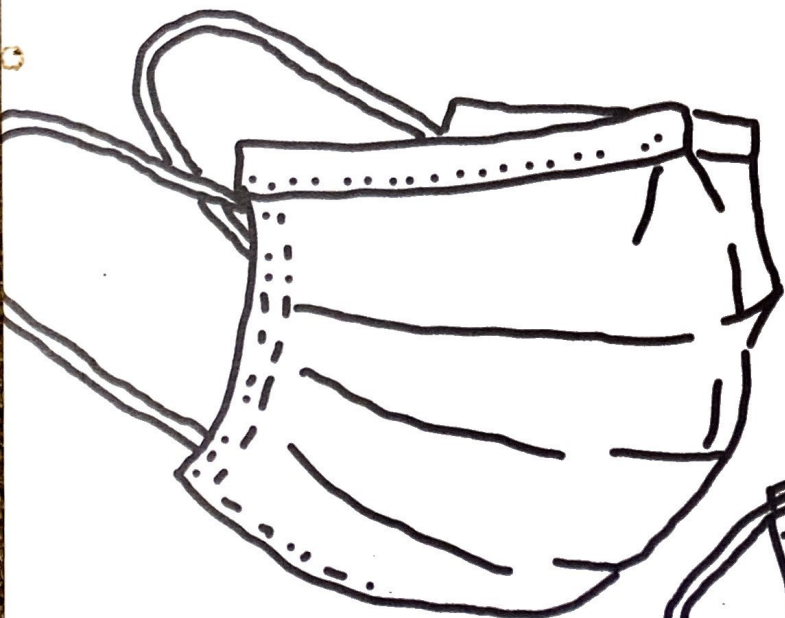
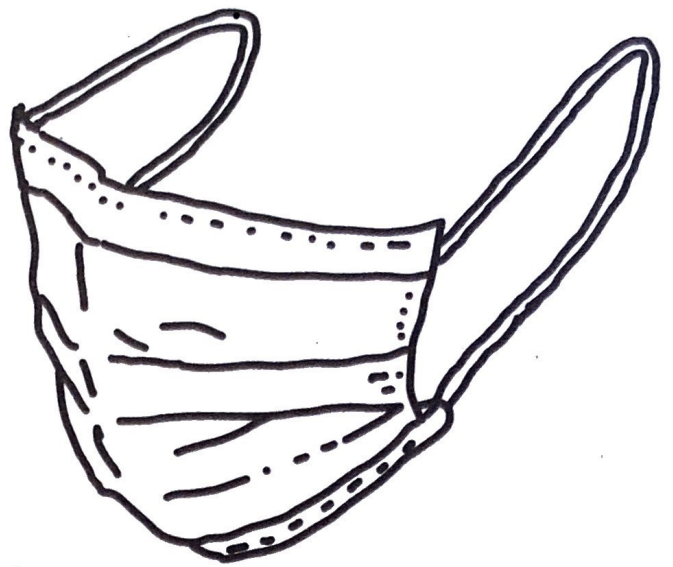
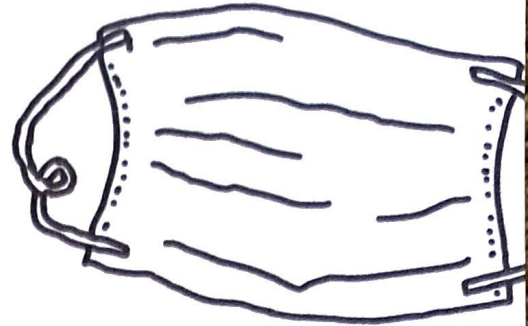
# The New Normal

POST PANDEMIC  
REFLECTIONS

BY VARIOUS POETS

COMPILED BY

Alan Maley



## What remains

*Sharoon Sunny*

no one to stake a claim  
but the weary grave-digger  
as we return to dust

the spider watches  
as the fly remains ensnared  
life hangs by a thin string

no wood for a fire  
no redemption for the soul  
nowhere to go

lavender and sage  
rosemary, thyme and incense  
now used to embalm

no time for goodbyes  
no time for last rites  
only time hereafter

what's the new normal?  
it will pass everyone said -  
prepare for next year.

*In memory of Patrick Early,  
Poet and friend.*

### **Foreword**

This collection is a follow up to *Something in the Air*, a volume of writings sparked by the first outbreak of the Covid Pandemic, published in 2020. A little over a year on, we return to reflections on the way Covid-19 has affected us, and the way our lives have been changed by it.

We have all lost something or someone. Not one of us has not been touched by the malign virus. And we are bound to ask what it all adds up to, and whether this is something that will pass — or whether we are in a new reality, not a casual blip. And are there any positive spin-offs from the pandemic?

The contributors consist of many of those who wrote for the earlier volume, along with some welcome newcomers, including some members of the Asia Teacher-Writers Group. Many of us, though not all, are or have been teachers of English as a Second Language. Altogether 14 nationalities are represented.

We are not a group in any formal sense. What brings us together is a shared interest in writing creatively about our lived experiences.

Alan Maley