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Deconstructing the pandemic through poetry

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Poetry and Fiction

I am just a number

Shailesh Rajaram Deshpande

4-5



A message to my family

Parikshit Sen

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Waking up to a pandemic

Amir Maroof Khan

18-19



Death on the Table

Sheela Jaywant

21-22



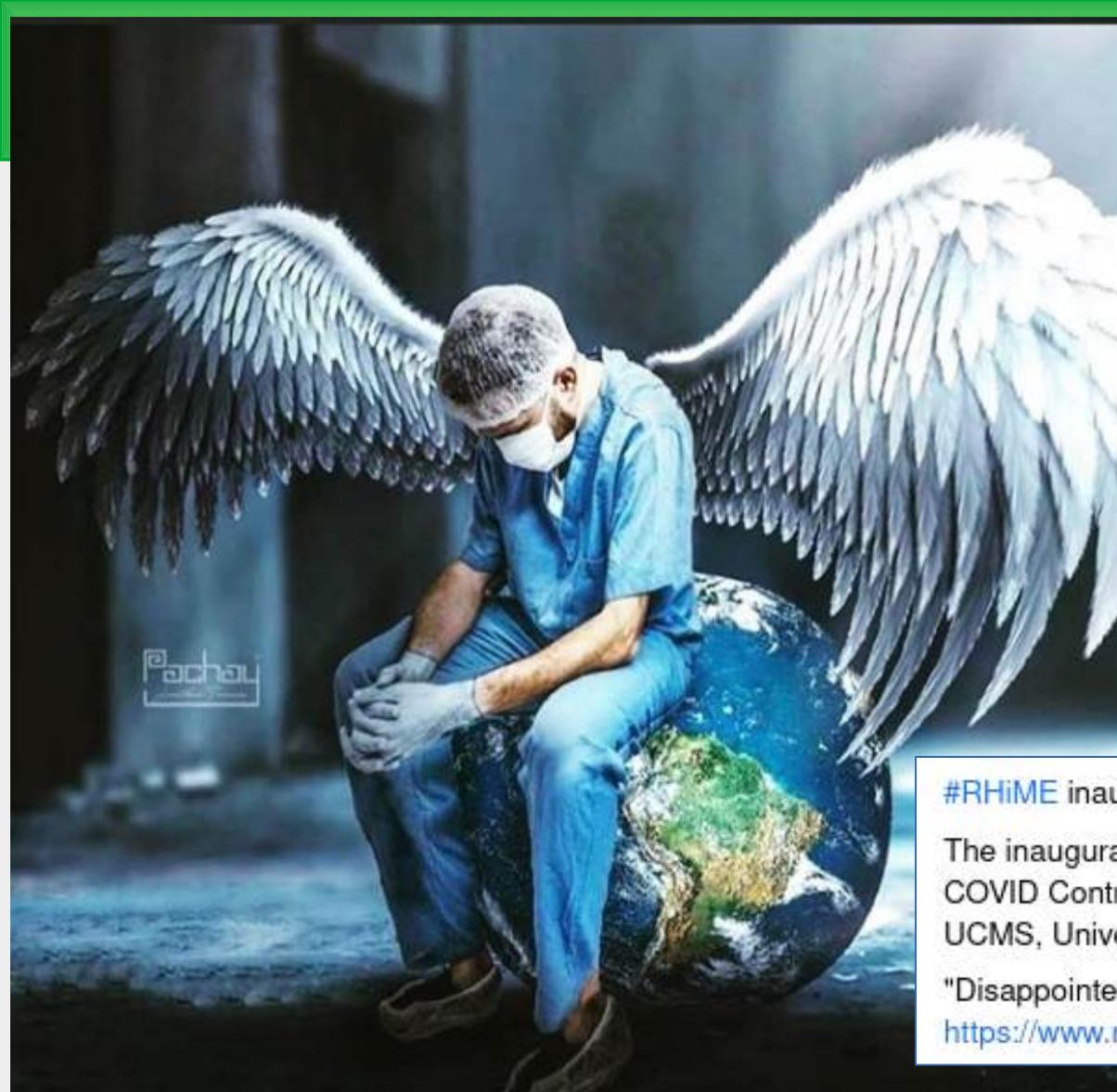
A letter to Rabid Covid: 'What are you up to Corona?'

