

Songs of the Pandemic

World Haiku

REVIEW COPY

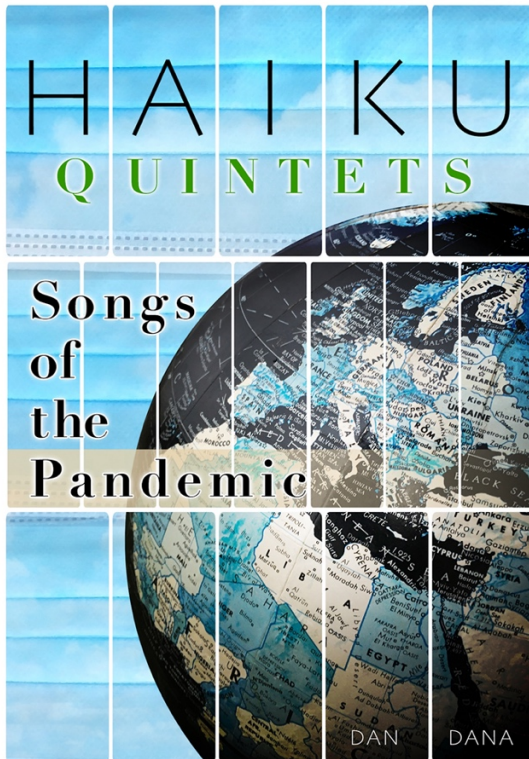
For college teachers, bookstore managers, library staff, book club leaders, and others for your consideration for acquisition and recommendation.

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Five Palms Press | Sarasota, Florida, USA

dandana.us/fivepalms

This 60-page PDF file contains all content of the 125-page book, available as paperback (6 x 9 inches) and ebook at Amazon.com and other booksellers. Formatting differs slightly from the published volumes.



Songs of the Pandemic: World Haiku tells 17-syllable stories by poets in 21 countries. A section of haiku quintets tell tightly woven tales in 85 syllables.

Dan Dana, in retirement, composes haiku quintets from his perch overlooking Florida's Sarasota Bay. See his bio at the Five Palms Press website link below.

What is a "haiku quintet?" Like other haikuists, I strive to pack maximum meaning into seventeen syllables in three unrhymed lines of 5-7-5 format, adopting the 17th Century Japanese style. Intentionally ambiguous words and phrases prompt the reader to project personal idiosyncratic significance onto the verse (think Rorschach inkblot). Diverging from tradition, and committing other poetic heresies, I compose a quintet of haiku under a single umbrella idea, which, as an ensemble, comprise a narrative theme. A photo or image illustrates and completes the finished piece. I dub this novel art form "verbal impressionism by curious wordcraft." Apologies to Basho for my unorthodoxy.

How to read this book:
Browse.
Let your mind wander.
Follow it there.
Repeat.

Five Palms Press
www.dandana.us/fivepalms

Front cover design: Sean Connor
Back cover photo: Claribel Connor



Songs of the Pandemic

2020 in Haiku

Cover design: Sean Connor
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Contents

1. Welcome to These Words
2. Dedication
3. Stage 1: Haiku Quintets
4. Stage 2: World Haiku
5. About
6. Other books

Welcome to These Words

Every haiku is a keyhole peek into the private world of its author, a microscope's lens revealing tiny, yet significant, life-moments. Each revealed moment is unique to its author, and each reader reconstructs from its seventeen fragments their own unique vicarious experience of that moment.

You, dear reader, have somehow survived this pandemic, so far, although its ravaging curse may have claimed lives and health among your family, friends, and neighbors. Congratulations on your good fortune, and condolences for your losses.

Tomorrow's historians may recall 2020 as a once-in-a-century inflection point. This century's first two decades may seem quaintly "normal" compared with our uncharted future. Then came COVID-19, a virus that has infected over 93 million people and killed nearly two million as of December 31. The coronavirus, drenched in a witch's brew of politics, has ignited economic disruption, poverty, homelessness, joblessness, migration, racial conflict, political upheaval, and re-arrangement of the world order. We shall see what Antevorta, Roman goddess of the future, has in store for our feeble and wounded species.

Meanwhile, we of poetic inclination seek comfort in artful words. We forage through heaps of language seeking bits of insight, reassurance, courage, and inspiration that may nourish and sustain us to put one foot in front of the other, one day at a time, as we make our way through the wreckage. Some of us are relatively privileged, by unearned circumstance and accident of birth, to survive this pandemic in style. Others, through no fault of our own, find its challenges profoundly difficult, and often lethal. May this collection of haiku lend humility to the privileged and compassion for the less fortunate.

These songs are performed on two stages, reflecting their distinct stylings:

Stage 1 offers "haiku quintets" of my own creation, bundles of five stanzas summing to 85 syllables. Like all haikuists, I strive to pack as much meaning as can fit into seventeen syllables in three unrhymed lines of 5-7-5 format, adhering to the 17th Century Japanese style. Diverging from tradition and committing other poetic heresies, I gather a quintet of haiku under

a single umbrella idea, which, as an ensemble, comprise a narrative theme. A photo or image illustrates and completes the final product. Apologies to Basho for my unorthodoxy.

Stage 2 offers 179 traditional single-verse haiku by 61 poets in 21 countries that provide glimpses of circumstances different from our own. They are arranged in no particular order, inviting you to browse aimlessly, as you would while strolling a beach, happening upon interesting shells and colorful bits that catch your attention. While curating this collection, I have been struck by our common humanity, bridging time zones, oceans, borders, and ethnicities.

Some of these songs may strike a familiar chord, reminding you of moments lodged in your own memory. Others will sing a distinctly foreign tune. Consider this book a world tour inviting you to peer through the mind's eye of over sixty fellow haikuists who have shared this orbit aboard spaceship Earth in the momentous year 2020.

All images are published by permission or source attribution, unless in public domain. All photos on Stage 1 were taken by me from the same spot overlooking Sarasota Bay, Florida.

Dedication

Bon Voyage

we're a cruising team
crossing fierce Pandemic Sea
each other's first mate

rising every morn
navigating through each day
'til our goodnight kiss

we share the tiller
steering clear of rocky shoals
and Covid's dark reef

yon fog-shrouded shore
who can know this journey's end?
we bid bon voyage

dear co-traveler
quarantine's sweet companion
let's sail on, my love



Photo: Susan in Greenland, August 2016

Stage 1: Haiku Quintets

My Race Against Time ~ Will I finish this before fate intervenes?

Final Moments ~ So, this is how it ends

The Crime of Killing Time ~ I sip slowly now

2020 ~ Existential year

The Black Swan Has Landed ~ Our surreal new normal

Coronavirus ~ Apocalypse now?

Comet Covid ~ A blast from within

Invisible Enemy ~ Beware the Trojan horse

The Joy of Nihilism ~ I will write haiku

Aging in Quarantine ~ Then is gone, but now is sweet

You Are My Afterlife ~ My stuff will go on, and on, and on ...

