

The Covid Conundrum | Shalini Mullick

As the world set into a new decade;
a new pathogen began its crusade.
A microbe, virulent and ferocious;
unleashing a fury unknown and grievous.
Though the winter did soon end;
droplet contagion continued to spread
Across many a territorial border;
into a spring without hope and color.
Now summer, exacting a toll;
and despair scorching the soul.
This little virus, spherical and small;
Wasn't in the microbiologist's recall.
Having crossed a species barrier;
it was only somewhat familiar,
Finding no reference in literature;
"novel" was prefixed to nomenclature.
Surface glycoprotein through ACE receptor;
the virion would bind and enter,
Of RNA it had but a single strand;
but was enough to force its hand.
Endothelial damage it could create;
and of mediators open the floodgate.
Myriad chemicals, especially Interleukin six;
berserk, putting all organs at risk
Leading to classic cytokine storm;
risking critical systems without a qualm
Witnessing of MODS the fury;
beginning with acute lung injury.
Bilateral pneumonia, and exudation;
then much intravascular coagulation.
The hypoxia needing intubation;

and complications of mechanical ventilation
Activation of rennin angiotensin system;
holding the kidney and heart to ransom
Physicians thrown this curve ball;
struggling without a defined protocol,
Drug trials companies to expedite;
search for a vaccine through many a night.
Humanity caught unprepared;
scarce resources overwhelmed.
Meanwhile, COVID continues, a Pandora's Box;
throwing up many a paradox.
Skies so clear and blue;
but possible only from indoors to view.
Long sought after air fresh;
we must breathe through a mask or mesh.
The patient in search of a solution;
instead confronted by loneliness and isolation.
Neither comfort of a familiar face;
nor is togetherness a solace.
The tender touch of love;
replaced by a plastic glove.
The satisfying final embrace;
can now be only a blurred face.
Connected only by the shiny screen;
to the family they so much mean.
Can the spirit take this grueling test;
will inner strength quell this unrest?
In the endeavor of humanity;
we must keep trust and solidarity.
Daily changing paradigms bringing a new brief;
we soldier on with faith and belief.