

Confessions of a Virus: A View From The Other Side

How strange are you the human race! You decided to exterminate me soon after my birth and ended up christening me COVID 19 from Novel CoV. Not a bad start for the beginners.

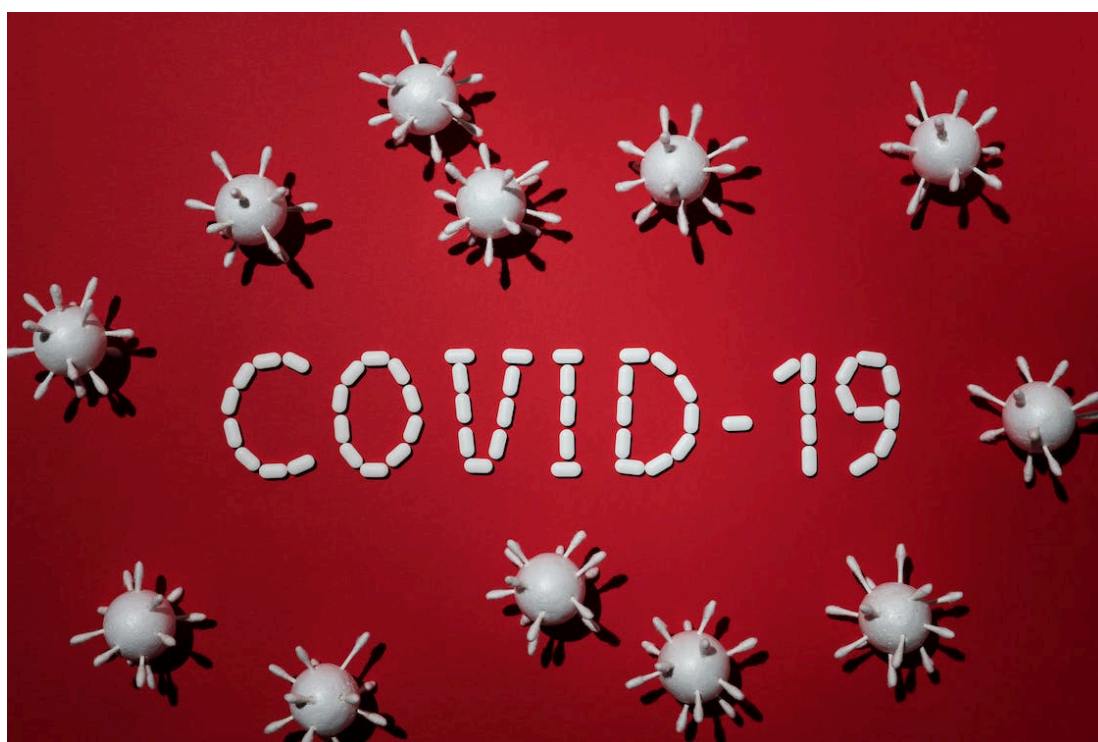


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I have ascended the throne without a ceremony since I am naturally decorated with a crown and overwhelmingly powerful for your community to fathom my strength. Let me narrate my natural evolution. To be fair and honest I was always happy to exist as a commensal in my primary hosts – the two bat species, flying fox and the old world fruit bat. I realise that humans have a negative connotation towards bats as denizens of the nether world, bloodsuckers and messengers of Beelzebub as they roost hanging upside down. I believe they look at your world in the right perspective. See how I have turned your world topsy-turvy!

I only had to 'drift' between a few amino acid chains periodically to enter even the pangolin, my intermediary host. My New Year celebration set in a few days before your calendar year 2020. This time I had to undergo a major 'shift' in my antigenic profile to enter your DNA. It was a novel experience for me too. My hosts were from different topographies, in different temperature zones, some were better equipped to resist me with BCG shots, varying demographic profiles and population density. I had to juggle between my fraternity of L and S strain. In short, I utilised my skills of viro-dynamics.

There have been microbes pathogenic to your species – viruses and bacteria. I am a double whammy. I trigger direct tissue lysis as they are deprived of oxygen or act as a bacteriophage through the bowel Prevotella.

You claim to be the most advanced species on earth which I find ludicrous. Your immune system labels me respiratory, haematological, neurological and finally multi-disciplinary as an act of desperation. Either you cannot mobilise your antibody resources or you go into overdrive by a cytokine storm. I have altered your era into a different time zone – BC/AC – before and after Corona.

The purpose of this write-up is not for my welfare. As I have already stated I can always head back to my hosts. Hey ignoramus! MEND YOUR WAYS. I have lived through Paleo and Mesozoic eras and witnessed your ancestor's progress from – Neanderthals to Homo erectus and regress to Homo sapiens. We are avatars of the same divine power who created all living beings. Your utter disregard of the other life forms, be it flora or fauna, is a non-negotiable crime. Trust me – my aspiration is not to wipe off your race because if you succumb I lose my shelter and it is a death knell for me too.

I have heard snide remarks like COVID being a coward; that I am an unseen marauder; utilise guerrilla kind of warfare;

target the weak and ailing. Let me clarify that my intention is not to easy pick low hanging fruits. I can easily say bring it on. But this is one battle I would like to lose. I can wreak havoc if I target the paediatric age group. You have witnessed a demonstration in the form of Toxic shock syndrome/atypical Kawasaki, just to name a couple.

Whatever has happened so far was collateral damage. Mother Nature gave you free air to breathe. I infected you through the same and made you pay for it by delivery through tubes. What a travesty of justice! Mother Earth gave you free land and soil for plantation and agriculture. But you had devious plans of animal husbandry, trading off values for your finances.



Image

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<https://pixabay.com/images/id-4937119/>

I confess I don't understand the human language of geopolitics and economics. But I gather, I have struck you where it hurts most. Your most valued possession has gone into a spiral vortex. The feel of the currency notes which used to give you a euphoric feeling is looked upon now with scepticism. I can only laugh mockingly at the transaction, fearing my presence. Overheard the conversation about your stocks and shares, hospitality and entertainment industries, all in a spin.

Picked up some difficult human vocabulary – capitalism, consumerism and recession. My serious advice is to add frugality and austerity to your dictionary.

Let me remind you that my Reproduction Number, R_0 is between 2 & 3. I can change my form faster than your brave hearts – ‘Virs’ or ‘Mabs’ with any prefix. Ultimately you may come out with a vaccine to build up your herd immunity. Remember I have not yet activated my viro-kinetics. This was only a recce.

By leveraging discipline, respecting the borders, youth protecting the elders in your community and passing on the lessons learnt to the next filial generation you can come out of the eclipse cast by me. Live and let live.

Remember I am lurking in the shadows.