

Shopping Days

In Gran's time, weekend shopping was ceremonial.
They used to dress-up, wearing hats and scarves
anchored with brooches, smart shoes
and special handbags - used only once a week.
They took an early bus to town, paid for
out of woven cloth purses that snapped shut.
Those were shopping days, with much to do,
finished off with tea and sandwiches
at a favourite department store, with
piano music that tinkled in the background.

We've just recently revived that weekly tradition.
But our lock-down shopping days happen,
whenever we feel we'll miss those queues.
We travel singly in cars, unsure if we'll be stopped.
Stand in lines - a safe distance apart -
that snake out of the shops, into centre corridors,
sometimes even into parking lots.
Many of us wear scarves too, but ours
cover noses and mouths - leaving
only our eyes exposed.

We get it over and done with
as quickly as possible, with little ritual.
All we take home is food, no silk
stockings or haberdashery items -
and there's no meeting afterwards
with friends for tea.
Perhaps tonight, I might dream
about going shopping with Gran.