

The Ghost of COVID19 Roaming the Corridors of Organizations

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About the Work:

This prose poem draws out the sadness and loneliness people are feeling at altered working spaces due to COVID19 that despite so many deaths, the world over, are still plagued by biases and indifference.

About the Author:

Anita Nahal, Ph.D., CDP is a poet, professor, short story writer, flash fictionist, & children's books writer. Currently she teaches at the University of the District of Columbia, Washington D.C. Besides academic publications, her creative books include, two volumes of poetry, a collection of flash fictions, three children's books and an edited anthology of poetry. Her poems and stories can be found in national and international journals in the US, UK, Asia and Australia. Nahal's poems are also housed at Stanford University's Digital Humanities initiative. She is also a columnist and guest contributing editor for New York based *aaduna* journal and is co-host of the monthly online creative series, *Tan Doori Gup Shup*. Nahal is the daughter of Indian novelist and professor, Late Dr. Chaman Nahal, and her mother, Late Dr. Sudarshna Nahal was also an educationist. Originally from New Delhi, India, Anita Nahal resides in the US. Her family include her son, daughter-in-law and their golden doodle. For more on, Anita: <https://anitanahal.wixsite.com/anitanahal>

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The murkiness of fake news. Fake people. Fake ideas. Fake injunctions. Fake promises, roaming the corridors of buildings now lying vacant. Covid19 stands like millions of ghosts vague about where to go. One of them spoke up,

"COVID19 seared through my body and soul leaving my heart behind holding the candle dangling midair with its beats fanning the flames to keep alive. My spectacles see all and my hat holds wisdom of all humanity. See, I'm the ghost chosen by those having passed by COVID19. You can call me representative X. I walk the halls of empty cupboards and homes, offices and malls, searching to preach. Don't be fooled by my impeccable shirt and starched cuffs or the white hankie peeking from my coat pocket. It's not a flag of peace. I'm like the defamed handsome Dracula on the prowl. Only thing you need to observe when I come near is the smoke rings of infected air curling viciously. Still, my heart was left behind so narcissist humans could reign themselves in and take a road different. I don't wish to represent any more human souls crying inconsolably when their loved ones couldn't even say goodbye. Banshees are screaming in barren halls of working and living spaces and huge edifices are falling like baby dominos"

"We'll take virtual working. It's very good. Family's at home. Bonding. Planning. Loving. Easing it out. Folks stand like millions of cheerleaders pretty sure they don't wanna visit you ghosts in the tacit, hollow eerie buildings," I whispered, stepping back, chest heaving.

Race, religion, gender, plethora of biases still persist though. And injustices still continue in the deepest most calculating ways. Human race finds itself alone these days. The exciting, sexiness of finding alien beings, hearing their chatter on cosmic airwaves is receding like reluctant space stations with no one left to watch over Earth. Gods of all religions seem jittery. Flummoxed. Guards, receptionists, workers, timekeepers, bosses, custodial care, all equaled by a magnified rolling pin. Thousands of windows lie smudged with bird poop, cafes lie cold, elevators groan with rust. Will humans give up their fakeness now?