

Demolition run of the Global Monster

The terrifying effects of the Covid 19 Pandemic
by
Alta Oosthuizen



Prologue

Another year, another project for me!! The choice of what to do for 2021 was a very easy decision. Since Covid hit South Africa in full force in March 2020, it is all we ever talk about.

Almost every news report and social media posts are filled with nothing but covid and its repercussions. Even our favourite television series are filled with all the drama surrounding Covid 19.

The world as we knew it changed completely in 2020. Never did we think that this would be our new reality - “The New Normal”. The physical and emotional effect of this global pandemic is sometimes difficult to define. The aim of this project is to put the chaos into words, as it is not always clear what is unfolding in front of us. I will try to be the voice of those who struggle to express, by speaking in a poetic way. I have created the pictures that are floating in our minds, to simulate the realities that we see and experience. At the end of this path of devastation that is depicted in the project, I would like to give some hope where some of us have lost it all.

The physical and emotional ramifications of this virus is almost too much to quantify. Ripple effects are huge and severe. I did a large amount of research by conducting unofficial interviews with different people to try and capture that which is in everybody's minds and hearts. Some of the emotions expressed in this project I too experienced , but my aim was to voice the shared emotions of our global community.



Prologue

The emotional impact of this project weighed heavily on me. Sometimes writing the poems made tears run freely, my own words and the realization that it is a global situation, upset me.

The fact that this is something every person in the world can identify with, made my responsibility so much bigger. I had to be true to emotions and voice it to the best of my ability. Some people struggle to put emotions into words. To identify and acknowledge your emotions is the first step to coping and dealing with circumstances totally out of your control.

With this project I tried to empower people. I attempted to make them aware of their own emotions and to give them a small amount of power and control, although the circumstances are spinning at its own pace and speed.

This year's project was more difficult than the previous projects. Due to restrictions I did not have the freedom to shoot images for this project only. I was forced to use some older images as well, but the majority of the images were taken during 2021. Some of the older images were reworked in order to fit the theme for this year.

It is a large project with many images. Take your time to go through the project, remember that reading is as important as looking at the pictures. I hope that this project will make a small positive contribution and shed some peace and light in a time of chaos and uncertainty!!

"Recovering physically and emotionally from a traumatic situation is not a single event, it is an on-going process!!"

(Alta Oosthuizen '21)



Special Thank You

I would like to thank every person who was part of this project, even if the images were taken a while ago:

First of all to my husband Rudolph and my 2 kids, Rico and Alri. Thank you for your love and support. Thank you for being models in some of the images. Rudolph, thank you for being there with perspective and help whenever I needed advice. Rudolph, Rico and Alri, you are my world, I love you all so much!!

Thank you for the rest of my models and friends who supported me. Without you a project like this would not be possible. A photographer needs people to make a project a success:

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*“A Photographic project is never a solo song.
It is like a orchestra that needs different instruments,
to make the song an absolute hit!!”
(Alta Oosthuizen '21)*



Lockdown becomes the “new normal”

The scary part of it all: “There is NOTHING
normal about this new normal”





Abandoned

The world came to a screeching halt,
the capital of the world became a ghost town.

Daily activities stopped, all in survival mode,
locked away in the “safety” of their private homes.

Streets left empty, nothing to move around,
the world left abandoned, too scared to make a sound!!





Basic needs threatened

The world turned upside down,
mass hysteria over basic needs.
Irrational fears, reactions in overdrive,
trying to keep our normality alive.

Selfishness of man kind,
grab for me, myself and I,
leaving nothing for the next guy!!





Bound

Bound by restrictions,
no freedom to move around.
Bound by the “smallest” threat,
that turned your world around.
The fears and tears inside your heart,
trying your best not to fall apart!!





Spiral of death

Confronted with a small addiction,
when your little “pleasure” was taken away.

Feeling like you spiral to your death,
as withdrawal takes away your insight and breath.

Frustration and anxiety, not thinking at all,
the spiral of another ill-considered goverment call!!





No beacon in the night

Trapped in survival mode,
isolating yourself on a very dark road.
Barely enough strength to shine your light,
missing your purpose to be a beacon in the global night!!





No helping hand

Locked up like prisoners,
confined to our homes.

Previously dependent on Samaritan love,
now left to pray for love from above.

The need of the needy growing day by day,
no one available to help them on their way!!





All dressed up.....

