

WOULD I RATHER BE A LLAMA? - Rhona North

Before,
Before many days,
Before the news,
News of Covid
I used to be a tortoise.
I enjoyed being a tortoise
Darting in and out of my shell,
Out, in, out in, out in
To work, to church, to family, to friends
Oh to the glorious array of shops.
And oh the smell of food cooking in a café
Glasses clinking with my friends,
My head was for certain out then
Returning tired, head darting back in!
No time to stand and stare
Barely time to pray, listen, clean or chat

Then everything came to a grinding h...a....l....t....
Tiny outs, mostly ins
Not much space to roam within my shell
Out briefly to a shop, head in
Only my eyes could be seen outside my shell
Terrified of catching the virus,
Quick back in, shell safe and secure
What shall I do?
I know I will tidy that drawer
Sort that pile of papers
Out briefly to the chemist
Head in only my eyes can be seen,
Fear rippling gently through my shell
You see I have underlying conditions....
I grab my prescription
The most pressing condition seems to be fear
I return, as quickly as my conditions allow
Back in, safe and secure in my shell.
What shall I do?

It's a glorious early morning,
Already the sun is blazing down,
All is peaceful, secure in my shell.
I pick up my bible,
I love to read the words,
Some familiar, some new.
I relax taking time to chat to God
It's delightful
Peace is slowly percolating through my vulnerable head
Packed with whizzing thoughts and fears,
But, like a merry go round grinding to a h....a....l....t....



My thoughts

Start

To

Ease

I feel the warmth of God's hug
The strength of His right arm over me
Jesus reminding me he knows and understands fear
Inability to breathe on His cross,
Seeing His relatives grieve,
Physical death temporarily over Him.
He understands,
He understands me.
The Holy Spirit starts to stir deep within
The little globules of peace supplanting the fear.
How that has set me up for the day!

But time hangs heavy,
Frustration for my old life overwhelms
What shall I do
A brief out,
A walk, some exercise
Wait a minute...
I have time to stand and stare!
The llamas are by the fence
Their sumptuously furry heads leaning over
One brown, one cream
Their eyes, pools of liquid brown
Dancing and smiling merrily
You can almost hear them hummmmmm
Company at last they say.
I watch them
Running along the fence,
Looking for food,
Like a crazed householder looking out
For their Asda delivery
They pace, walk, run
I smile



I return to in
Time still hangs heavy
But I have more energy
A craft? Cook? Mend? Bake? Read? Watch?
A virtual coffee on Skype?
A zoom Meditation?
Worship on a you tube channel
Memes all around

Not everything has changed
What shall I do?
The days merge into one,
I need to check my phone

For which day and date it is

I see the llamas
I hear the birdsong
New faces to say hello to
They become my new regulars
Time to say hello,
Time to talk to The homeless man in his tent.
And the different greens of newly verdant trees
And the nests
And the tulips opening as daffodils wither
And the bluebells
And the pied wagtail
Only venturing down
When the blackbirds are there as sentry guards
I begin to pick out the differing birdsong
I watch nature reclothing herself on a daily basis
An hour a day
Out in nature
What bliss!

I'm like that llama,
I now have time to stand and stare,
Walking up the now familiar stretch
Back and forth
Back and forth
Searching, just like them
Eyes open wide.
God is changing me
He has taken away
The busyness
Of my old life
Those foundation plates had slipped
Too busy...
Too many outs and ins
In too quick succession
He's restoring my foundation
More of Him
Less of the world
More of Him
Less of my own building
More of Him
More of His creation
More time to stand and stare.

Keep parts of me being a tortoise Lord
Safe and secure in my shell
But let me be a llama too
Quizzical, running up and down
Noticing new things
That you are pointing out to Me Lord
New ways of seeing You
New ways of seeing the sacred in the mundane,
New mission fields
New ways of telling people about your death
And your love.
Keep me Lord
Being a tortillama!

