



Reflection on Solitude in Times of Covid

In 2020, our world convulsed and mutated from a buzzing beehive to a global prison with eight billion solitary inmates. Shops closed, schools shut, flights cancelled, highways emptied and human connectedness collapsed under emergency measures to self-isolate. A tiny virus ravaged bodies, traumatized minds, shattered social bonds, and paralyzed the planet. Torontonians were locked down, confined to home and lost. Many yearned for bursts of stimulation. We spent the day browsing, surfing, scrolling, watching, liking, posting and Netflix binging. Facebook became the “potato chips of the soul.” Others sought purpose and structure in activities like cooking, cleaning, exercising, dancing and singing on balconies. Fears were eased with shopping on-line and ordering in. Some escaped with carbs, martinis and a buffet of pharmaceutical distractions. Consumption conquered boredom.

A few like myself, welcomed solitude as an old friend. We are writers. A couch is our kingdom and we work from home. We stocked up and hunkered down with calm awareness that aloneness is the nexus of creativity, a gateway to enlightenment . We embraced the solitude knowing that interruptions destroy imagination. There can be salvation in damnation. Boredom is a luxury to be savored and cultivated. It can “stir dull roots with Spring rain.” The possibilities embedded in an unstructured day are vast, allowing time to ponder, muse, and maybe even write an article on Solitude. Be assured, dear reader. the grand scramble and boogie-beat of our daily lives will soon return. Enjoy the voluptuous burden of aloneness while it lasts.

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Stone walls do not a prison make nor iron bars a cage. (Richard Lovelace)

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