Sick and tired of PJ's and slacks,
so much wanting to dress up a bit.
A dress and red lips, the only sad thing you know,
you are all dressed up and have nowhere to go!!





Violence becomes the norm

Forced to be in each other's space,
always confined in the same small place.
Worries and fears, emotions running high,
frustration builds as the days are passing by.
Violence and aggression now becomes the norm,
domestic abuse hits households like a storm!!





Broken vows

Tears and cracks that were dormant for a while,
came to the surface when the shit hits the town.

Too many hours, confronted with the truth,
nothing more to say, not connected like in your youth.

Added stress, a marriage that will not grow,
broken vows - sadly where this all will flow!!





Ending it all

At the end of the line,
no outcome that I see.

Trapped in debt, no hope for me,
ending it all, the only solution that I see!!



A global thing

Covid 19 made the world a smaller place, as every person on earth share the same thoughts and feelings at the same time





The Grip of Death

A world in crisis,
a world wide threat,
daily living like Russian Roulette.
The grip of death,
a global thing,
so much devastation it will bring!!





Change of season

Seasons change year after year,
normality as we know the beginning and the end.
But the change of season that we currently feel,
the “climate” we feel, the experiences unreal.
Nothing is normal about this seasonal change,
uncertain how to deal with a season so strange!!



Financial implications

The financial struggle during the pandemic is real.
Some people had a uphill battle, some lost
everything and might never recover





Financial crisis

Total lockdown, the world to a halt,
confined to your home, locked in a safety vault.

Economic crisis, businesses to crash,
no income, no work, simply no more cash.

Families to maintain, mouths to feed
not enough money to provide what they need!!





Poverty trap

A vicious circle, enhanced by something small,
restricted and constrained, no opportunities, no work at all.

No change to improve your quality of life,
the reality of your poverty trap cuts like a knife!!





Fragments of myself

Scared, I am really scared,

I was not ready, totally unprepared.

A family to support, no income at all,
where do I start providing for big and small??

Don't know who I am, so confused,
fragments of myself, shattered and abused!!



Corruption keeps on going on

Not even a global crisis will temporarily
turn corrupt officials around





Filthy fingers

A country in a crisis, a worldwide pandemic,
basic human needs to be cut to the bone.
But those in control of millions of lives,
with filthy fingers to shamelessly steal what was meant to save!!





Still corruption reigns

With the level of corruption and dishonesty around,
grab and steal what there is to be found.

A demand for protection, a country in need,
thinking of their pockets, their hearts filled with greed.

The tender to a “friend”, a kickback he will get,
no standard and protection, as long as greed is met!!



A whirlpool of different emotions

Experiencing all the different emotions will put you on a rollercoaster ride





Vulnerability

With science and technology,
We feel strong, feelings of invincibility.
But a small virus and its biology,
made us realize our vulnerability!!





Pretending to the world

Pretending to the outside world,
a picture of functioning well.

The cool, calm, collected look that they see,
not knowing the broken and lonely side of me.

Hiding my eyes, the window to my soul,
despair as I know I no longer have control!!





Disguising her tears

A mother is the magic glue,
that holds her people tight.
The only place where she can cry,
so no-one asks her why.
So let the drops disguise her tears,
to hide her pain and fears!!





Overwhelmed by uncertainty

A worldwide pandemic,
so many emotions flying around.
Uncertainty most likely the overwhelming one,
nobody sure of what next to expect.
Unsure how to treat, how to really prevent,
unsure if you'll survive, when will this all end??





Suffocating in the reality

All I hear is covid, Covid, COVID!!
From morn till noon, nothing else to reach my ear.
Rising numbers, another confirmed death,
save me please, I've lost my breath.
Suffocating in the reality of this threat,
so much wanting to just forget!!





Ready to explode

Constant exposure to worry and stress,
the devastating effect on the human psyche.
Impatience and intolerance, irritability with all around,
highly strung and ready to explode.
We forget to smile, to see the bright side,
hope that our spark for life has not completely died!!





Walk away

So much I want to walk away,
from this new normal, this “game” we play.
From yourself, your fears,
run away from your tears.
But then you see: “I’ve got nowhere to go,”
no other choice but to go with the flow.





Trapped in loneliness

Staring through my window,
longing for some company.
But lockdown has confined me here,
just me, myself and I.
Completely trapped in loneliness,
Will I survive this dreadfulness??





