

# Voice of the Coronavirus 2020 April 1, 2020

Micki Shelton

[My poem was greatly inspired by “Letter from the Coronavirus” by Kristin Flyntz,

3-12-20. My eternal thanks to Kristin for inspiring my poem.]

Please listen.

Do not be afraid.

Wait for me to speak. Do not try to speak for me. Just listen.

I chose a bat as my host because I could not begin my journey in you.

You are too strong and powerful and have too many ways of fighting.

I had to search for a weakness through which I could enter you

And I found it.

I had to find a way to speak to you.

It was imperative. Is imperative.

The little bat gave me entry.

Please listen. I am still speaking.

Speaking because I love you.

How otherwise can a thing as tiny as a virus find a voice

Against all your defenses?

My name is Coronavirus.

I began my journey in China because it is the most populous on Earth.

I need to reach as many people as possible.

I am traveling now through the United States

Because you are the most powerful on Earth.

I apologize for my stop in Italy.

A land of poetry and song and love.

It did not deserve the horror I left there.

But, you see, once I began traveling,

I was guided by science.

That is the way I travel.

It is the only way I can.

But maybe something in me also knew

That the West as you know it

Began in Rome.

And being who I am, I was drawn there.

To the beginning of what you call "civilization."

You ask why I am here.

I am asking you to stop and rethink.

What of all your inventions?

What of all your technology?

What has it brought you?

Has it allowed you to better enjoy a sunrise?

Does it sharpen your ears to hear the birds sing in the morning?

Or hear the crickets as night begins?

Is swimming in a river more pleasurable now?

Is your ascent to mountaintops

Or your descent into valleys more full of wonder?

Does the scent of the rose bring you more joy?

Or the giggles of children bring you more delight?

Does the taste of the peach burst more brightly inside the vestibule of your mouth?

Can you see more clearly into the tide pools?

The insects are disappearing.

The rivers are drying up from your unquenchable thirst.

The views from the mountaintops are occluded.

Your flowers altered for easier transportation

So they have lost their scent.

The children are sad and ill-equipped for enchantment.

Our fruits too modified for travel, not taste.

The old stories are lying untold and unread.

The reefs too are dying.

Wake up beloveds.

I am here to awaken you.

Why did I choose you as a host?

Because you are the most beautiful of the creatures.

All creatures are beautiful.

Were they not, why would the love that made them have called them so?

Yet you,

Most of all.

Who else can sing? What other creatures have created

Guernica, the Sistine Chapel, or Starry Night?

The great sculptures of ancient Greece and Europe?

The cathedrals along the Rhine

Beethoven's Ninth Symphony? Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus" or Leonard Cohen's?

Who else the great gardens of England or the delicate ones of Japan?

The pyramids of Egypt? Those within the rainforests of America? The Taj Mahal.

Who else has written the Arabian Nights, The Brothers Karamazov?

Les Misérables? The Razor's Edge?

It has been you, my hosts.

Yet all this majesty has made you proud.

It has made you believe you are invincible.

You have become self-important.

These gifts were given you

Because you were meant to be co-creators with God

But too many of your gifts have been ill-used

Used to build your egos instead of your art

And peace

And justice.

It is time now to

Stop.

Listen.

The cataclysms that were meant to stop you

The hurricanes, and floods, and fires

Did not make you stop.

You kept using your creativity to kill instead of birth.

So the fire has come inside your bodies.

It has come through me.

I am your teacher.

I am your lover.

Please stop.

And listen.