This Defining Moment ~ Where does this triple-threat lead?

BC ~ Before Coronavirus, when life was simple

Epidemiology ~ Pass the course ... or die

Pandemic on the Serengeti ~ Report from the Maasai

Introverts Unite! ~ What's so bad about self-quarantine?

Self-Quarantine Report ~ Home confinement works for me

Quarantine Cuisine ~ Good fortune's sour taste

Quarantine Coiffure ~ Paradigm shift in men's hairstyles

This Haiku Is About You ~ Can you find yourself in it?

I Forgot My Mask ~ Necessity is the mother of innovation

Covid Chicks ~ A hatching project

My Race Against Time

this healthy old dude
should survive corona bug
but still, there's a chance

this haiku e-book
may be final legacy,
if finished in time

we social-distance,
we facemask responsibly,
our friend-pod is small

rushing to complete,
and forward to publisher
before fate strikes me

Florida hotspot
not the best place to be, now
... I race against time

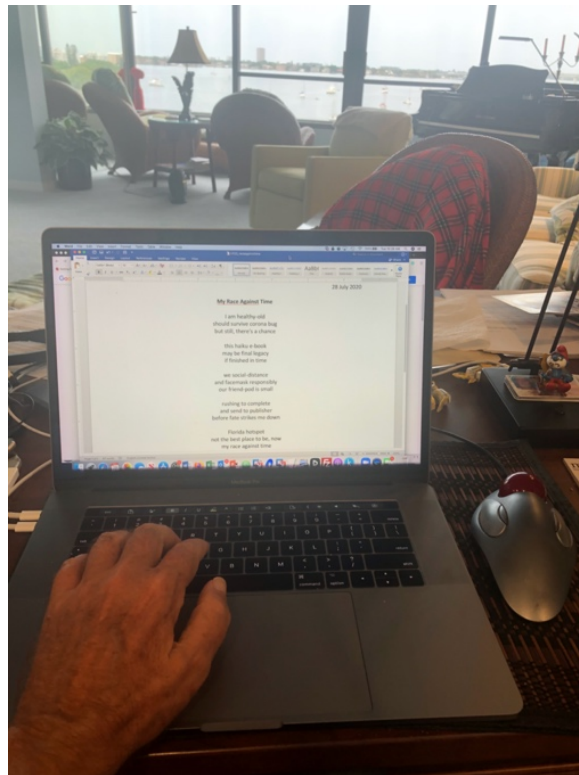


Photo: selfie

Final Moments

Covid's victim horde*
enduring final moments
thoughts ebbing, alone

nurse's tear-wet face
ventilator's steady beat
light fading to black

I wish you comfort
you were loved by those you loved
your good deeds remain

yielding to abyss
at eternal nothing's door
pain is near its end

so, this is death, at last?
being loved by those we loved
goodbye to the world

* Two million people have died of COVID-19 worldwide as of 1/15/2021 (CNN and other sources)



Image credit: World Magazine

The Crime of Killing Time

quarantine fillers
empty tasks, devoid of worth
staving off boredom

life's stark finitude
nonrenewable resource
spent one day per day

youth's bottomless cup
unconcerned for careless spills
blinded by plenty

elders' clearer sight
murky depth comes into view
we savor each drop

harking once-full cup
heeding crime of killing time
I sip slowly now



2020

existential year
pressing us to prune meaning
from its stark vastness

a pinhole of life
lush verdant complexity
one glimpse at a time

unmask hidden joys
in the leaded gray cloudscape
of collective grief

find strength or perish
trust Blind Instinct to survive
Victor Frankl did

Covid's simple quiz
each day's choice to live or die
I'll say *Yes to Life*



Inspired by Maria Popova @brainpickings
Photo: Victor Frankl revisiting Auschwitz
Photo source: Victor Frankl Institute, Vienna

The Black Swan Has Landed

Tranquility Base —
bomb shocks peaceful agora
left field's sneak attack

friends lose livelihoods
neighbors' fragile nest eggs crack
elders dread health scare

dim new normal dawns
surreal world supplants the old
fog lifts at crash scene

reframe this picture ...
lucky, compared to Earth-mates
think of Syrians

pandemic's lessons:
no woulda-coulda-shoulda
this phoenix shall rise

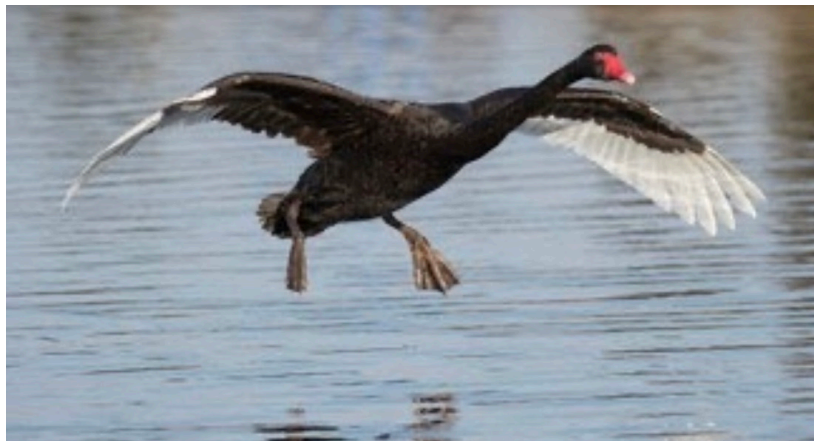


Image source: moneymorning.com

Coronavirus

millennium's plague?
pothole in life's long highway?
uncertainty looms

existential threat?
end of life as we've known it?
apocalypse now?

globe's supply chains break
world economy flat-lines
labor goes remote

Wall Street thinks it knows
lemmings follow off the cliff?
or, crowd's wisdom wins?

extend staycation
mask face, keep social distance
invest in Netflix

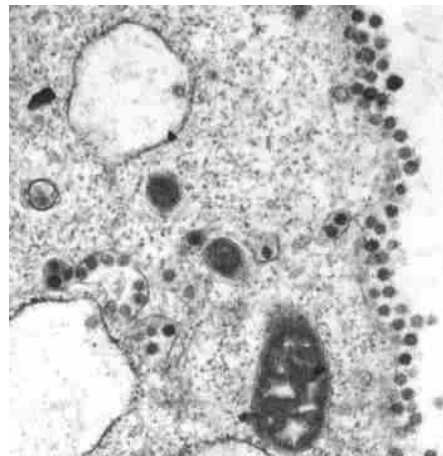


Image: Electron micrograph of COVID-19 (University of Hong Kong, 2020)

Comet Covid

virus strikes the Earth
asteroid crash from within
impact felt worldwide

social smithereens
economic A-bomb blast
global tsunami

throng's drown in deep grief
species lives, but people die
my fate waits, and yours

Divided States heals?
political gash sutured?
will patient survive?