Our poor kids

Growing up was never easy,
challenges and obstacles in a child's way.

But what our kids have to face today,
deprived from normality, day after day.
Depression and anxiety, when will this end?
as parents, how can we protect and defend??





Spinning

Spinning uncontrollably fast,
your world that used to be sane.
A virus so small, the ripple effect,
not knowing what next to expect!!





All a blurry mess

Chaos and confusion, nothing makes sense,
nothing familiar to use in our defence.

“Be positive” is now a curse, “Lockdown” to “Flatten the curve,”
“isolation” and “restrictions” in order to preserve.

Nothing is how it's supposed to be,
all a blurry mess, I am unable to clearly see!!





Avoid

Completely against human nature,
isolating from all man kind.

Forced to do, later the norm,
what long term effect, our world to deform.

So sad to see, the need to reach out,
normal contact we learned to live without!!



Information from the media

The biggest danger of the media is the selective information we receive in order to manipulate our thoughts and emotions





Just lines

Newsfeeds from the media,
to manipulate what we think.
Just lines of information they want us to see,
half truths and sometimes downright lies.
Dangerous to build your opinion on that,
conspiracies is the rabbit in the hat!!





Rims of truth

Me, myself and I - day in and day out,
perspective and insight is what I live without.

Isolated in survival mode,
building my reality around rims of truth.
Only my thoughts and what's fed to me,
when will this end to let me clearly see??



Being positive is not that positive any more

Concepts have changed over the past 2 years, as
“being positive” is something people desperately
trying to avoid





From numbers to people

A year and a half ago,
all this was still a little unreal.

But seconds ticked and months passed by,
the circle of reality leaves you hanging high and dry.
Numbers became names and names came near,
now people you know leaves your heart in fear!!





To use or not to use

Constant discussion,
to use or not to use.

Desperation for a cure,
but research is still unknown.

Does this really help, for prevention or for cure?

Time will tell when research tells for sure!!

