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Lockdown Moon

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11th February Moon. Photo by Sharon Methi

I was forewarned of the events of this year when my young adult daughter returned home for Christmas, and suddenly and totally unexpectedly, was admitted to intensive care with life threatening sepsis. She began to recover just as the pandemic was taking hold. Hard to know how to process such a startling personal encounter with the fragility of life just at the point when so many others were experiencing the stark reality of Covid 19. Learning the heart sutra soothed me in ITU and a dear friend posted me regular images of the moon. These helped. I have attempted to capture my experience of this time.

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Locked in
Kind words
Sombre tone
Humming machinery
Blue patterned hospital gown
We watch in lockdown
Prior to lock down

helpless as blood pressure falls
Organs failing
Button down the hatches
Don't dare to breathe or think
Don't dare to sleep
Don't dare to voice the thoughts not spoken
that persist

Moon
Inconstant constant cycle
Dry barren rivulets
Shadows depths unknown
The unerring constancy of the universe
Emptiness is form, form is emptiness
Heart sutra pierces my torn heart

Moon casts eerie light
Creates space
Welcome distance from our plight

Painstakingly life returns
Sutra by sutra
Grasping
Perilously
Balancing tentatively
Edging home

Our lives upended
Meanwhile all is changed
Shifted off balance
World gripped in lockdown
Pandemic
Seeks out inequality
Concertina tubes
Hospital gowns, visors
Fearful, space like PPE
Casts out individuality
Rips through humanity
Statistics rise
Truth is a liar

We clap
First for carers
Then for porters, cleaners, shop assistants

Then take the knee
Against racial injustice
Many hearts torn
Many sutras needed
Leadership fails

Moon remains constantly inconstant
Nonchalant, oblivious
Tides waxing and waning
In monthly cycles
Pictures arrive
Friend's words reaching out
"...and now I have spoken to the moon
the magnificent moon
will shine in the darkness"

This is all
A touch, an image in the darkness
A hope
to shine again

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