



## THE POETICS OF A PLAGUE: A Haiku Diary

*Sandy Jeffs*

no pot holders, felt  
hats, quilt rugs or sourdough  
to show, and no

grand projects done, just  
these humble haikus that tell  
the tale of how we

lived through this virus  
its existential despair  
counting off the days.

During the pandemic, Melbourne became the most locked down city in the world, restricting five million people largely to the confines of their homes for months on end. Poet and mental health advocate Sandy Jeffs was one of them.

This diary, written in haiku form, takes the reader through the daily grind of lockdown, with Sandy's humorous and sharp insights on local and national politics, as well as international events like the US election, all written from her study, aka haiku central.

On the coronacoaster with Sandy, she takes us from humour to despair, counting syllables and case numbers, marking birthdays in lockdown, as sewing machines come into demand, the Arts industry goes into freefall, and Melbourne experiences a black summer followed by the pandemic, a super storm and an earthquake. Her poems mark the changing moods.

As the world is in the grip of COVID madness, sanity is found in poetry.

*Light in a dull time  
Best start to a better day  
Aptly delightful*

— Peter Doherty, medical scientist & Nobel Prize winner

**Sandy Jeffs OAM** is a prize-winning poet and the author of 8 collections including the bestselling collection, *Poems from the Madhouse*, *Blood Relations* *The Wings of Angels: A Memoir of Madness* and *The Mad Poet's Tea Party*. Her non-fiction includes prize-winning books the memoir, *Flying with Paper Wings* and *Out of the Madhouse* (with Margaret Leggatt).



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*Poetry*