

RENAMING COVID-19

I dislike the name COVID-19.

It's too technical and abstract.

How about pangolin plague

or badass bat bug

since pangolins and bats

carry similar strains? I want

to see the face of a villain:

scales and a snout, or red eyes

and razor-sharp teeth.

Or how about serpent syndrome,

to be more biblical;

the corona curse, suggesting

power and evil; or Earth scourge

to bring in geography

without offending anyone?

Admitting politics, both

domestic and international,

we could call it fiasco fever.

It needs a name that evokes

science fiction, Armageddon,

a dystopian nightmare.

COVID-19 sounds like
it could be a new medication
or maybe a new planet,
one where we could go outside
without fear and even touch
each other, which, of course,
is just what we need.

Lucille Lang Day, Oakland, California