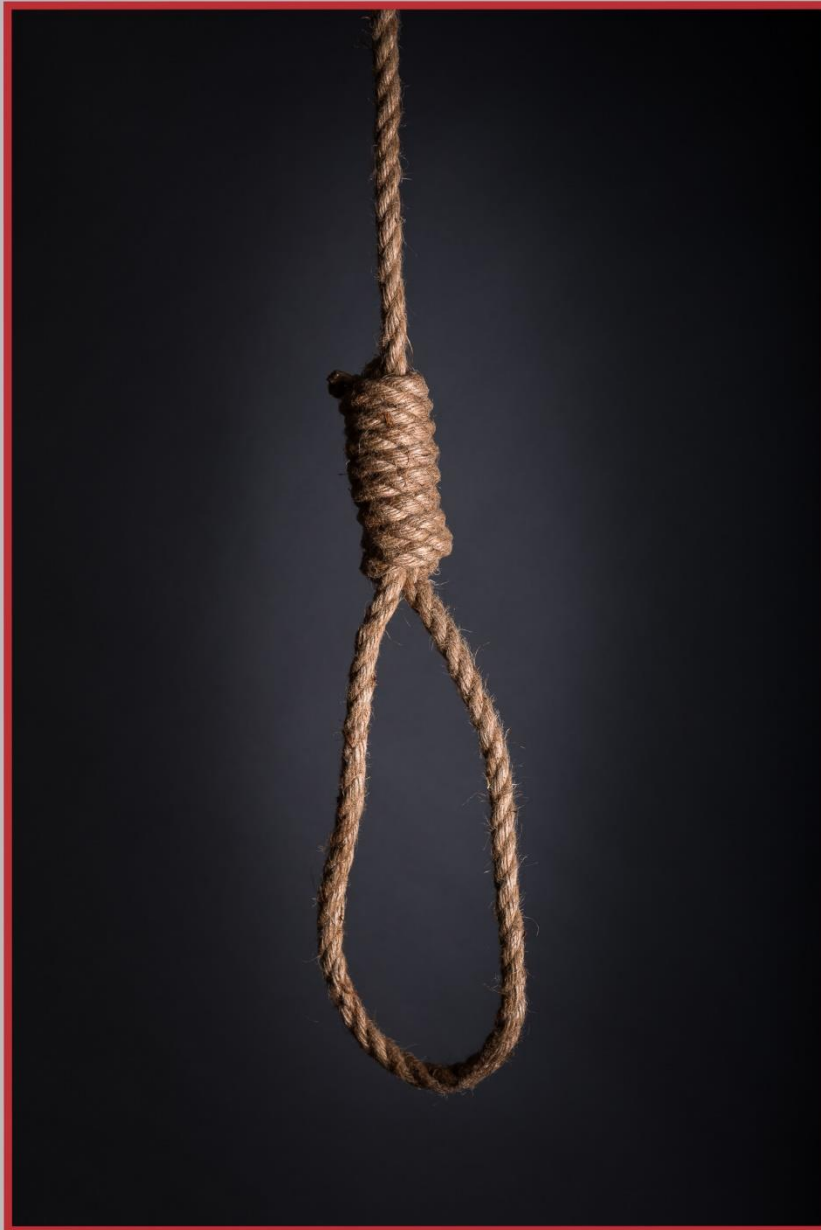




The Vaccine question

So much uncertainty,
questions and conspiracies all around.
Beware of false prophets,
who like to spread fear.
You can find true solace and peace to know,
vaccines fought successfully to keep diseases low!!





Death sentence

For so many of us a positive result
would be their death sentence.

But do not ignore, never forget,
that we are faced with both physical and emotional death.

The death sentence that we daily face,
the uncertainty of not knowing what next to expect!!





Being sick

You received the awful news,
the dreadful positive result.
Being sick, not only a physical thing,
the mind games make your head swing.
Lying in bed, not knowing if
you'll see the next light of day!!





The passage of uncertainty

Walking down this passage alone,
uncertain if you'll ever return.

Will you live or will you die?
What's the truth and what's a lie?





Want to hold your hand

Not allowed to go inside,
alone with my worries and fears.
So much want to hold your hand,
waiting for news to make me understand.
All by myself, in silence wait and pray,
For extra time of your earthly stay!!





Hours without end

A virus small, the impact huge,
hospitals full, staff overworked.

Dealing with illness,
staring straight at death.

Hours without end,
how will their hearts ever mend??





No more space

Wave after wave the virus hits with force,
time after time a new strain is the source.

No more space, full capacity reached,
the monster of triage will then be released!!



Dealing with different kinds of loss

Dealing with loss, any kind of loss, usually results in severe emotional reactions





Untimely deaths

A pandemic across the globe,
so many have lost their lives.
Unsettling amount of untimely deaths,
prematurely drew their last breaths!!





I lost everything

How much more will I be able to take?

How many tears will I be able to cry?

The voices in my head tell me I am weak,
outcome from this hell is what I seek.

Everything that matters in my life is gone,
how will I recover, how will I be able to carry on??





Time lost forever

The most precious in life is time,
time spent with those that you call “Mine”.

Time was stolen, to never get it back,
a vicious circle, a malicious attack.

All we can do is to take it day by day,
for this to pass quick, we can just hope and pray!!





No time to build memories

Our freedom to move around was taken away,
time to explore came to a sudden halt.

Time spent together as family and friends,
was limited to nothing, precious moments are gone.

More so for the elderly, as time is so dear,
time to build memories still remains unclear!!





Celebrating alone

Special occasions come and go,
celebrating with family and friends is now a no no.
On these special days, the reminder: "I'm alone",
longing to be hugged, sadness cuts to the bone.

Light your own candle, blow out the flame,
learn to celebrate, although it will never be the same!!



Realizations may shine some light

Reflecting on your own thoughts and feelings will
guide you to come to new insights





Facing my own mortality

Never in your life before,
had you to face this fact.
Irrespective of your health or age,
you realize that you might die.
Not knowing how you would react,
mortality becomes a scary fact!!





Also a spiritual attack

A virus to attack the physical part of us,
people get ill, they struggle to breath, they DIE.

But never overlook, do not forget,
this is more than just a physical threat.

Guard your inner self against the spiritual attack,
God's armour will protect, evil will find no single crack!!





Soul searching

My whole life came to a sudden stop,
no work, no nothing normal to define me.
Looking at myself, searching my inner soul,
when last did I really look to take control??
Searching for the truth, finding the real me,
do I really like that what I see??





Heat is needed

Like a piece of iron,
in a red hot oven.

Nowhere to go,
only feeling how you melt.

But for you to become what you were meant to be,
heat is needed to transform little old me!!