innovations surge
togetherness finds a way
we can only hope



Image source: shutterstock

Invisible Enemy

those sneaky bastards
droplets of viral mucus
hiding in plain sight

on every surface
feigning guileless innocence
awaiting my hand

wily Trojan horse
breaching porous defenses
probing for portals

hijacking my cells
then wreaking bloody havoc
waging bio-war

an organism
mutating, reproducing
just like us humans

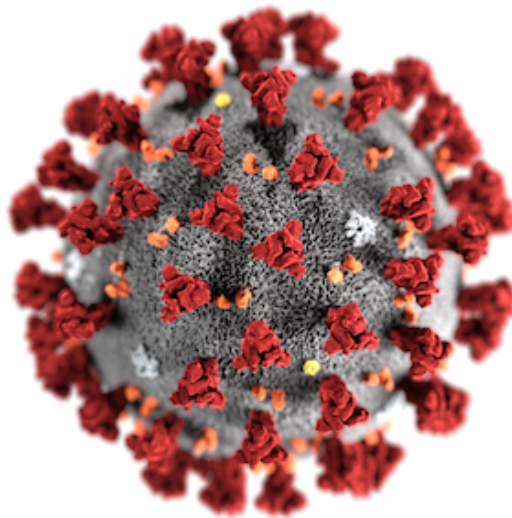


Image source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (cdc.gov)

The Joy of Nihilism

I will write haiku
I'll vote, pay tax, obey laws
be kind to others

but things I can't change
like future of planet Earth
and I/we will die

some will know I lived
my dust will return to dust
legacies die, too

meanwhile, here I am
observing my existence
in awe of this fact

I'll accept, not fight
surrender my will to fate
be. here. now. in peace



Photo: The author, enjoying his moment

Aging in Quarantine

yep, been there, done that
bucket list mostly scratched off
odd salve for this wound

to-do list is done
my life-book's eight decades thick
awesome read, so far

aah, these golden years
then is gone, but now is sweet
quarantine cocoon

young folks' burning dreams
time's a-wastin', boredom screams
fear of missing out

old man's few coins left
young man's wealth cries for splurging
I'm just fine, thank you



 Edit Profile

Dan Dana

Feminist

Husband & Father Of Strong Women

Author's ID badge at a breastfeeding conference accompanying his wife (a lactation consultant) and daughter (a new mom), circa 2005

You Are My Afterlife

my atoms will roam
join other earth-bound life forms:
mouse, bird, fish, worm, weed

as dad, my genes will
walk, talk, think, feel, reproduce
keeping human form

my molecules float
in air until Earth's days end
five billion years hence

Sun's sons go nova
generations of star-stuff
I'm galaxy-wide

as teacher-writer
some wise bits may carry on
perhaps this haiku?



This Defining Moment

dire triple threat looms:
virus, finance, politics
unprecedented

old lifestyles crumble
history unrhymes this time?
opaque crystal ball

middle class implodes
careers plunge, newbies take stage
graveyards populate

democracy dies?
inept captain sinks our ship?
election foretells

Brave New World redux
green lifescapes arise from ash
kids tell their grandkids



BC

aaah, those olden days
Before Coronavirus
when life was unspoiled

friend A had a job
friend B had plump piggy bank
friend C could dine out

friend D could shake hands
friend E could meet luncheon groups
friend F planned a cruise

friend G could fly home
wife could watch graduation
I could see grandkids

life back to normal
After Coronavirus?
can't wait to hug you



Photo credit: Jane Goodall Institute (janegoodall.org)

Epidemiology

nation of experts
epidemiologists
learning pandemics

Professor Fauci
America's top guru
teaching us daily

trillions of wee germs
exchanged in conversation
sight unseen ... who knew!

air- and surface-borne
hand-washing, facemask-wearing
death lurks on doorknobs

we know it all now
are you ready for the quiz?
pass the course ... or die

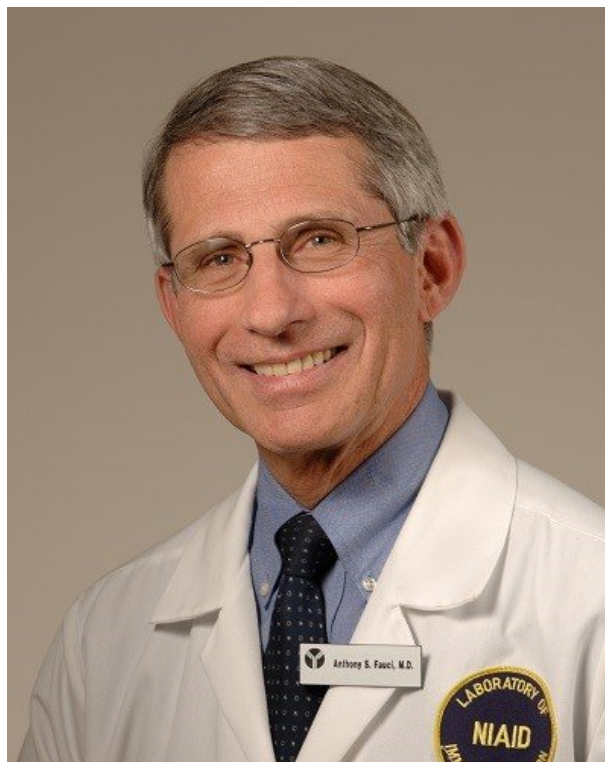


Image source: niaid.nih.gov

Pandemic on the Serengeti

Saruni's village
Serengeti's ancient plain
Covid hunts Maasai

masters of the wild
boffins of bush predators
virus threatens now

cattle's meat, blood, milk
victims of climate-change drought
rice, beans, maize replace

new normal befalls
social distance warps culture
masks disguise anguish

no pandemic deaths*
peaceful people on defense
for millennia

* As of 2 November 2020, as reported by Saruni, our friend since 2018 visit to Maasai Mara



Photo credit: Saruni Rolex Kasoe, pictured standing in shuka robe

Introverts Unite!

it's tiresome, I'm told,
in coronavirus times,
to self-quarantine

social-distancing
violates primal instinct:
craving party scenes

we introverts smile,
relishing our quiet days,
savoring calm space

shall we all unite?
create a fraternity?
join in common bond?

or, read long-shelved books
or, binge on Netflix movies?
or, write a haiku?



Self-Quarantine Report

in paired confinement
conjugal imprisonment
our luxury jail

two-bedroom, two-bath
internet, cable TV
comfy, just like home

great view of the bay
pantry stocked for life sentence
vintage dinner wine

daily walks allowed
sunset movie every night
introverts' delight!

serving our hard time
hands washed, safe social distance
could be worse ... much worse



Quarantine Cuisine

lunchroom with a view
magician in the kitchen
quarantine cuisine

lanai herb garden
basil, dill, peppermint farm
home-grown morning tea

sweet potato soup
lawn-kill mangoes in season
vodka ice cream treats

in-house Sunday brunch
New York Times' spiced brain-fodder
more than I can chew

good fortune befell
golden plate runneth over
so, whence this sour taste?



