Reading - Every cloud has a silver lining

A well-known English proverb says, “every cloud has a silver lining”, meaning that no matter how bad a situation might seem, there is always some good aspect to it. This phrase has been used quite a lot recently by many people who claim that despite the destructive consequences of the coronavirus pandemic, there is something good that can come out of it. This ‘silver lining’ perspective is best expressed in an untitled prose poem written by Kitty O'Meara, a former teacher and chaplain from the US, which went viral as soon as it was posted on Facebook.

And the people stayed home. And read books, and listened, and rested, and exercised, and made art, and played games, and learned new ways of being, and were still. And listened more deeply. Some meditated, some prayed, some danced. Some met their shadows. And the people began to think differently.

And the people healed. And, in the absence of people living in ignorant, dangerous, mindless, and heartless ways, the earth began to heal.

And when the danger passed, and the people joined together again, they grieved their losses, and made new choices, and dreamed new images, and created new ways to live and heal the earth fully, as they had been healed.

“It offers a story of how it *could* be, what we could do with this time,” O'Meara tells OprahMag.com of her viral work. “And the people stayed home” was written in one sitting, after months of built-up anxiety while watching the pandemic **brew** on the news.

“I was getting kind of sad. There was nothing I could do. I couldn’t help my friends. I was very worried about them. My husband said: ‘Write. Just write again,’” and so she did. “I just kind of sat down and wrote it… I saw the maps of the receding pollution over China and Europe. I thought, ‘There you go. There’s something of blessing in all suffering.' And I thought with my passionate love for the Earth, maybe that’s one good thing.”

Immediately after writing, O'Meara shared this poem with her friends on Facebook. “I post stuff like that all the time. I usually don't get a lot of response,” O'Meara says. “But this found its **niche**.” Soon, a Facebook friend asked to share the poem with her own followers, and the poem appealed to people instantly. Within three days of posting, it had officially gone viral.

Since then, O'Meara has been flooded with letters from fans from around the globe sharing how her words provided them with comfort. “It’s just amazing,” O'Meara says. “I saw going viral as a gift to me. I was able to offer spiritual care,” and she adds “We have gifts. It’s a good reminder that whatever your gift is, and however small it is, keep using it. This is a really good time for that.”

Article adapted from: <https://www.oprahmag.com/entertainment/a31747557/and-the-people-stayed-home-poem-kitty-omeara-interview/>

**Read the article and mark the following statements as True or False.**

1. Supporters of the ‘silver lining’ perspective think that coronavirus outbreak can be beneficial.
2. Kitty O’Meara is a professional writer.
3. O’Meara rewrote the poem a few times.
4. The word ‘brew’ in paragraph 5 means ‘begin to happen’.
5. According to the article, coronavirus has had some positive effects on the environment only in China.
6. O’Meara says that she had never posted anything like that before.
7. The word ‘niche’ in paragraph 7 means ‘right place’.
8. It took a few weeks for the poem to go viral.
9. O’Meara’s feels that she has helped people spiritually.
10. She suggests that it’s a good opportunity for people to do the things they are good at.

**Writing a letter or an essay**

Choose one of the following tasks:

1. You have read Kitty O’Meara’s poem “And the people stayed home.” Write a **letter** to her **expressing your appreciation** for her workand **describing your thoughts and feelings** about the poem.
2. Do you agree with the phrase “every cloud has a silver lining” in relation to the coronavirus pandemic? Write an **essay** to express your **opinion**, supporting it with **specific reasons and examples**.

Write 180-200 words.