

THE SOCIAL ISOLATION SONNETS

CORINNA EDWARDS-COLLEDGE



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INTRODUCTION

On the 17 March I committed myself to writing a poem a day for two weeks to help me get through the emotional challenges of the Coronavirus crisis and shared them on my author Facebook page (facebook.com/corinnaauthor). Two weeks is the mandated period of self-isolation if a member of your household has symptoms of Covid 19. As I write this, we are just two weeks into lockdown.

Please note, my interpretation of 'sonnet' is loose! All the poems are 14 lines but beyond that they are more reflective of the mood that took me that day, than a rigid interpretation of the sonnet form.

I hope you enjoy this collection If you would like to find out more about my novels, short stories and audio books visit:

www.corinnaedwards-colledge.co.uk

Novels:

THE SOUL ROOM
RETURN OF THE MORRIGAN
ARGEMOURT

Novellas:

THE CALL
THE DOOR THAT SHOULDN'T HAVE BEEN THERE
(Coming summer 2020)

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SCHOOL

Children still play, their voices fall then rise. I open up my window, see bright shapes, dart and dodge in Lowry playgrounds tiny sized. The sound haunts, hurts, I feel the sadness ache, the day is coming soon, no more surprise. A silence falling on the tarmac and the brick, suspending of the place that makes kids wise.

What next for them, days, weeks, months, no-one knows. Gates shut, swings still, desks go grey with dust. This is the time of ending, things that close. This is the time of duty and of must. Small faces behind every door, snotty nosed, sniffing out normality with childish lust. This is uncharted land, they dip their toes...

Corinna Edwards-Colledge, 17 March 2020

SUPERMARKET

My kingdom for a loaf of bread Instead the empty shelves, My kingdom for a clear head, Not each out for themselves. My kingdom for a tin of tomms Instead the empty shelves, My kingdoms for this all to end Each in their private hells. My kingdom for some soft loo roll, Instead the empty shelves, Cotton wool must do instead Ring it through the tills. My kingdom for a glass of wine Ah, there's plenty, ring the bells!

Corinna Edwards-Colledge, 18 March 2020

THE NEW NORMAL

The new normal is not normal at all,
The new normal is like hitting a brick wall,
The new normal is upside down and back to front,
The new normal is full of tricks and stunts,
The new normal is twisted up and inside out,
The new normal won't tell us what it's all about,
The new normal feels just like falling,
The new normal is pretty appalling,
The new normal makes my heart race,
The new normal moves at a startling pace,
The new normal is taking all our money,
The new normal is not remotely funny,
The new normal is killing all the light,
The new normal serves us bloody right.

Corinna Edwards-Colledge, 19 March 2020

MONEY

We can't go to the shops, so we can't spend any money. In any other time than this, I'd find the whole thing funny. We can't spend any money, who'd have thought of that? We can't buy linguine, wrapping paper or a hat, We can't buy leggings, earrings or a hook, We can't buy picture frames, slippers or a book.

Turns out market forces are built on feet of ice Once the heat is on full blast, the tigers turn to mice. Capitalism's hit and run leaves the road blood red Zero hours and self-employed casually left for dead.

Tour Zombieland, the empty shops the pubs that have run dry, See the leaves blow down the street, and ask if you know why, That even when the worst has passed and we can say it's done, The only shop that's done quite well is bloody Amazon.

Corinna Edwards-Colledge, 20 March 2020

PUB

Last orders at the bar my friend, last orders at the bar.
We've had our fun, but now it's done
This is the last hurrah.

Last orders at the bar old man, Last orders at the bar. That's been your stool the last ten years, But this is your last jar.

Last orders at the bar everyone, Last orders at the bar. Drain your glass, this too will pass, I'll leave our door ajar.

Come on, that's time, don't make me yell, It's all over, here's the bell.

Corinna Edwards-Colledge, 21 March 2020

SUNSHINE

She blazes down, she doesn't care
She's all around and everywhere.
She warms, she lights, she's kissed my face
And now she sinks without a trace.
The Met office tells me she's back tomorrow,
And the rest of the week in her glorious yellow.

We clear the shelves and live in fear, But the canals of Venice are crystal clear, No aeroplanes, the sky's sharp blue The stilling of the human zoo. Against our will, we've had to change, The turning of a dirty page.