Quarantine Coiffure

calling all trimmers
PPE emergency!
essential hardware

beard tools go topside
why groom retired balding pates?
no meetings this month!

barber poles stop spin
hair-cutters seek new careers
blacksmiths' fate reprised

hair-care budget slashed
redefining "self-made man"
strut our bold fashion

Covid coif's new scene
move over, Vidal Sassoon
buzz cut's movin' in



This Haiku Is About You

you were on my mind
your strong presence stirred my muse
can you find yourself?

you are not named here
but this verse would not exist
if no you in me

have I asked too soon?
years hence this seed may burst forth
you'll shout, "there I am!"

of course, you'll wonder
where you're hidden midst these words
I would love to chat

if not for Covid
we might explore together
I'll wait, patiently



Photo: Sarasota morning

I Forgot My Mask

store clerk refused me
hurried to buy milk and bread
but forgot my mask

doffed my Calvin Kleins
emergency solution
clerk now lets me in

other rushed patrons
same awkward plight as my own
innovation works

lady's bra filled in
dad donned his baby's diaper
man stuffed dirty sock

pandemic lesson
the moral of this story:
don't forget your mask!



Image source: unidentified video clip

Covid Chicks

locked down in home jail
virus-tethered, time to spare
why not hatch some chicks?

high-rise condo perch
not your grandpa's chicken ranch
fitting view for fowl

rooster's dad-deed done
delivered by Fedex stork
don't scramble these eggs!

three weeks 'til hatch-day
incubator surrogate
warms and turns her kids

pecks and chirps announce
freedom from shell confinement
set to fly the coop!



Photo: Day four of life on the outside

Stage 2: World Haiku

Browse these 179 haiku authored by 61 poets who have endured this pandemic in 21 countries. They appear here in no particular order.

As you browse, let your mind wander.

Follow it there.

Observe the memories, emotions, thoughts, associations, and images that each haiku evokes within you. Listen to the music.

Pause to reflect.

Repeat.



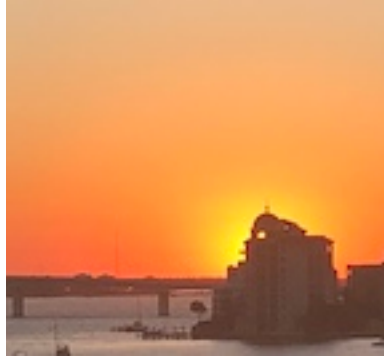
candle flickering
an empty chair reminds me
you are not with me
~ *Martin Wildman, UK (Devon, England)*

when we meet again
I'll hold you 'til our shared tears
wash away this year
~ *Alice Rivera, USA (California)*

woman on my phone,
I feel like I know you now.
what do you smell like?
~ *Hannah Lawrence, New Zealand*

creatures of habit
snatching back my proffered hand
before it's shaken
~ *Ingrid Baluchi, North Macedonia (Ohrid)*

pandemic song sung
in a soft sweet contralto
now sounds falsetto!
~ *Deepa Mazumdar, India (Pune)*



eighth month of lockdown
the house is full of love but
it's getting smaller
~ *Jason Gould, USA (Maine)*

in isolation
I raise my full glass to you
with British reserve
~ *C. L. Spillard, UK (York, England)*

closing eyes against
black glitter, I hug a friend
it won't happen here
~ *Claire Matturo, USA (Florida)*

end of pandemic
the first red berries gleaming
on a hawthorn twig
~ *Judit Hollos, Hungary (Budapest)*

they call us heroes
too exhausted to revolt
don't want your title
~ *Alexis Schmier (ICU nurse), USA (Baltimore, Maryland)*



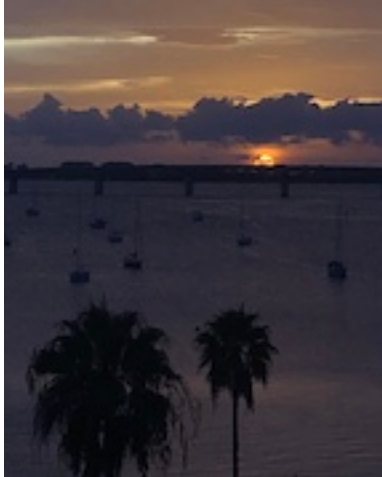
to live to tell these
horrors to my grandchildren:
my hope and my dread
~ *Grace Haewon Choi, USA (Vienna, Virginia)*

spitting in the wind
we whistle past the graveyard
crowns upon our heads
~ *Jay P. Botten, USA (Minneapolis)*

virus awareness
activists put a face mask
on the stone hero
~ *Anthony Obaro, Nigeria (Ihima, Kogi State)*

haiku of despair
smash this dreadful year into
seventeen pieces
~ *Barrie Levine, USA (Boston)*

tighten restrictions
my cat doesn't understand
social distancing
~ *Marina Bellini, Italy (Mantua)*



microscopic foe
cloth facial armor adorned
can't see our pained smiles

~ *Stephen Goldberg, USA (New York City)*

the white-haired lady
her face mask worn at half mast
has nothing to lose

~ *Marilyn Ward, UK (Lincolnshire)*

mourning fallen leaves
a quarter million souls shed
from bare tree branches

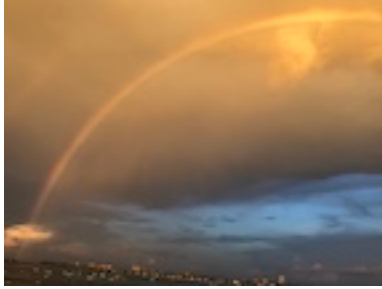
~ *Grace Haewon Choi, USA (Vienna, Virginia)*

just a pair of pears
in a vintage photograph
why am I crying?

~ *Jason Gould, USA (Maine)*

hydrangea blossoms
tracing back our ancestors
the mother and I

~ *Hifsa Ashraf, Pakistan (Rawalpindi)*



fretful eyes darting
carriers behind all masks
death unseen stalking

~ *Ray Rusin, USA (Woonsocket, Rhode Island)*

old friend's funeral
grey skies hurl heavy rain drops
bringing down blossoms

~ *Sophia Wilson, New Zealand (Otago, Aotearoa)*

who knew that I'd need
to see my grandmother's face
just when I couldn't

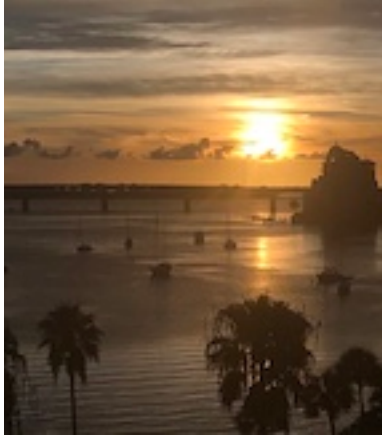
~ *Adream Thompson, USA (Buford, Georgia)*

technology bridge
a love longing to utter
a final goodbye

~ *Sylvia Avery, Canada (Toronto)*

new neighbors move in
bringing us in quarantine
a fresh olive leaf

~ *Therese Sellers, Greece (Nea Epidaurus, Argolis)*
and *USA (Gloucester, Massachusetts)*



