

# Dis-Ease

Unmasked,  
he smiles,  
gestures with an arm  
across a demesne palpable as imagined:  
“This is the world I’ve always wanted.”

The old, with a stunned gasp,  
collapsing suddenly at his feet;  
the new disease, swooping in softly,  
downed in the cloak of ease,  
the way lines fall readily into place  
in the stolid march  
between life and death,  
perfectly cadenced  
6 feet apart,  
6 rationed sardine cans at each doorstep,  
6 feet in the ground no longer,  
but the shortest distance  
between confinement and  
that final flaming consignment.

Around his table, men in masks  
that sheathe the black, hooked beaks of quacks,  
grin and nod and softly cluck,  
“This is the world we’ve always wanted.”

Corrigible  
Obsequious  
Vulnerable  
Intimidated  
Dominated

We are taught to parrot, to twitter the words  
'round in our little cages:  
"This is the world we've always wanted..."  
with nary a hint of a whimper,  
else to end  
despite pleading arms  
long outstretched in dazed surrender,  
nailed,  
point-blank to the chest,  
with a bang.

—*Rosella TORRECAMPO*