

Bourne
toWrite...
creative writing
workshops

Night Nurse

by Paul Hunter

I queued at the pharmacy, it really was a pain.
I had to wipe my glasses, they'd steamed up yet again.
When the mist had lifted, I heard the assistant say.
"There are no lateral flow tests in the pharmacy today."

A sneeze was building in my head but there was nothing I could do.
After two sharp intakes of breath, I expelled a huge "ACHOO!"
Shoppers dived for cover, staff ducked behind their screen.
I might as well have waved a placard proclaiming me "Unclean".

A tiny voice piped up from somewhere in the queue.
"Has that man got Covid? I think I need the loo."
The unseen child's diagnosis confirmed my inner fears.
That if I don't get my medicine, this will end in tears.

I found myself at the front of the queue.
"I have a cold or maybe it's the flu.
Please can I have some Night Nurse, I think that'll do the trick."
"Are you sure it isn't Covid, you could get really sick."

“I regularly test and it's clear every day.”
I began to feel woozy and started to sway.
The tiny voice piped up from the queue.
“Is that man drunk? I really need the loo!”

I felt rather embarrassed when I woke up on the floor.
Worried faces all around me, my arm feeling sore.
“Nothing broken, just bruised, really I'm OK,
if you've got my Night Nurse, I'll be on my way.”