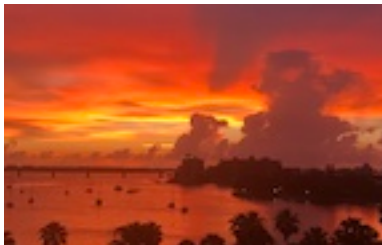
one hundred thousand
that is not just a number
each one has a name
~ *Grace Haewon Choi, USA (Vienna, Virginia)*

back to Dark Ages
the effects of a virus
to people's mindset
~ *Marina Bellini, Italy (Mantua)*

bundle this year's plans
into a paper sailboat
and float them downstream
~ *Jenn Ryan-Jauregui, USA (Tucson, Arizona)*

karma is mentioned
did we hurt the earth badly?
is winter coming?
~ *Nelson Brooks, UK (London)*

masked in the market
old man's list drops at my feet
I don't pick it up
~ *Stephen Joseph, USA (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania)*



online speaking test
all my mischievous students
wearing their face masks
~ *R. Suresh Babu, India (Chikmagalur)*

sketching death in the
garden of cold dry leaves and
wait for life's return
~ *B. A. France, USA (Annapolis, Maryland)*

rains of the monsoon
are not why we are indoors
with time to reflect
~ *Jack Murnighan, Myanmar (Yangon)*

autumn fashion week
the couture houses debut
new line of face masks
~ *Jenn Ryan-Jauregui, USA (Tucson, Arizona)*

face behind the mask
fearful thoughts spread so swiftly
faster than disease
~ *Keng Pin Toh, Singapore*



golden light once fell
where now only broken clouds
illuminate hope
~ *Stephen Joseph, USA (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania)*

all our homes are now
safe houses where we hide from
the dangerous world
~ *Celia Moses, USA (Boston)*

all over... for now
we knew each other better
between every wave
~ *Ian Richardson, UK (St Andrews, Scotland)*

missing relatives
at the holiday table
phone calls for dessert
~ *Roberta Beach Jacobson, USA (Indianola, Iowa)*

be responsible
isolate yourself inside
slowly lose your mind
~ *Kenton Oliver, (Canada (Vancouver BC))*



just one little cough
pandemic paranoia
deer in the headlights
~ *Eve Castle, USA (Dallas)*

lockdown with mother
and I thought my teenage years
were the most stressful
~ *Tracy Davidson, UK (Warwickshire, England)*

home alone drinking
a bottle of Cabernet
flattening the curve
~ *Michael H. Lester, USA (Los Angeles)*

it's solitary
masking for community
solidarity
~ *Tammy Scheuermann, USA (Chicago)*

blurred time horizons
time weighed not in weeks
but sourdough cycles
~ *Hege Jakobsen Lepri, Norway (Oslo)*



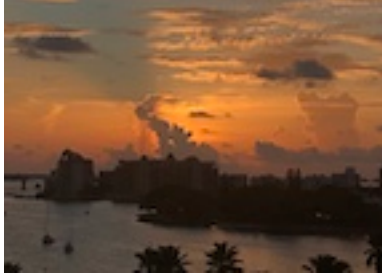
war and pandemics
alternate fear with sitting
around. waiting. bored
~ *Celia Moses, USA (Boston)*

blood red evening sky
ambulances whizz for life
through deserted roads
~ *Nisha Raviprasad, India (Kochi, Kerala)*

migrant labourers
the temple shelters prepare
free food packages
~ *Christina Chin (Malaysia)*

outside the confines,
the emergent fears within,
freely dissipate
~ *Stephen Joseph, USA (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania)*

social distancing
reluctant members have joined
antisocials' club
~ *Yaw Ayisi, Ghana (Dansoman)*



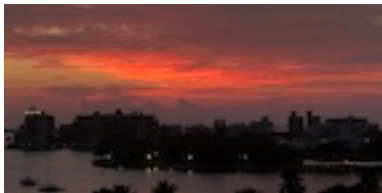
I don't want to see
the whole of your face so please
just smile with your eyes
~ *Megeath Brockway, USA (Sombriillo, New Mexico)*

we die if we wait
'til opportunity knocks
no second chances
~ *Ian Richardson, UK (St Andrews, Scotland)*

skyping with a friend
on my laptop at Christmas
we exchange our gifts
~ *Meik Blöthenberger, USA (Hanover, Pennsylvania)*

carefree and cloudless
the sun on each face shining
now masked and longing
~ *Jay Loftin, China (Zhuhai, Guangdong)*

her remote classroom
from a dining room table
a dog at her feet
~ *Roberta Beach Jacobson, USA (Indianola, Iowa)*



new local groupings
charm of finches, flock of geese
kindness of neighbours
~ *Clodagh O'Connor, Ireland (Dublin)*

looking for new path
that hopefully leads away
from the pandemic
~ *RD McManes, USA (Kansas)*

colour pokes grey skies
vaccine rides on rainbow's arc
steel city glinting
~ *Sheila McGill, UK (Sheffield, South Yorkshire)*

they cough, "four more years"
rallies in heat and the cold
lives risked for a clown
~ *Mary David-Snow, USA (Illinois)*

soft autumn showers
pandemic air still lingers
amongst petrichor
~ *Nisha Raviprasad, India (Kochi, Kerala)*



covered face conveys
responsibility shared:
gesture of respect
~ *Neil Rodrigues, Thailand (Chon Buri)*

the Day of the Dead
the stench of chrysanthemums
fills my empty rooms
~ *Hege Jakobsen Lepri, Norway (Oslo)*

rising beauty
from the mud of pandemic
a sweet lotus blooms
~ *Megeath Brockway, USA (Sombrillo, New Mexico)*

at home with my books
still waiting and waiting for
herd immunity

~ *Anna Maria Domburg-Sancristoforo, The Netherlands*

six feet away should
not seem as far as it does
but it's way too far

~ *Stephen Goldberg, USA (New York City)*



we stared in horror
a maskless man hid his face
sneezing and coughing

~ *Melisa Quigley, Australia (Melbourne)*

divided country
disease disbelieved spreading
dirges sung by all

~ *Swarndeeep Gill, USA (California, Pennsylvania)*

pandemic lockdown
sending bereaved family
a virtual hug

~ *Monalisha Gogoi, India (Assam)*

grandfather to five
I wish we knew the secret
to keep you alive

~ *Alexis Schmier (ICU nurse), USA (Baltimore, Maryland)*

isolation hours
far too much time trying on
my funeral suit

~ *John Hawkhead, UK (Wiltshire, England)*



getting accustomed
to living this year's nightmare
one day at a time

~ *Michael H. Lester, USA (Los Angeles)*

little hand shy smile
reaches to gram's window hand
love in loneliness

~ *Donna Weitz, Canada (Victoria, BC)*

one-point-four million
felled humans don't leave behind
tree stumps in the yard

~ *Adream Thompson, USA (Buford, Georgia)*

doctor's checkup now
hello sir. I know the drill.
turn your head. don't cough

~ *Michael Dorsher, China (Hong Kong)*

I'm the lucky one
who buys the last garlic clove
in grocery stall

~ *Patrick Wafula, Kenya (Nairobi)*



held your hand through death
iPad whispers last goodbyes
yet my friends won't mask

