They need each other. Like to be around each other. Like to touch each other.

They search for things:
Harry and meghan
hary and megan Canada
new year's resolutions
new year's resolutions how long

They like being with their families. They like being with strangers. They work in small spaces. Crowd into boxes, push the air around. Sleep in boxes. Need each other. Touch each other. They move around the world. Everywhere in the world.
Like us.

They search for things:
Harry and William
meghan and kate
Meghan and Kate feud
N.F.C. playoff picture

They ask themselves:
should I be afraid
how afraid should I be

They ask themselves: What is coronavirus. corona virus what is it. Oscar party ideas. State of the Union. State of the Union what time. Super Bowl odds. Bean dip very spicy. Bean dip not so spicy. They ask themselves if they should be afraid but they already are.
They have patterns. Weekends. Summer plans. They have ways of doing things. They don't see how they can give those up.

They have weaknesses. They need each other. Like being around each other. They make noises. Open their mouths and push the air around and make noises at each other. Ha ha ha is a noise. Thank you is a noise. Did you see the thing about meghan and harry is a noise.

They have systems. Systems have pressure. Pressure to grow. Make more of things. More and more and more.

They go in the air boxes and in those boxes are smaller boxes and smaller boxes and many of them crawl inside a box and sit there and share the air.

Their movements seem random at first but study their movements and it becomes clear that the systems have patterns. Sunlight brings them out of their small boxes, they move together in streams. Massive streams, sometimes traveling quite far from their home boxes to hubs or centers where they collect in large boxes. Streams on the ground. They are also capable of airborne...
travel. They sort themselves and divide their work up. The work is to make more. More and more and more. All day long they break off in groups then reform new groups. Air is pushed. There is touching. In the moonlight they stream back to their boxes or to other boxes.

When it gets warmer they spend less time in boxes. When it is colder they heat up their boxes. They follow cycles of earth and moon and sun. Most of them live for many cycles.


They divide themselves into groups. They say: some of us are them and some of us are us. They do not always tell the truth. They spread things
on their own. More and more and more.

They ask themselves:
   who invented coronavirus
   W.H.O. invented coronavirus

They search for things: governor. Lockdown.

They change their patterns.

They search for:
   how long is six feet

They ask themselves: Zoom what is it. How to use

Zoom. School grades. Do my grades count.

They search. They look for patterns. They gather data. They look for patterns in the data and then they do something unexpected: they change their own patterns. No more streaming to large boxes. The hubs are empty. The streams are gone. The airborne migration is gone. They stay still in small boxes.

They ask themselves: affordable chromebooks.

Their older ones sit alone in boxes. Staring at smaller boxes. Their older ones have trouble with air.

They find patterns but some of them need to find more patterns.

Showing results for: coronavirus
Search instead for: coronavirus conspiracy

They ask themselves: How to cut hair. How to fix kid's haircut. Hats for kids.


They need each other, like each other. They miss each other.
They ask themselves:
  can cats get depressed

They search for:
  Food bank donation. Food bank near me.
  What is
  How to
  Is it OK
  Can I
  Numbers. Numbers up. Numbers growing.


They search for:
  Stop payment indicator.
  what does stop payment indicator mean for unemployment
  unemployment office number
  when do we open up Lexington
  when are we reopening Flint.
when can we reopen Bowling Green

When it gets warmer they change their patterns again. They are temperature-sensitive and they spend less time in their boxes.

Many of them die. When they die, they stop pushing air. When they die they do not search for things anymore.

The weather changes and their patterns change again. Staying still in boxes for many cycles, they begin to emerge. Some of them are hungry.

Some of them are hungry. They restart the system. Slowly, the streams resume. The pressure builds. More and more and more. They make food. Some of them have too much food. Some of them share food with others. Some of them line up for food.

They search for things: are we in a bear market what is a bear market what is martial law how do I shelter in place safest cities to live
What is considered a fever. What is considered a dry cough. What is considered essential.

What is open right now. What is Marshall law. How to make hand sanitizer. How to sew a face mask. Shirt as mask. underwear as mask. What is N95. How to break a fever. Living alone. What if I'm alone

They have subgroups. The subgroups are virtually indistinguishable. Genetically. They have invisible signals that help members of one subgroup identify fellow members. They divide themselves. They say: some of us are us, and some of us are them.

They have weaknesses.

Some of them are aggressive. Some of them are confused. Some of them have short memories. Some of them cannot change their patterns. They have systems. Systems of air. Of information. Of ideas.

Some of them enjoy breathing as their right.

Some of them can't breathe.

Some of them send signals with incorrect information about the environment.
Misinformation spreads quickly through the population.

Misinformation can be transmitted through the mouth or eyes.

These signals confuse some of them.

Others of them study us.

They know what we are: not quite alive.

Invisible. Information.

They have invisible signals.

They talk to each other. They push air. They need each other, like each other. Miss each other. Think about each other.

They harness invisible forces.

Electromagnetism. Light. They are like us. They have codes. Codes of symbolic sequences. They encode information and spread it.

They can be in small boxes and signal to each other in codes and coordinate their actions. They can be one and many and one somehow. They have particles, they have transmission, they have magical powers. They can communicate across time and space.

They have science.

They know:

Approximately 8 percent of the human genome is viral DNA.

They know we will never be apart. There are
no subgroups. There is no us and them.

They search for things:
where is protest
safe to protest
how to protest

They realize:
Community is how it spreads.
Community is how it is solved.

They will keep going. Emerge from their boxes in boxes in boxes into sunlight. Cycles resuming. They will transmit messages to each other. Some of them will be confused. Some of them will share food.
They will make more and more and more. Some of them will die. Some of them will be hungry. Some of them will be alone.

The systems will be the systems. But some of them may change the systems. Rebuild them. Make new patterns. They will fly again, collect again in hubs, gather by the thousands and push air at each other, ha ha ha and other noises they make to each other to signal invisible things.

Some things will not change. They will need each other. Like each other. Miss each other. They will have weaknesses. And strengths. They ask themselves: Harry and Meghan what now. Harry and Meghan what next.
Charles Yu is the author of four books, including his latest novel, "Interior Chinatown." He lives in Irvine, Calif.

Sophy Hollington is a British artist and illustrator. She is known for her use of relief prints, created using the process of the linocut and inspired by meteoric folklore as well as alchemical symbolism.