



Thoughts, Poems and Reflections in a Time of Pandemic Number 1. The Music Trees

At the present time the news is dominated by two things, the rapidly increasing number of deaths from the Corona Virus Pandemic and the disruption it creates. The social isolation forces us in on ourselves and makes us face up to our personal thoughts, fears, and challenges that we might otherwise have hidden away. In these *"Thoughts, Poems and Reflections in a time of Pandemic"*. I describe some of these, and how through facing them we may find fulfilment in the lives we seek.

Every death is a heartache for some family, and the pain and grief of that parting must be fully expressed. However, the end is another beginning in the cycle of life.

In my poem "The Music Trees" written a long time before the present pandemic, I have tried to express something of that cycle, the unpredictability of death, the ripples we create throughout our everyday lives, and how we live on though the memories transmitted to the music and song of the trees, after life has passed.

THE MUSIC TREES

She watching sits as ringlets spread
From central stillness left behind
While shafted in their golden glow
Portrayed in stillness on the ground
Light's casted haloes dance their way
Through canopies of branches held
In autumn colours leaves entwined.

For in this warm September eve
No one could tell the blighted fly
Its fitful course across the lake
Would end within the fishes' bite
And soulful in the turmoil's wake
The passing sound of water breaks
The rustle from the trees on high.

Enflamed by sun on forest ground
The ripples reach the nearby shore
Where mirrored by the water's edge
They set in dance the move of trees
With bended light against the sky
To list in time to nature's course
Until dispersed to dance no more.

In tinselled tone the autumn trees
Prepare the way for spring's rebirth
As sapless leaves their work complete
Caressed by wind and nature's force
In endless motion search for flight
From nurtured branches made replete
And through decay renew the earth.

In harmony with nature's realm
The music trees sing of her tryst
To seek not grief when life is gone
But crown the life of offspring run
Where leaf and fly and human form
Give way in death for life's rebirth
The trees sing of our greatest gift.

November 1995

REFLECTION

For all who hold a religious belief death is never the end. In 1st Corinthians Chapter 15 Paul discusses the Resurrection of Jesus and how everybody will be transformed in a heavenly life. He finishes with his paean of victory over death: *"Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting? The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.* For other traditions, death is part of the re-cycling of life until a state of unity or Nirvana is reached. For those who do not have such beliefs there will still never be an end: indeed, there cannot be an end because we will never be around to know that our time has ceased: our lives still live on in the memories of those who were around us, and in the music of the trees when the time of life has passed.

Our own deaths are times of parting, but permission to grieve by those left behind must never be suppressed or denied. The loss of the love, care, support, wellbeing, and compassion are devastations which leave people bereft. It is those people who were at one time around us, who suffer the great loss. During the present pandemic it is likely that each of us will know of at least one person who has died, alone, without loved ones and family around them, and in a clinical hospital ward. Also, family and loved ones who cannot go to the funerals of people who have died.

According to our own beliefs we ask or pray that people can be given time to find their own ways through these crises. We ask or pray for all people who are in this position and that they can find ways to express and work through their loneliness and griefs. If we do not allow ourselves to accept the hurt and the trauma their grief creates, we cannot transform the sorrows of death into the gratitude for all that has been given in the past. And find that, in the sun that beams down on us, and in the joys of nature, and for us in our own lives, and in the music of the trees, we can then uncover their greatest gift.

The complete collection of reflections is available at: www.com.tqdr.co.uk/articles/001C-PandemicThoughts.pdf