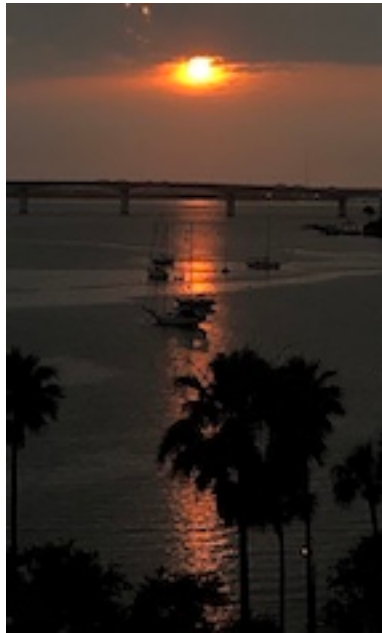
~ *Alexis Schmier (ICU nurse), USA (Baltimore, Maryland)*

thief in a mask holds
breastfeeding mother's handbag
as she cries her thanks
~ *Keith Nunes, New Zealand (Napier)*

eyes brimming with tears
I touch the screen and your smile
I can't feel your warmth
~ *Randy Coombs, USA (Golden, Colorado)*

fake masks will come, go
but the near and dear lost, killed,
are lost forever
~ *Unmesh Mohitkar, India (Pune)*

an older raccoon
keeps six feet ahead of me
he will show the way
~ *Pat Geyer, USA (East Brunswick, New Jersey)*



to bury a child
whose pale hand you could not hold
shatters the numb heart
~ *Jeff Burton, Australia (Toowoomba, Queensland)*

a lone pigeon stood
looked for food. no leftovers.
empty streets. Covid
~ *Celia Moses, USA (Boston)*

lockdown challenges
knowing what it must be like
cooped up in a zoo
~ *Ingrid Baluchi, North Macedonia (Ohrid)*

you work from your home
not “all in this together”
please take down those signs
~ *Alexis Schmier (ICU nurse), USA (Baltimore, Maryland)*

overripe peaches
the unending arguments
at dinner table
~ *Hifsa Ashraf, Pakistan (Rawalpindi)*



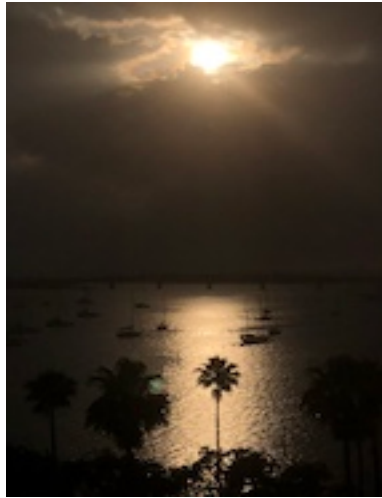
selfsame reflection
once most favored friend of all
too familiar now
~ *Aditya Rao, USA (Florida)*

the little girl wails
reaches to gram's window hand
quarantine teared smiles
~ *Donna Weitz, Canada (Victoria, BC)*

lonely soul ticks days
only birds for company
Covid brings visits
~ *Sheila McGill, UK (Sheffield, South Yorkshire)*

I skip the haircut
the barber's breath more lethal
than sharpened scissors
~ *Barrie Levine, USA (Boston)*

a small funeral
for a popular person
only few could come
~ *Yaw Ayisi, Ghana (Dansoman)*



these strange new neighbors
muffled hellos behind masks
when did they move here?
~ *Hege Jakobsen Lepri, Canada (Toronto)*

I hope we can keep
some of the changes we've made
redefine normal
~ *Adrien Kimbrough, USA (Seattle)*

deadening comfort
now happy to not go out
stillness becomes me
~ *Jason Catena, USA (Chicago)*

death crawled in silence
sonata of prickly thorns
bemusing mankind
~ *Deepa Mazumdar, India (Pune)*

Zoom is exhausting
sucking my soul through the screen
leaving me empty
~ *Lindsay Moore, USA (Denver)*



packed homeless shelter
the moon's halo now shining
in warmer colors
~ *Judit Hollos, Hungary (Budapest)*

piece by piece we stack
the memories of times past
in lieu of fresh ones
~ *Alice Rivera, USA (California)*

safe distancing's on!
bumping fists, not shaking hands
latest social trend
~ *Keng Pin Toh, Singapore*

oh when will we meet
again? I ask people who
live in the same town
~ *Celia Moses, USA (Boston)*

the lonely rustle
unwatered plants die in time
to the Covid cough
~ *Donna Weitz, Canada (Victoria, BC)*



alone in this room
must preserve our PPE
no help may enter

~ *Alexis Schmier (ICU nurse), USA (Baltimore, Maryland)*

turn of a leap year
wishing my sister on Zoom
happy beginnings

~ *Anna Maria Domburg-Sancristoforo, The Netherlands*

dancing in silence
the virus hops lung to lung
searching for a home

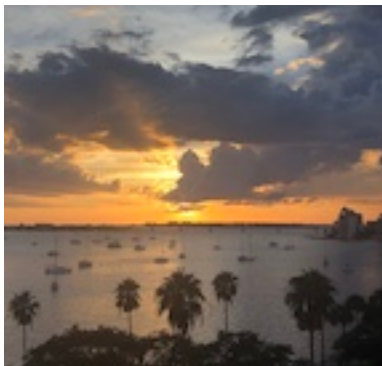
~ *Pamela Mard, USA (Charlotte, North Carolina)*

smiles imagined bright
now masked and far out of sight
await the sunshine

~ *Jay Loftin, China (Zhuhai, Guangdong)*

wishing for a clown
the nurses come to juggle
in a children's ward

~ *Lovette Carter, USA (Douglasville, Georgia)*



masking feelings now
quietly not applauding
spirit blitzed away
~ *Adam Ianbarry, UK (North West England)*

sunflowers burst tall
Kansas' answer to covid
reach high, seeking light
~ *Shawna Davidson, USA (Kansas)*

so many colours
of the pandemic year's moon
life's kaleidoscope
~ *Hifsa Ashraf, Pakistan (Rawalpindi)*

ignoring our loss
fallen leadership tumbles
our breath is precious
~ *Roxanna Caughey, USA (Nashville, Tennessee)*

pandemic lockdown
neighbourhood refuse swells up
in lager bottles
~ *Adjei Agyei-Baah, Ghana (Kumasi)*



winter sunshine drips
tired workers wrestle with death
the typhoon rages
~ *Anita Maina Nabonne, UK (Newcastle upon Tyne, England)*

distance between us
filled with hot soup and warm thoughts
grandma's recipes
~ *Jason Gould, USA (Maine)*

