

## **Interview After the Pandemic**

How many masks did you stitch with strong thread?

*One, first. Then two. Three. More.  
Then some for all my neighbors.*

How often did you soap and rinse your hands?

*I sang "The Farmer in the Dell" two thousand times.*

Did your washing machine break down?

*My shirts are paler. My pants wore thin.  
And shoes! They made the dryer tremble.*

When did you last embrace a friend?

*I learned to touch by pressing keys.  
People shrank to squares of Zoom.*

Where did you go to find God's beauty?

*Empty walkways. A lake's lone edge.  
(Always dreading others' steps.)*

What will you do with your masks now?

*Shred them. Burn them.*

What will you do with your masks now?

*Sew them into a heritage quilt  
to be cut apart when a new virus  
spreads its deadly breath.*