

“Wake Up Call”
by Corrine Ardoin

“We are all in this together” may seem an overused reminder to bolster our resolve to see things through, to have courage, to not let ourselves forget everyone on the planet is experiencing the coronavirus pandemic. Yet, it rings true when I watch news stories from around the world and see that we are all going through the same thing. People in Africa are wearing masks. People in Europe are wearing masks. People in Asia, North America, South America, are all wearing masks. Death looms and lines itself along the edges of our minds as we spray hand sanitizer, and nonchalantly step away from others. Our greatest fear, death is, and we share in our greatest fear, together. So many beliefs, so much fighting, it seems, too. The world of humans is falling before our eyes. Perhaps, that is the real death, the status quo of racism, barriers to opportunities, fossil fuel dependency, abuse of power, animal abuse, child abuse, domestic violence, hunger, unemployment, unfair wages, homelessness, corporate greed, greed, and more greed. How much money do billionaires need? Or, perhaps their's is the greatest sickness of all, for are we not all in need of their compassion, their willingness to acknowledge the suffering of others as they cash in on it, instead?

Jane Goodall spoke on the coronavirus earlier in the year and said it was a result of how we live on the planet, disrespecting the earth and its inhabitants. I believe this is so, that the way we live on the planet, alongside all others, has brought us to this awful year, this year of death. “We are all in this together,” takes on new meaning. We live together on this planet, and we suffer together, and we die together. Can we not flourish together instead? This is what I believe: We are experiencing the Great Death of our times, the end of the old ways of thinking and doing things and its consequences. Out of this can come a new way of living on this earth. Possibilities abound. It is possible to dream anew, to turn away from hatred and bigotry and awaken to what is happening: self-annihilation on a planetary scale. The morbid obsession with death and ghoulishness, fear and horror, is a hellish cry for sanity in a world that has turned insane. We are not only befouling our nest, we are burning down the house while we yet live inside.

Can we not choose life instead? Can we not bid goodbye to Death and sent it on its way, revive dying ecosystems, restore damaged forests and wetlands? Can we not see to the other side of things the possibility awaiting all those who choose to live on this planet in community with our fellow denizens? Why not embrace appreciation of our differences, our diversity? Why not share in uplifting one another? We can help each other. We can envision new energy sources and ways of running our cities that are so efficient that the internal combustion engine and fossil fuel usage is rendered obsolete. We can dream and create new ways of travel. We can dream peace into being. Why not? Envision plentitude rather than lack. Re-imagine our living systems that consider the whole and benefit the whole. Lend a hand to those who struggle with homelessness, mental illness, and addiction. Why not end imprisonment for drug users and instead help people overcome their addictions? We can awaken to the truth that we are, indeed, all in this together. Here. On planet Earth. Now. Today. Wake up! Wake up! It's time. What are you waiting for?! Those of you who wish to remain in denial, get out of the way! The rest of us have work to do! It's time to get busy!