

# The Great Pandemic Poem 2020

*by* Jerry Ratch

First you had to have been there  
Because the air cleared up  
When the world stopped driving  
And the plants bloomed  
Bigger and brighter than we had ever  
Ever dreamed  
The sky was just a brilliant, pure  
Blue  
Like when God was born

Now for the bad stuff  
So, brace yourselves...

Because now my hair looks something like  
Bob Dylan meets Albert Einstein meets Mark Twain  
Since I can't get a haircut from six feet away  
Maybe if they invented six-foot scissors  
We might be able to get somewhere  
Though I'd be worried about losing  
One of my ears to Van Gogh's ghost

People are noticing animals in places and at times they usually  
don't

Coyotes have meandered along downtown Chicago's Michigan  
Avenue

Along the Miracle Mile, like a true miracle  
Also, near San Francisco's Golden Gate Bridge  
And a puma was seen roaming the streets of Santiago, Chile

While goats took over a whole town in Wales  
Including the mayor's seat and a number of the city council chairs  
as well  
And they can now vote on nearly anything they want

In India, already daring wildlife has become bolder  
With hungry monkeys entering homes  
And opening refrigerators to look for food  
And they began making lists for you to go shopping  
When they can't find particular items  
So, be careful what you're avoiding buying  
You don't want to make a hungry monkey angry

Also, I overheard this coming from our own backyard  
Just this morning  
"Quack, quack, quack  
Quack, quack, quack  
I'm a duck  
And I don't give a phuck  
So, take that"

I mean, what the ph...eck  
Is happening?  
Ducks who can talk now?  
Like some sort of bad Walt Disney movie?  
Or is this some new pandemic of bad behavior that  
We previously knew nothing about  
But maybe always existed  
Right under the great nose of Reality?

They've got bear parties going on in Yosemite  
Though they don't have party hats on yet  
But just you wait  
They got wild boars crossing a road in Haifa  
In the crosswalk yet

With their snouts down, sniffing the stripes  
Checking to see if this is really  
Just some version of Abbey Road  
But more like Piggyback Road

International rock stars with names like  
One Egg and Manic Monkey  
Have come out of the International Closet  
Dancing they fat off  
While we all go around wagging our verbal finger  
At each other from a six-foot social distance  
When caught with our masks off  
While I bend my light for you around the planet  
Like gravity

And we have fallen from a great height  
Fallen by the chocolate cliffs of memory and sanity  
Fallen like there's no better gravy in this life  
Than pure gravity  
When there *really is no* gravy in this life  
*Other* than gravity

And now it's been reported  
That pigeons in New York  
Are fighting with pigeons from Boston  
They just can't all get along  
Must be the different accent that gives them away  
And begging has become so much more difficult  
That they are starting massive pigeon wars

Now, I'm no open-faced liar  
So, when I lie, I turn my back  
And lie openly to the fields  
The clouds, and the cat next door  
Who hisses at me openly and skulks away

Because I can't and/or won't pet him

His name is Hortus, the hissing cat  
Because he openly throws hissy fits  
But I myself am no open-faced liar  
And I would never, ever lie to him  
Cause I can't stand to hear him hissing at me

And now there's a bug hiding in every rose  
And you've got to look before you smell  
It's hard to tell whether this is being done on purpose  
And now we're even cleaning the  
Cleaning supplies, for God's sake!  
When and where does it stop?

There's tarnish on the silver lining of  
Everything  
And we're making masks  
Out of the new math  
Of elder bras  
And there are more vapor trails  
Than all of God's lovely clouds  
While those who are ruling over us  
Are going nuts with their own egos and eagles

The *No-Solicitor* signs  
Are fading from our building  
And now solicitors are  
Showing up en-masse  
Especially those who can't read  
So well, or those who are semi-blind  
Or those who just don't care  
Whether or not you want them there

They are making loud begging noises

All day long and halfway into the night  
And not a few of them have learned  
How to howl like wolves at the door

To avert depression in these times  
How else to create order out of chaos  
But to do jigsaw puzzles?

Of course, the whole country  
Has bought up the supply  
They have run out of puzzles  
Because of this Puzzlemania  
And the despair that comes and goes is here again

We try tuning into the Good News channel  
But it keeps eluding us  
Life's other goal ought to be laughter  
Not any laughter, but the pure oxygen of laughter  
That which takes away the breath  
But sustains you anyway

And now this, just in:

*Massive Herd of Goats Makes a Mad Dash for Freedom  
To Show Town Who's in Charge*

As much of the world continues to socially isolate to help prevent the further spread of the coronavirus, a herd of some 200 goats has broken out from where they were sheltering in place

The goats were being kept in a holding pen in a San Jose, California neighborhood, but somehow broke through an electric fence to make a run for it. Goats are regulars in the neighborhood, where they are invited to come eat the brush to clear it on a hill behind the houses in a bid to prevent fires

Usually the fence holds, but this time the goats managed a jailbreak, knocking down the walls of their pen and pouring onto the streets of the neighborhood. They made for an unexpected sight that was captured on a video. All the goats had broken through the fence and were wreaking havoc on the street. In the video, the goats can be seen running down the road and seemingly having the time of their life

Sadly, the goats' mad dash for freedom did not last, as they were rounded up quickly. They did make the most of their time out of lockdown, though, turning the neighborhood's potted plants into an all-you-can-eat buffet

And then, then — I saw someone running down the road  
When suddenly it flew out of his mouth  
Ewww, joggerphlem! Oh, gross! Ewww  
Joggerphlem! Joggerphlem!

