

**Before Corona,**

**We pretended as though there were activities we would never live without.**

**Now there is a drop in carbon emission in China,**

**Water bodies will now heave a sigh of relief for a while.**

**Before Corona we pretended as though we were not equal,**

**as though we did not share a common humanity.**

**Corona came, and all precautions are the same,**

**all efforts at producing a vaccine are done**

**for human beings: not merely for whites**

**not for Hispanics,**

**not for black people**

**But for Human Beings: The people at the borders who are not allowed in,**

**the ones with the right documents and the ones without the right documents**

**Before Corona we pretended as though human beings have answers to every question**

**Even the deepest questions about God.**

**We had immobile philosophies to which we were tethered.**

**We claimed to have fully understood God.**

**Well, Corona took theologians unawares,**

**Sent scientists racing to their laboratories,**

**without being sure of any results.**

**Corona brought politicians to acknowledge that God knows better.**

**When humanity adamantly leaves no room for doubts,**

**fate imposes those rooms.**

**Before Corona we thought we were not vulnerable.**

**We lived on what we knew and had,**

**we said human beings were unquestionably the greatest of species.**

**Ask the animals we ate for food.**

**Their movements are not restricted.**

**Ask the birds in the air whether their flights have been cancelled.**

**Ask them whether they have any need to wash their hands.**

**Before corona we thought that money could do everything**

**We thought that the rich were “humans” and the poor were “species”**

**And suddenly we are “Human Species”. Together.**

**So it is actually true that there are things we cannot afford.**

**So it is true that there are situations that money cannot change.**

**Before Corona we thought that time was always against us.**

**We were ever in a haste, catching flights and rushing off to do something.**

**Corona came, many hours have come and gone, unused.**

**We can now quietly observe the rising of the sun.**

**Flower shrubs, the unwary stars of the night.**

**We can now talk about the weather.**

**Before Corona we thought that effort was everything.**

**We thought people suffered illnesses because they deserved it.**

**We stigmatized HIV and AIDS, maybe we thought it was the gay disease**

**We always felt oblivious when cancer was mentioned,**

**because cancer was not in our families.**

**We thought Corona had come to reward unbelievers in a terrible way.**

**When it came to China we said it was because they were too secular**

**and needed to surrender to God.**

**Corona got into the Vatican, then we fell silent, in prayer**

**But we pretended as though what we felt was not cluelessness.**

**Schools closed. Churches closed. Offices closed.**

**Some kids can now have the attention of their busy fathers.**

**At least for three weeks.**

**Corona came and kept people from what they owned,  
and owned people away from what they kept.**

**Corona came, and friends no longer shook hands.**

**But enemies are now united by another common enemy.**

**We are suddenly friends because we share a common tragedy.**

**This common enemy that renders economic rivalry irrelevant.**

**Corona came wicked and just.**

**Corona came and proved itself inclusive,**

**And non-judgemental, in the way that death is.**

**Corona came to remind us that there are things we get without deserving,**

**And there are things that we deserve without getting.**

**Corona is a timely reminder about two things:**

**The many flamboyant things that we are not**

**And the vulnerable things that we really are.**

**Corona will leave us. But its legacy might stay, would stay.**

**And we would no longer be ridiculously sure about anything**

**As we were.**

**Before Corona came.**