Actions to ensure self-preservation

Acting on your basic instinct to protect yourself





Don't want to hear nothing

Bad news from dusk till dawn,
wave after wave, strain after strain.
Getting more severe each and every time,
so many ill, loved ones who simply die.
Don't want to hear nothing, please no more,
don't want to listen to this ongoing war!!





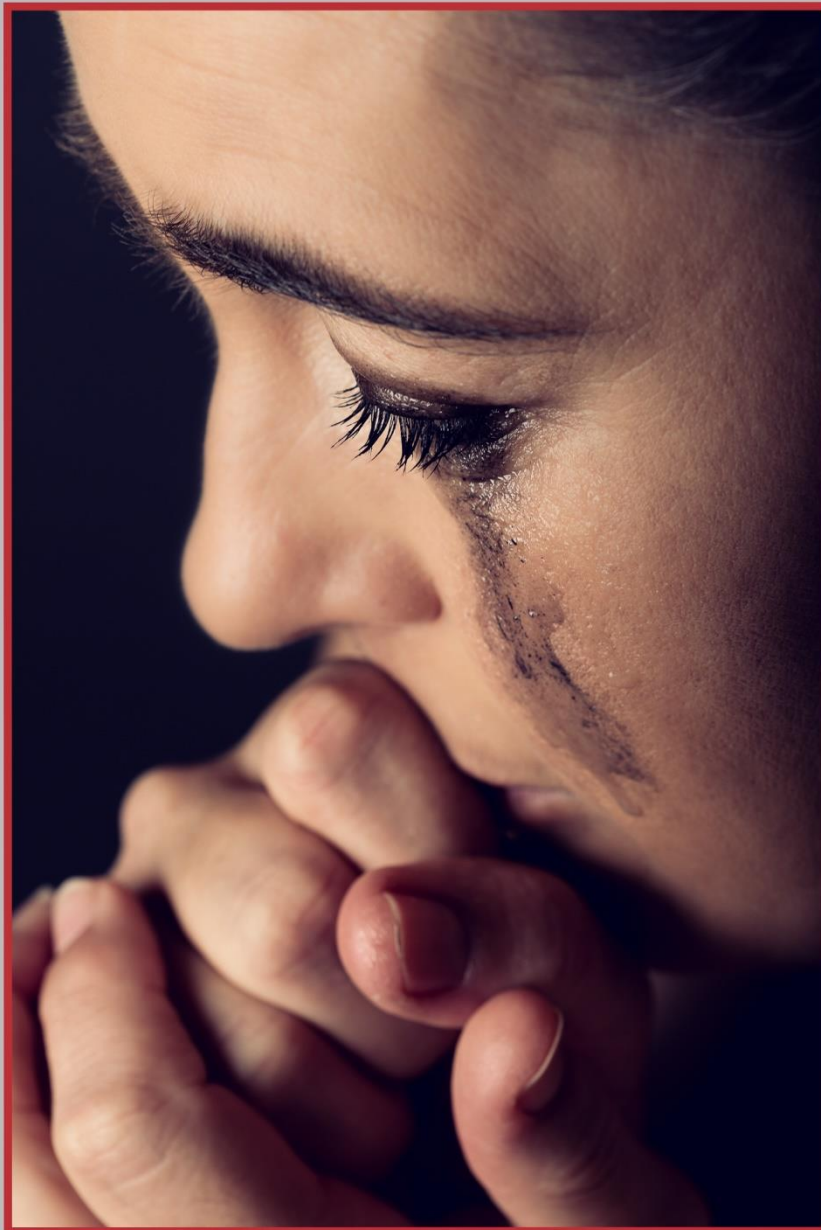
Hiding under my umbrella

If I hide under my umbrella,
the rain can't drench me.

If I hide under my umbrella,
the sun won't scorch me.

If I don't see, I simply don't hear,
the horror of reality will not come near!!





It is ok not to be ok

“You have to be positive, you have to believe,”

is what we really try to achieve.

But we all have that very dark day,
so much hardship, no words left to pray.

All we need is someone to say:

”It is ok not to be ok!!”