The sun, she looks down on us all, and wonders at our mighty fall.

Corinna Edwards-Colledge, 22 March 2020

FRIENDS

Friendship continues at a social distance, At the opposite end of the garden table, By my gate, wearing red lipstick, Glorious against the blue of its Sunglasses and yellow scarf. Friendship continues on a screen, Its three faces stacked one upon the Other, staring through digital windows Laughing and raising wine glasses As if everything is ok, really. Friendship flies through the air riding words of shared experience it is articulate and loving. Friendship saves me.

Corinna Edwards-Colledge, 23 March 2020

LOCKDOWN

Here I am, a child of the seventies, I remember stand pipes, power cuts, the three-day week But never this, Britain on its knees. Human life, stripped, naked and weak.

On our street, the cars are still, the stars are still, Windows cut squares in the dark and glisten, A lone skateboarder races down the hill, We are glued to our TV screens, we listen.

We chat to neighbours as the sun sets, From our gardens, we are the lucky few, To share anecdotes about our pets, And bask in sunset and the view.

But some have only windows in our town, They lean out and breathe the air of lockdown.

Corinna Edwards-Colledge, 24 March 2020

VIRTUAL REALITY

Virtual Reality
The new form of humanity,
It has no need of gravity
Or touch, or time or space.

My meetings are all virtual now Heads all lined up in a row, I look at you and for all I know You're naked from the waist!

Virtual reality
Has brought a strange equality,
A levelling of you and me,
The simplicity of a face.

From yoga teacher to living room, by Skype, Facetime, Whatsapp and Zoom, We meet and talk, defy the gloom, and hope things will be normal soon.

Corinna Edwards-Colledge, 25 March 2020

APPLAUSE

The things we can do The things WE can do! To all those in the NHS, the carers, we applaud you.

Tonight our street, it was the stage And we were the audience. This is the dawn of a new age We learn the laws of consequence.

Sound the horns and bang the drums Fund the care, not the guns Learn the lessons, reward the good Let the change run in our blood.

The things we can do, the things we can DO Time to build our world anew.

Corinna Edwards-Colledge, 26 March 2020

BORIS

Get well soon Boris, Shall I bring you a hot chocolate? Or maybe a hot toddy? Shall I rub your feet? Can I fetch your newspaper? Pass the remote over? Choose you a boxset?

When you feel a bit better,
Perhaps you could undo
Ten years of austerity?
Perhaps find PPE gear
For our care workers and nurses?
Perhaps you could tell us where you were hiding
That magic money tree?

Corinna Edwards-Colledge, 27 March 2020

CROW

Bright eyes, rainbow-black, you clever old crow You see the world's mysteries, but know what you know. You understand that you reap what you sow, You are free, live your life, you are wise, dear crow.

I envy you that tree-top, lucky bird, Your beady-detached view of this world, The sturdy branch around which your claw's curled As my world splits and crumbles, reality blurred.

Quick on the draw, sharp of beak, shrewd crow, The sky is your fiefdom, but you're still lord of the low. You know how to stay, but also how to go, You are nobody's fool, dear pragmatic old Crow.

Launch quick, clear, assured, ascend This mess is not yours to mend.

Corinna Edwards-Colledge, 28 March 2020

SILENCE

There is the silence of absence,
The silence of things that have stopped.
An echoing silence of emptiness,
A silence of things that are locked.
There is the silence of closed mouths,
The metallic silence of cars,
The careful silence of keeping vows,
The sad silence of empty bars,
I hear the silence of locked doors.
And the silence of all the closed shops,
The silence over our sweeping new laws.
A nation tied in knots.

Here is the new silence of no-one out Here is the silence of fear and doubt.

Corinna Edwards-Colledge, 29 March 2020

GREEN

Although I knew green was inevitable
It has still caught me off guard with its beauty.
Acid sharp with life, exploding, erupting
From earth sweet with rain, and slender branches
That hide their potential behind pale bark.
Bottle green is refreshed and glossy new
Like the delicate skin over an old wound.

The spring green softens, turns the jagged trees Into a line of lace against the low sun.
Our garden's horizons are gentler now,
As other walls harden and close in.
The burden of proof is in the buds opening,
The answer to every question is green.

Corinna Edwards-Colledge, 30 March 2020