

**The Mask by Sarah Heavren, '21**

The mask cannot hide my fears  
Nor make emotions disappear.  
Its function is critical.  
Its protection is physical.

Its weight can feel like concrete.  
It muffles my voice when I speak.  
It means so very much more  
Than a mandate to go outdoors.

The problem is not the mask.  
Wearing it is a simple task.  
It is for the greater good,  
But it evokes a somber mood.

Days of loss and days of change  
Make the familiar too strange.  
The mask makes mouths disappear,  
But the mask cannot hide my tears.