

Is There Something in the Air?

(*Che cos'è che in aria vola?* by Roberto Piumini)

Translated from the Italian by Leah Janeczko

Is there something in the air?
They called off school: why'd they do that?
What's the danger to beware?
My friend, let's have a little chat.

The virus making people frown
is called Corona. It's no king
even though its name means "crown".
So you might ask: What is this thing?

The bully's one that we can't see.
It's one so small the only hope
of showing it to you and me
would be a great big microscope.

A kind of poison floating round
and causing problems everywhere,
it's sneaky, sly and has been found
to spread real fast from here to there.

It's teeny-tiny and it's light
but it's a real danger too
because it puts up quite a fight
to get inside of me and you.

But it's a fight that me and you
and everybody else can win
'cause there are things that we can do
to keep that brute from getting in.

Now first, remember if you sneeze
to catch it quickly in your arm
to stop the spread of its disease
so it can do us all less harm.

If you go out, once you get back
make sure you march off right away
to wash your hands of its attack,
not just today but every day.

Use lots of water, soap and care,
and rinse and dry your hands well too.
That way you'll make it end up where
it's down the drain and not on you!

When Mom and Dad walk in the door
make sure that they both do the same,
then shout *Bravo! Well done! Encore!*
to make it fun, like it's a game.

And keep your fingers off your face.
Don't touch your mouth or eyes or nose,
to keep out each and every trace,
'cause what you touch is where it goes.

If you pass others, when you meet them
keep some space from where they stand.
You can smile and wave to greet them.
There's no need to shake their hand.

Hugs and kisses? Let's not give them,
but that's only just for now,
while that tiny, nasty villain
is still sneaking all around.

Some wear masks when on the street
but they're not dressed for Mardi Gras
or even out to trick-or-treat
or bandits wanted by the law.

That friendly mask is for their cough
'cause when they cover up their face
it stops Corona's flying off
and spreading round from place to place.

But while the villain's still about
and free to damage, harm and roam
you know my plan to keep it out?
I'm staying put inside my home!

It's a brilliant plan, my friend,
since we can't even go to school.
Until this virus danger ends
"Stay home!" should be our golden rule.

But friends and family, yours and mine?
They're all at home too, safe and sound,
and we can stay in touch online,
that way they'll always be around.

And if you want to show you miss them
there's a way for them to know it.
There's no need to hug or kiss them:
with a world of words you'll show it.

Words are presents, words are seeds,
they're gifts that we have plenty of
and if they're good they're all we need,
when we're apart, to grow our love.

If you and me and everyone
let caution, care and love inspire us
soon together we'll have won
our fight against this nasty virus.

Once we've made it through together
maybe everyone will see
that we can learn to make a better,
wiser world for you and me.