Anuradha Joshi

33-34



Pandemic Virtuosity



Artist:
Pachay, Graphic Designer
Image source:
<https://www.facebook.com/Debcati/posts/10158276886511944>

#RHIME inaugurates a new section today: Pandemic Virtuosity
The inaugural poem is one that was submitted to "Picturesque: The COVID Contract" hosted online by Parwaaz, the poetry society of UCMS, University of Delhi
"Disappointed" by a medical student
<https://www.rhime.in/.../index.../rhime/article/view/284/283>

Feel, Imagine, Think

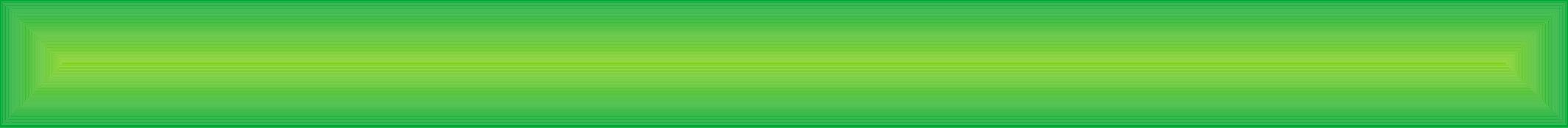


Feel, Imagine, Think 2020 on [#RHIME](#)

Submissions made by a myriad of poets and writers based on the artwork by Dr Haryax Pathak

Publications

Pandemic Virtusity: 30
Feel, Imagine, Think: 12



”

The Poets and their Angst

“

I slide a tube
into his throat,
into wind pipe,
into his core.
He breathes easy,
plugged to machines
that work hard
for him.

I walk back,
in a prayer
"Please let him
live a life ahead.
'Coz
I don't want to be
the last girl
for a young man
to have met."

Kakkar K. The last girl. RHiME. 2020;7:989.

You were to stay home while I stayed at work,
This was all I asked and needed from you, but
You walked out of your homes, ignored my advice,
selfish, reckless fools, not even thinking twice.

Jindal H. Disappointed. RHiME. 2020;7:35-6.

नाप लिए हैं मुकाम लगभग
मंज़िल मेरी यहीं कहीं है
हार जाऊं ये मुमकिन नहीं है
मेरी कुलबुलाहट भी कम नहीं है ...

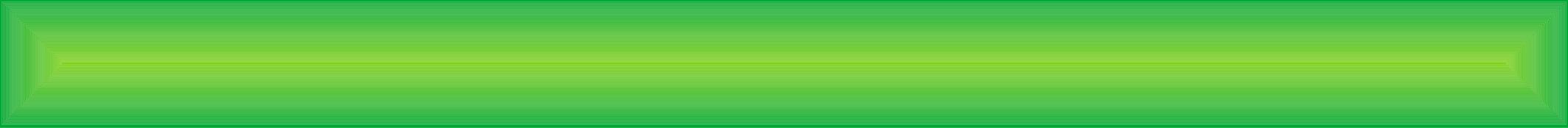
Sharma N. Kulbulahat [Hindi]. RHiME. 2020;7:45-6.

You beat me up, you pelt stones at me,
You hurl abuses, and worse, throw punches at me.
Threatening my life as I fight at the front line...

Jindal H. Disappointed. RHiME. 2020;7:35-6.

वक़्त की मार से सम्बल जाते हैं लोग,
लोगों की मार से साँसों को बिखरते हुए देखा है।

Saifi T. Insaan [Hindi]. RHiME. 2020;7:43-4.



This chaos, which has made us organise,
Has made us value the gift called life;
Has shown the world - those running after money & might -
that the healers, the cleaners, and the law keepers
Are their only hope in relieving their plight.

“

”

Jahan S. Hope. RHiME. 2020;7:523.

Do we really need a pandemic to realise
that we are here on earth to support and not to exploit
others;
that the earth belongs to all species, not just to
humans...?

“

”

Khan AM. Waking up to a pandemic. RHiME. 2020;7:18-9.

This time let's NOT go back to the old normal,
Rather, let's build a whole new world,
one that's filled with hope and trust,
And with health and love and laughter.

“

”

Jahan S. Hope. RHiME. 2020;7:523.

आज यह संग्रोध मेरे जीवन में लाया वो पल :
जहाँ मैं मिल गयी खुद से ,
हुई मैं वाकिफ़ अपने शौक से,
आज इस संग्रोध ने फिर दिया मुझे मौका
खुद के भीतर के खजाने को खोजने का !

“

”

Sheoran J. Is sangrodh mein [Hindi]. RHiME. 2020;7:756.

“
वो घर ही होता है, साहब
जो कानपुर से दिल्ली, दिल्ली से कानपुर
पैदल भी चलवाता है
वो घर ही होता है

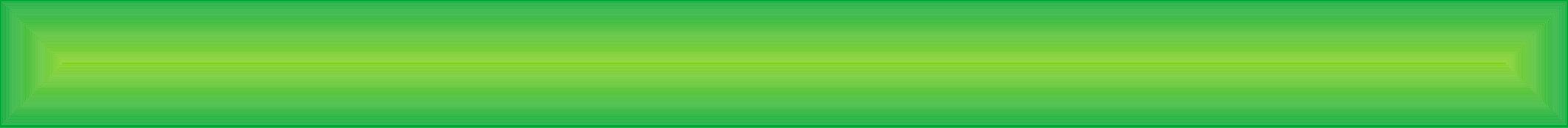
जो हजारों मीलों की दूरी तय कराता है
और पुलिस की लाठियों से भी पिटवाता है
वो घर ही होता है
”

The doctors, nurses, and other workers,
Who worked with so much determination,
stood by your side, steadfast and unwavering,
even when compromised by many an administration.

