

Quondam Writing Prize 2019

Senior Category Entry

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Entrant's Form: UVC

Word Count: 443

The Lethal Infection

"The only thing we have to fear is fear itself."

The courageous chant it to themselves as they continue living in apprehension

Of our improving, advancing, technologically smart, instant society.

"Isis", "Drone", "Watching us" whispered under the breath of a country's citizens,

A blanket of fear covered by the fragile layer of pretence and ignorance.

Those who are in bliss are the ones who understand it

The ones who don't, are controlled by it- Artificial Intelligence.

On every newspaper, magazine, phone, tablet, TV, laptop (etc)

The two cursed words flash out.

Don't stay for too long in busy places, dash through Heathrow

Anxious Mothers warn their children, for fear there might be another buzzing beast

Hovering in wait.

For Christmas, Easter, Birthdays, machines are given out

In order for some to receive the latest gismo, gadget, or electronic.

Yet, people are afraid.

The even quieter mumbles inside the blanket are the benefits.

MRIs, Ultrasounds, Cancer Research are lost in the chasm of panic.

Siri, Echo, Alexa: conspiracy theories flash by as you scroll, yet who reminded you about

Your meeting yesterday morning.

Wars won, through a camera of the sky

Businesses smoother, sharper, better as a result of spam filters, junk mail defeated

Before even popping into your inbox.

Car accidents; the numbers fall as rapidly as the number of houses increase.

The fear begins to fall, as the next generation replaces the old one

A more relaxed, open approach to the beasts of technology.

Just as before, the Internet was an uncertain web filled with obstacles and the unknown

Only used for NASA, scientists, mathematicians

Now it is a tool as vital as the human lungs, information inhaled every second.

As the future seems bright and filled with exploring, so does the past.

Suddenly Historians have windows into what seemed distant, lost memories

Algorithms manipulating ruins into structures as real as they would be in Roman times.

The white boot, landing on red dust, on a red planet, in my lifetime

The fabrics of space no longer seem so infinite due to the telescopes spinning their

endless orbits around Solar systems, stars, supernovas.

It is easier to defeat a deadly disease

Than to stop the infectious spread of fear, apprehension and worry
Passed down over generation and generation
The subject of worry changing each time (this case: AI).
However, the base of concern and despair remaining fundamentally the same.
Fearing the machines is pointless
Embrace a changing society that will make things once thought so far out of reach
Become known.