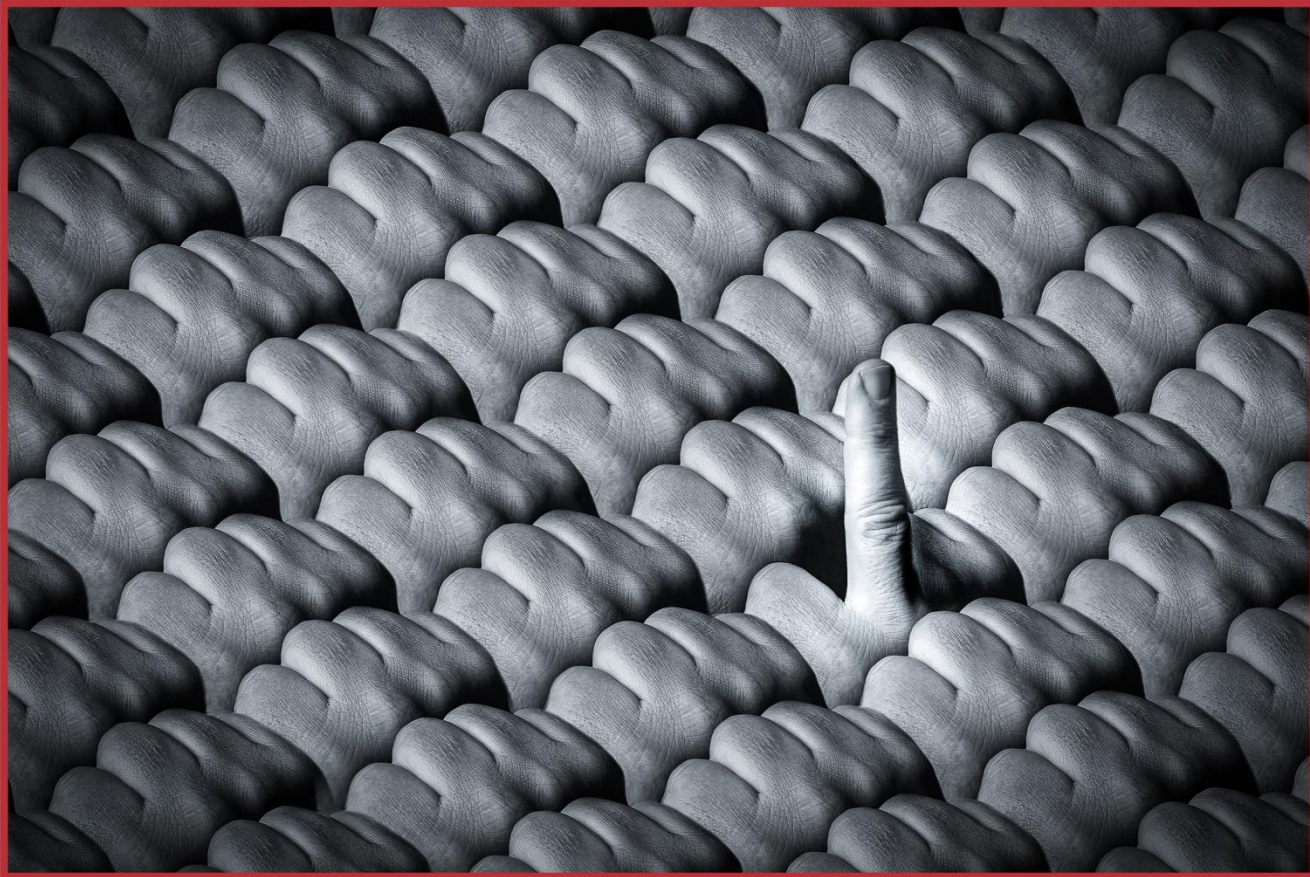
Speak to the hand

Each of us has our own load to bear,
dealing with the changes of life, our own despair.

No tolerance to deal with other people's shit,
demeaning attitudes and disrespect will no longer fit.

Speak, I take one step back,
no longer the object of an unsolicited attack!!





