

The hunt

As masters of their dark art of epidemiology,
they chase a bug whose genetic coding
is thirty thousand letter long.

They've decided to break all protocols -
to inject human rats with vaccine alphabets,
before they expose them to COVID toxicity.

In locked rooms, they toil in obscurity -
swallowed by masks and plastic ensemble.
Their language of adjuvant technology
defies even spellcheck, as chloroquine,
ritonavir and ritonavir, battle for attention
with kerzana, actevira and vemolesivir.

Meanwhile this pestilence smiles smugly,
knowing it's always one step ahead.
In a momentary life it has already learned
that reaction is our fatal human fragility.
It knows we would never consider to unite
those dispersed fifty labs and their billions,
in the hunt for its extinction.

So it sleeps soundly tonight, anticipating
its year of pillage ahead - if not even longer.

Craig O'Flaherty 2020