“

”

Mullick S. Dedicated to the frontliners who await PPE. RHiME. 2020;7:7980.



An affirmative response is not enough,
each must question, and introspect
Where was the protective gear?
What made the conditions circumspect?

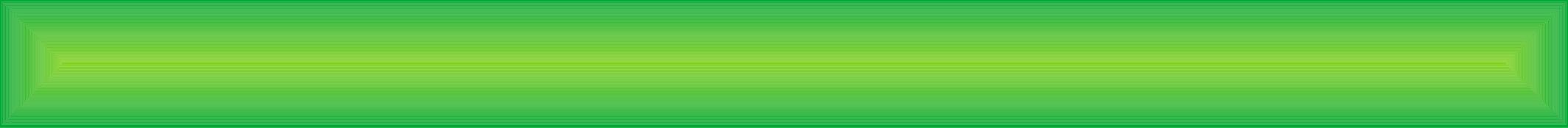


Mullick S. Dedicated to the frontliners who await PPE. RHiME. 2020;7:7980.

The poor struggling between sustainability and legitimacy;
The frontliners, between ethics, altruism, and responsibilities;
A middleclass person, between boredom and creativity;
The rich, between compassion and publicity;
Policymakers, between misfortune and stringent actions.



Begum J. Feeling like a funambulist, I'm walking on clouds. RHiME. 2020;7:816.



“
Yet, our crew - the frontliners - strive to plug the holes.
Everyone doing their bit to fight against the waves.
Some are scared, some lost in early smoke; others
wondering who, why, what and how.”

Begum J. Feeling like a funambulist, I'm walking on clouds. RHiME. 2020;7:816.

“

क्या मतलब था नए विमानों का ,
उद्धार के उन प्रमाणों का ,
जो कठिन समय में फेल हुए ,
एक नोटिस पर ही रद्द किए ।

”



The face of empathy
is starting to disappear, blurring
as more of us give in
to the forgiving nature of apathy
my idle mind questioning a
worn out yet guilty conscience
Is it safer, if we just say
that we tried?



Kataria S. The face of empathy. RHiME. 2020;7:1734.

I am learning to seal the seams of my lips;
to pretend that the healer doesn't need healing
in a manner reminiscent of Frost when he
talked of being one acquainted with the night,
but with a smile that hides my bitten tongue.

“

”

Salwan A. Some stutters remain lost, nameless. RHiME. 2020;7:185.

My hands work with a deliberate dexterity,
borrowed from a dream I once had
Sometimes, I can see thin strands of sharp
gossamer swooping from each corner of the
hospital ward and cutting into my fingers
that are not allowed to tremble.
Not allowed to bleed.

Salwan A. Some stutters remain lost, nameless. RHiME. 2020;7:185.



The boss spends countless bucks
In building a fancy marble structure,
But nothing is done for the frontline men
If the safety harness should rupture.
No funds are ever gleefully spent
For doctors' emotional wellbeing,
While they are held responsible for
The misery of all the poor and ailing!



Ghiya M. Save the doctor and the nurse. RHiME. 2020;7:1202.



I have revived your body,
Even when you demeaned it,
I have dressed your wounds like
It was my heart that bled.
I have eased your pain when
I couldn't fight its cause,
I have stood relentless,
Even when you said you'd rather give up.



Pandya P. I've passed you by at the bus stand. RHiME. 2020;7:180.

Poetry, the pandemic, and Ethics

Anger Fear Abuse Burden Despair Helplessness Burnout
Feeling unsupported

Fortitude Reflection Enlightenment Compassion Humanity
Empathy Professionalism Ethics
Gratitude

A word cloud of psychological and emotional terms on a black background. The words are written in various colors and orientations. The terms include: Burden, Compassion, Abuse, unsupported, Anger, Ethics, Feeling, Fortitude, Gratitude, Despair, Reflection, Burnout, Enlightenment, Humanity, Empathy, Fear, Professionalism, and Helplessness. The word 'Reflection' is written vertically in pink, and 'Enlightenment' is written vertically in orange.

Burden
Compassion
Abuse unsupported
Anger Ethics Feeling
Fortitude Gratitude
Despair Reflection
Burnout Enlightenment Humanity
Empathy
Fear
Professionalism
Helplessness