Sometimes this is needed

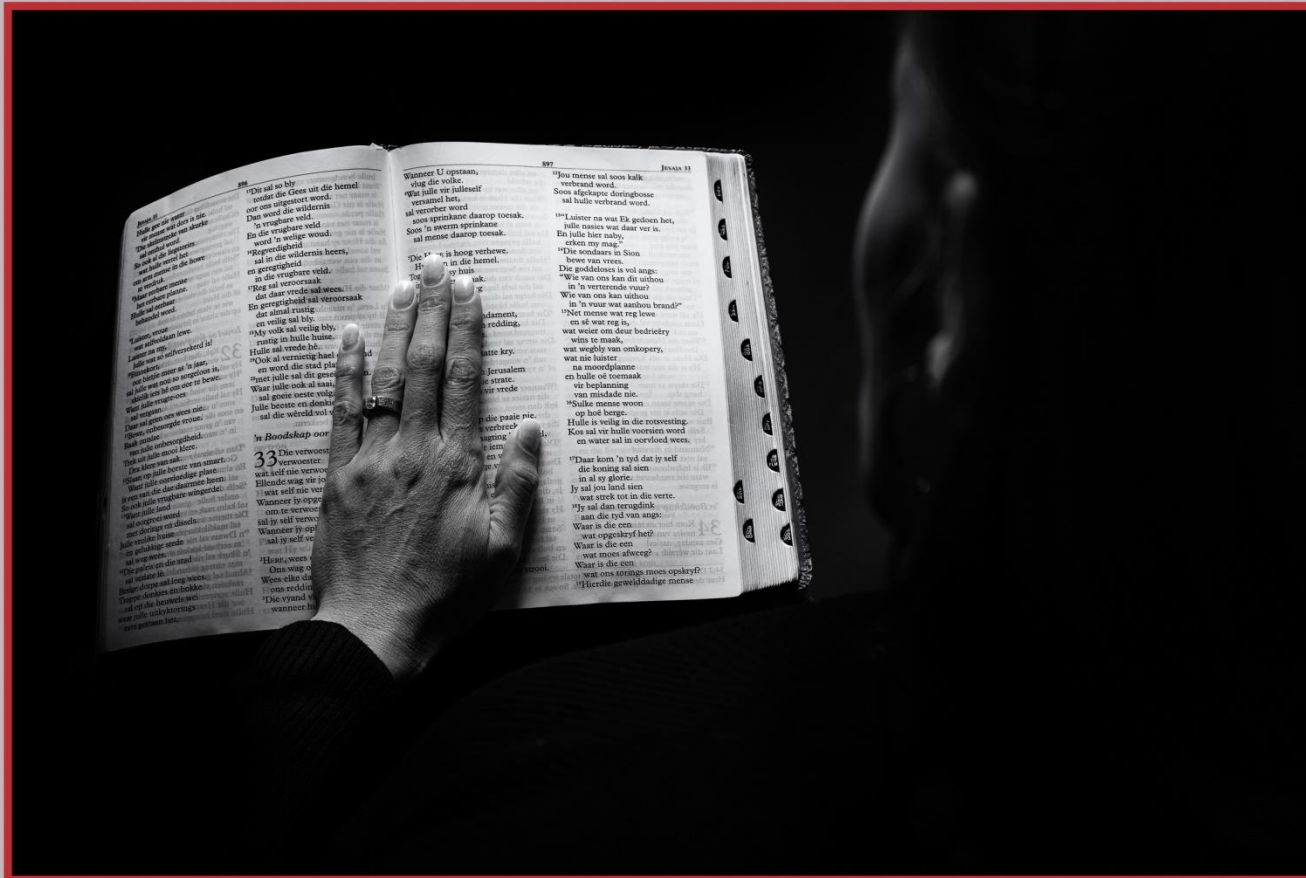
Tiptoe around our emotions,
sugarcoated with decent words.
Sometimes this is needed, raw words are allowed,
true feelings that you say - say it out loud.
“Fuck this, I’ve had enough,
I really don’t need this shit!!”



Hope gives you strength

Hope - The optimistic state of mind to expect a positive outcome despite of the current crisis you are trapped in





God is in control

Dealing with the new normal,
so much that's just so unsure.

But there is an anchor,
a stable pillar to hold on to.
God is in control, He loves me dear,
in time of turmoil, He is always near!!