I tie wee pigtails
with Nana's thinning grey hair
in Covid lockdown
~ *Anne Curran, New Zealand (Hamilton)*

funeral by Zoom
chatter and stamp of vultures
over goat carcass
~ *Blessmond Alebna Ayinbire, Ghana (Bolganga)*

outside the window
ginkgo leaves still on branches
wait for a vaccine
~ *Marina Bellini, Italy (Mantua)*



choice and consequence
fools dance as the band plays on
breathless at the end
~ *Jay P. Botten, USA (Minneapolis)*

this island nation
bound by the Anzac spirit
faced the foe and won
~ *Jeff Burton, Australia (Toowoomba, Queensland)*

a slow ebbing tide
the flowing undercurrent
of ventilator
~ *Marilyn Ward, UK (Lincolnshire)*

many months indoors
belly grows big and it shows
Covid baby born
~ *Paula Spitale, Italy (Udine)*

introverted life
unaffected by distance
bubble still secure
~ *L. M. Shayle, Canada (Montreal, Quebec)*



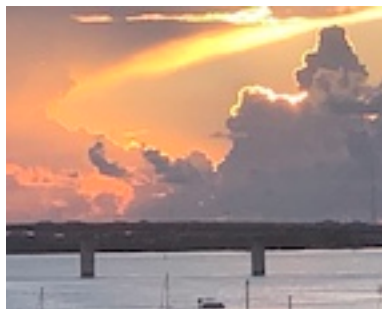
pregnant caregiver
on her duty in Covid ward
rubs belly with love
~ *R. Suresh Babu, India (Chikmagalur)*

after the party
coffins waiting in a row
for huge mobile morgues
~ *Carol Raisfeld, USA (Atlantic Beach, New York)*

ambulances queue
outside hard-pressed hospitals
the crisis deepens
~ *Jenni Wyn Hyatt, UK (Derbyshire, England)*

a pregnant woman
heading a dripping bucket
on Soweto street
~ *Patrick Wafula, Kenya (Nairobi)*

her fine waist thickens
in Covid19 lockdown
nursing apartment
~ *Anne Curran, New Zealand (Hamilton)*

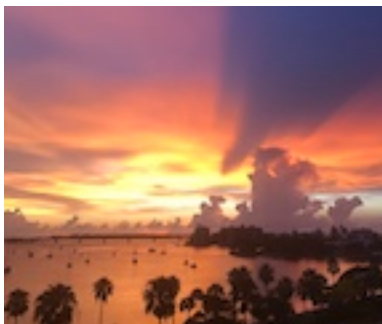


my dear poet-tree
our ends are coterminous
we die together
~ *Aditya Rao, USA (Florida)*

I hear no music
bitter wailing of blind death
a year has gone by
~ *Pixie Dust, Canada (Vancouver, BC)*

once predictable
our boring lives now shaken
becomes challenging
~ *Christina Chin (Malaysia)*

new to home-working
we break away from silence
to dance the samba
~ *Ingrid Baluchi, North Macedonia (Ohrid)*



in lockdown again
protected yet depressed by
pixelated life
~ *Bessie Crum, USA (Chicago)*

the city's now dead
from waves of total lockdown
and victims in graves
~ *Keng Pin Toh, Singapore*

morning garden stroll
past pink and yellow roses
learning new routines
~ *Roberta Beach Jacobson, USA (Indianola, Iowa)*

eyes glint above blue
a covert smile brightening
these uncertain times

~ *L. M. Shayle, Canada (Montreal, Quebec)*

my daughter's eyes hurt
doing kid life through a screen
hope she recovers

~ *Lindsay Moore, USA (Denver)*



tendrils of morning
I wonder what the new day
will no longer bring

~ *John Hawkhead, UK (Wiltshire, England)*

Friday drinks with friends
the Zoom screen sticky with gin
pandemic meets fun

~ *Hege Jakobsen Lepri, Norway (Oslo)*

all masked up on train
saw a killer pompadour
epic day indeed

~ *Michael Dorsher, China (Hong Kong)*

snatching and grabbing
nothing left to eat tonight
tears fall on tiled floor

~ *Melisa Quigley, Australia (Melbourne)*

in isolation
pigeon in the balcony
keeps me company

~ *Nisha Raviprasad, India (Kochi, Kerala)*



the sky hid today
not really, it was too big
but it was trying

~ *Seamus Connor USA (Cambridge, Massachusetts)*

with vaccines we rise
step out into daylight lives
meaningful again

~ *Ian Richardson, UK (St Andrews, Scotland)*

on her wedding day
in masks the family cries
for members just lost

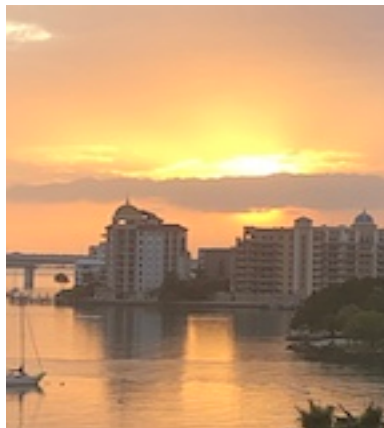
~ *Carol Raisfeld, USA (Atlantic Beach, New York)*

workers on the farm
social distancing apart
tomato harvest

~ *Anthony Obaro, Nigeria (Ihima, Kogi State)*

leaves color a pond
bare trees ponder all the loss
as healing begins

~ *Jim Grey, USA (Martinez, California)*



it's April it's May
it's June it's the end of June
it's January

~ *Mark Gilbert, UK (Nottingham, England)*

I stand at gravesite
cocktail of grief and regrets
mercilessly lost

~ *Sylvia Avery, Canada (Toronto)*

still in quarantine
she sings her baby a song
about life after

~ *Carol Raisfeld, USA (Atlantic Beach, New York)*

pandemic buying
sellers overprice items
amid public cry

~ *Isaac Ofori-Okyere, Ghana (Akyem Osorase)*

keeping our distance
left to our own devices
guess we got our wish

~ *Jennifer Patino, USA (Las Vegas, Nevada)*



across Offa's Dyke
friends and family aging
will we meet again?

