



The New Normal

By Isobel McElligott

For this poem my aim was to make light of the difficulty everyone is facing in lockdown and to show to people that everyone is feeling the same. Despite the dark nature of the poem, the beginning is meant to act as a reminder for life before lockdown, and what will soon come back to us.

Restless nights leave me drained
Lulling in and out of slumber throughout the day
I wake up to a darkness staring back at me
I go to sleep with the same fate, devoid of sunlight

Feelings of sluggishness,
Days transfixed and faces plastered to screens
Fast food and snacking consuming my days
Blurry vision from watching too much tv

Online classes leaving me confused
Deadlines looming, yet no motivation
Social life disappearing, friends lost
Trying to build connections on zoom

I long for the buzz of a busy crowd,
The bustle of a bar, the people loud
The queasy nervousness before a night out,
Uncontrollable laughter erupting between with friends

Spilt drinks and clumsy behaviour,
Buses filled with happy singing
I wish for the panic of not knowing what to wear
Messy rooms and what to do with my hair

I dream of beaches and sun hats,
Sands stuck in my shoes for weeks on end
Sticky ice cream melting on over my fingers,
Afternoon naps accompanied by the July heat

I wake up to my harsh reality
No laughter, no friends to accompany me
Everyone else feeling miles away
Walks aren't enough to make me feel okay

The light at the end of the tunnel diminishes
Daylight disappearing more and more, day by day
Colder weather and grey skies
As I fantasise about my old life

I ponder over the many relationships lost
Contact diminished over months spent apart
Struggling connections over FaceTime and messages
Whether it be digitally or emotionally

I stand before the mirror, not liking what I see
My face looks gaunt, I no longer look like me
I flick on the tv, filled with bad news
No signs of escape, a lockdown till June

