

WINDOWS

Open. Window.

Look into my world.

See my room, see my life

Or at least the part I show.

The seminar: Also coming to your room, soon.

No escape, unless you've got a free kitchen or living room.

Morning, wake up.

It's ten minutes before your lecture starts.

Who cares, listen to it while you're having breakfast, like a morning podcast,

You could even shower now, you think, and nobody would see,

Girl, where are your morals, you ask, where's your dignity?

I sit.

You sit.

We all sit.

I sit in front of my laptop, to look into my world.

I sit, I wait, I hustle, from work to work to work.

No clear borders anymore, no life to take a break from learning

Your room is the only place to go, inevitable returning.

Your world – became significantly smaller

Your world – got transferred to being an online scholar

Your world – changed within a day or two

So many parts of your normal – stopped existing for you.

Before – you went home after a full day of studying and coffee and talks,

Now you leave home after work to get at least a ten-minute walk,

Some fresh air, sun or a small gathering of two people that you miss

To still be weirded out by it—

Your studies came closer to you, as close as solely existing in your home
but at the same time, distant, far, loosening connections through missing human contact
and being apart, through sixteen emails that could've been one talk, ten minutes, even less,
but there was no breakout room for that.

Motivation? Gone, or at least harder to find

It's hard to motivate yourself if you contemplate that your grandparents might possibly die
if you see them next week, finally, after half a year.

Meeting people before? No second thoughts, meeting people now?

*Are we too many? Did you distance yourself properly? Did you wash your hands? Do we sit
apart? Are we allowed to – hug?*

You think at least ten times before meeting someone you haven't seen for two weeks

You think at least twenty times before meeting your grandparents or someone with a baby

Your thoughts crash if you enter a crowded place

You don't feel comfortable anymore with not having enough space.

Other humans are potentially dangerous now

You are a potential danger to other humans now.

After some weeks, you would love to meet your friends from the other side of Germany

You would not love to take a train there, or a bus, or see their twenty friends from university.

Scared for your mum, who's working with large groups of children,

Scared for your friend, who's an underpaid nurse in need of self-isolation,

Scared for the people you know with lung problems, depression, or other diseases,

Scared for the sister of your grandmother, or children, losing the mobility they needed—

So much to think about,

Your head is running wild.

You constantly need to calm yourself

Not allowing it to become too loud.

Your head? It's filled with crushed plans, fear, and panic.

Let's not pretend that this is the same basis as before

For studying or for learning.

learn to stop thoughts

from crawling into your head

prevent yourself from reading the news
before going to bed.

At least

Nobody you know has been affected, as in “dying”
And the safety measures are working rather fine, worth it, no denying.
The uncertain uncertainty it is that keeps us up at night
Not knowing how long this will continue to be
Not able to tick off days, counting down, till we —

And at the end of my full day, happily
I close my windows
And get up from my desk at home to close the other windows.
I’ve been looking out of these windows much more than ever before,
leaves turning green
on the tree in front of it
and on my computer screen.

You get used to it, you think.
The new normal becomes less intimidating.
Still though, you miss
Not having windows between your world and yourself.



Leonie Figge is currently pursuing a bachelor’s degree in English studies and history in the city of Münster. She is fascinated by the human desire to tell stories –something that she encounters in both her subjects- and also enjoys studying a diverse mixture of texts. Interested in creating something with and through words, she has been writing for the past few years and has tried out several different genres and text forms, beginning with poetry and short stories. For some time now, she has mainly settled on writing Spoken Word Poetry because she finds the need to give words a (heart) beat, not just through writing but also performing them.