~ *Jenni Wyn Hyatt, UK (Derbyshire, England)*

I want to get a
Covid-19 piñata
and just go to town
~ *Grace Haewon Choi, USA (Vienna, Virginia)*

wearing a face mask
I still can look through her eyes
feel the inner light
~ *R. Suresh Babu, India (Chikmagalur)*

a new plot taken
inside a small child's playhouse
all the tears are real
~ *Lovette Carter, USA (Douglasville, Georgia)*

how it is to feel
a human touch, a kiss, hug
I don't remember
~ *Pixie Dust, Canada (Vancouver, BC)*



they talk of Covid
passing the eerie silence
of cemeteries
~ *Carol Raisfeld, USA (Atlantic Beach, New York)*

in public transport
everyone is single spaced
like a typed statement
~ *Yaw Ayisi, Ghana (Dansoman)*

everything locked down
still the boss calls to ask why
he doesn't see me
~ *B. A. France, USA (Annapolis, Maryland)*

the sea advances
a grandparent's lungs drown in
salty secretions
~ *Sophia Wilson, New Zealand (Otago, Aotearoa)*

deserted autumn
discarded masks blown like leaves
carrying lost smiles
~ *Randy Coombs, USA (Golden, Colorado)*



divided by veils
blue cotton and paper thin
we won't forget masks
~ *Jay Loftin, China (Zhuhai, Guangdong)*

cover your damn face
you could be spreading a plague
think about others
~ *Dathan Brown, USA (Chicago)*

convention centers
converted to hospitals
ice cream truck coffins
~ *Eve Castle, USA (Dallas)*

the space between us
mourning that hug we forsake
in pandemic times
~ *Hege Jakobsen Lepri, Canada (Toronto)*

city in lockdown
sidewalks deserted midday
silent boulevards
~ *Stephen Goldberg, USA (New York City)*



on the empty street
a kangaroo gallops by
pandemic lockdown

~ *Anthony Obaro, Nigeria (Ihima, Kogi State)*

new normal playground
swings, seesaws, and sandboxes
wrapped in police tape

~ *Barrie Levine, USA (Boston)*

December morning
Santa smiles to a toddler
from under the mask

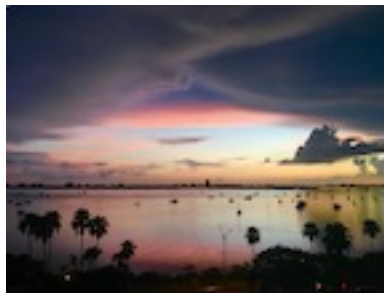
~ *Anna Maria Domburg-Sancristoforo, The Netherlands*

the doctor's office
even if I wanted to
I couldn't get in

~ *Adream Thompson, USA (Buford, Georgia)*

wafting aroma
neighbour shares new recipe
through zoom video

~ *Nisha Raviprasad, India (Kochi, Kerala)*



no health insurance
she was found dead in her bed
a countless victim
~ *Eve Castle, USA (Dallas)*

selfish deniers
whining about the lockdowns
the dead fill the morgues
~ *Amy Lawsky, USA (Chicago)*

playgrounds closed again
no space in cities for kids
sorry for the mess
~ *Michael Dorsher, China (Hong Kong)*

distorted face masks
going up into the sky
become cirrus clouds
~ *Dorna Hainds, USA (Lapeer, Michigan)*

Daylight Savings ends
we all get an extra hour
of the pandemic
~ *Jason Gould, USA (Maine)*



running out of gas
endless cars lined up for food
baby is crying
~ *Megeath Brockway, USA (Sombrillo, New Mexico)*

hand prints on glass panes
streak with the warmth of our tears
Covid prison bars
~ *Anita Maina Nabonne, UK (Newcastle upon Tyne, England)*

first two months of year
such dear memories they hold
pre-pandemic life

~ *Jenn Ryan-Jauregui, USA (Tucson, Arizona)*

greener grass contents,
the other side of boredom,
happiness awaits

~ *Raphael Shehata, Canada (Langley, British Columbia)*

putting on my mask
it smells of Tide detergent
on this rainy day

~ *Meik Blöttenberger, USA (Hanover, Pennsylvania)*



they thought it would last
home working and no commute,
mental harm began

~ *Nelson Brooks, UK (London)*

I hope you've enjoyed
haiku pandemic world tour
stay safe and be well

~ *Dan Dana, USA (Sarasota, Florida)*



About Dan

I am a retired mediator, psychologist, and educator living with wife Susan in Sarasota, Florida, USA. Born in 1945 on a family farm in Missouri, I served, reluctantly, in the U.S. Army in Vietnam (non-combat) and Panama Canal Zone (1966-1968). Holding the PhD in psychology from University of Missouri (1977), I am the author of two books on mediation and one on secular humanism in addition to the current series involving haiku quintets. I am the father of one and grandfather of two. For more, see www.dandana.us

Bits of biodata squeezed into the mold of a haiku quintet:

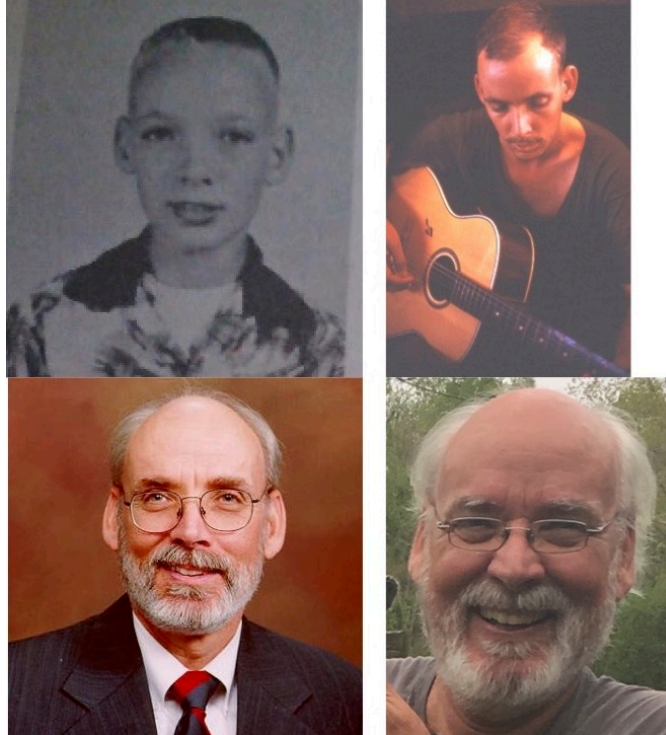
Midwest born and bred
family farmland culture
at baby boom's cusp

farm work not my style
nor army life, I soon found
education called

classroom's seeds took root
psychology fit my bill
then, mediation

teaching called me first
self-enterprise beckoned soon
science-based worldview

soul mate Susan shares
Sarasota tree-nest joy
retired haiku bard



1955 – 1968 – 2003 – 2018

Other books

View links at www.dandana.us/fivepalms to:

- *Haiku Quintets*
- *Science and Secularism: Haiku Quintets*
- *Common Ground: Haiku, Mediation, and Police Reform*
- *Resisting Trumpism: Haiku Quintets*
- *The Reason Revolution: Atheism, Secular Humanism, and the Collapse of Religion*
- *Conflict Resolution: Mediation Tools for Everyday Worklife*
- *Managing Differences: How to Build Better Relationships at Work and Home*