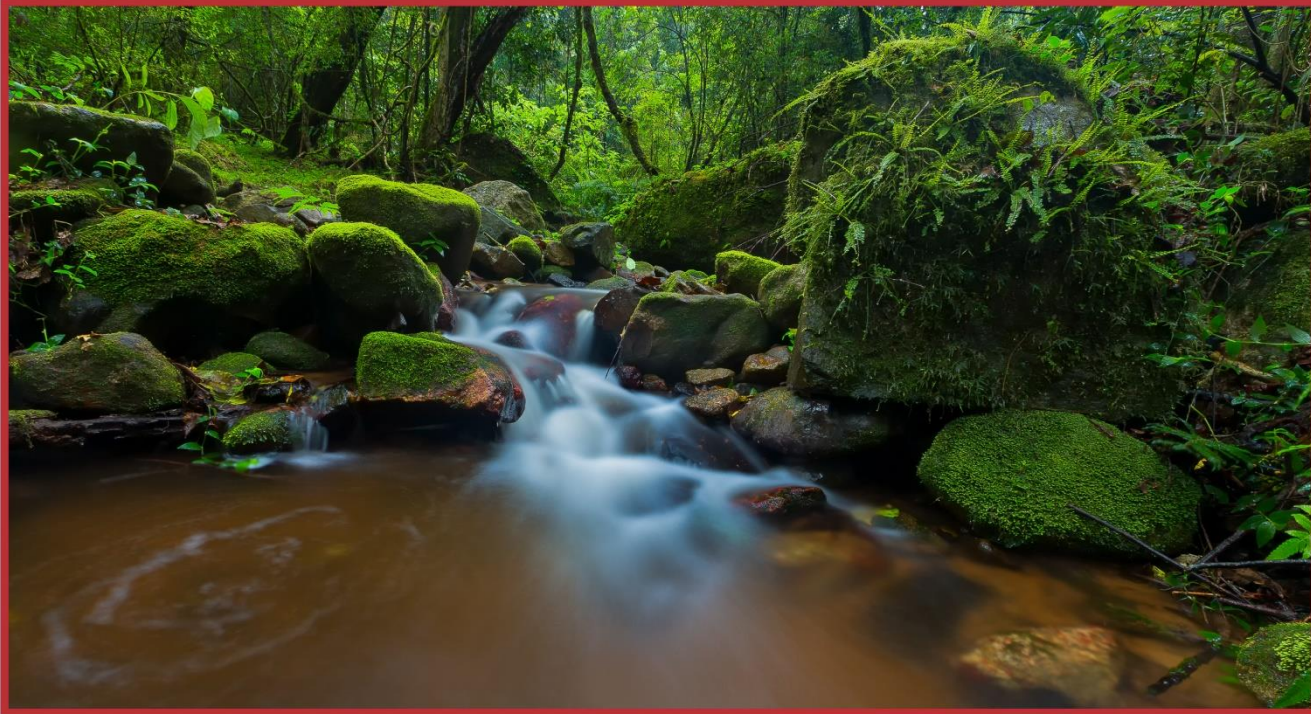




Life's divine design

People got ill and lost their lives,
loved ones feeling it was an untimely death.
But we have to remember our lifeline is set,
no extra days that we can expect.
Those who died were at the end of their line,
so Covid did not change the divine design!!





Walk besides quiet waters

In this cold and dark night that we walk,
no evil shall I fear.

As He allows me to lie on green pastures,
walking besides quiet waters that refreshes my soul.

Even if I lose the Covid battle on earth,
I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever





Hold on to small miracles

Worries and fears, sickness and death,
uncertainty drawn with each and every breath.

We're looking for miracles, wanting to see,
big changes needed for us to be free.

But every day small miracles do appear,
hold on tightly and see how your fears disappear!!





When the going gets tough

The responsibility as parents we have is large,
what do we say when a crisis hits the world?
Do we teach them to step back when things gets tough?
Or do we set the example to never give up?
Teach them to cope when the going gets tough,
moving forward when the tough gets going!!





The Lion inside of me

Facing the warzone day after day,
terrified by Goliath standing in front of me.

But at the end of my emotional line,
I discovered the David inside of me.

The Lion inside ready to fight back,
to regroup and rebuild to keep me on track!!





The Grace of Salvation

The dreaded positive result,
the biggest fight of your life.
Whether you win or whether you lose,
have peace to know where you go.
If God is your salvation,
there is grace in this horror situation!!





Light at the end of the tunnel

So much death and tears,
so many lives ripped apart.

Questions arise, answers unknown,
where and when will this tragedy end?

This tunnel has a light at the end,
God Almighty, our Saviour and our Friend!!





This too shall pass

Covid brought along some new phases,
phases that left us with disillusioned gazes.
Phases that seem like they just won't go away,
for still how long will this terrible virus stay??
Walking though our desert phase, no water, no green grass,
but like with everything in life, this too shall pass!!



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