



VIR

US

Observations and conversations during the Coronavirus lock-down, 2020.

K A T E A B B E Y

Nothing before like this has happened to the nation, and nothing could have prepared us for the sudden mass isolation that occurred during lockdown.

On the 23rd March, 2020, 27 million people tuned in to watch Boris Johnson's televised address as he announced the new social restrictions. Overnight, our lifestyles were forced to change drastically in an attempt to curb the overwhelming pressure on our National Health Service, aiming to control the infection 'peak' and minimise the death rate.

I documented my experience of the new restrictions through my two daughters - observing their myriad emotional responses: Sometimes anxious and uncertain, sometimes bored or indifferent and sometimes just missing their friends. As the days rolled into weeks, I still found beauty in the mundane, watching the activities repeated as we lived in the limits of the immediate vicinity, thankful of being safe with no family or friends at risk.

Wanting to add more breadth to my observations, I started to record people's feelings and ideas as they navigated through this new landscape. Intermixing this, along with the pandemic-frenzied news broadcasting of those seven weeks, my following 'piece' gives my slant on an extremely unique period of our history: one that only a handful of weeks later, had yet again changed, taking those temporary attitudes and emotions with them.

No matter how people tried to make sense of the initial lockdown, it was invariably as something as extraordinary to them as mine was to me.



Week 1

VIRUS DEATHS
IN
HRS

Mel (Paramedic, 39)

I really feel it's like a nightmare sometimes - Everyday changes when you get to work. So when I put my uniform on in the morning and go to work, I do feel quite scared, because you don't know what you're walking into.

23rd March

25th March

Dawn (Care-worker, 51)
It's constant anxiety about it all -
it's on my mind a lot, it's all bad
news. No good coming out of it.

MADRID
ICE RINK
BECOMES A MORGUE.
400,000
CONFIRMED
CASES
WORLDWIDE.

A woman with blonde hair, wearing a light blue long-sleeved shirt and grey leggings, is lying on her back on a black trampoline. She is looking up towards the sky. The trampoline is set up in a park with tall trees in the background. The sun is shining from the upper right, creating a bright, hazy atmosphere. The text is written in a bold, black, hand-drawn style.

26th March

Katie (Veterinary Client care assistant, 26)
You get more comfortable in your own home.
I will have more anxieties about going
out and seeing people again.

THE EXCEL CENTRE IN
LONDON IS BEING CONVERTED
TO NHS NIGHTINGALE





Week 2

1st April

Imogen (Pupil, 16)

Cuz I'm used to going to school every day. And then, like, within a couple of days, it just stopped. I mean, I should stay at home, mindful that I was lonely at first because I wasn't seeing my friends like 24 seven. I felt very nervous about it at first.

DEATH TOLL
UK 563
(2,352 TOTAL)
29,000
CONFIRMED CASES.



5th April

9 BUS DRIVERS HAVE DIED AFTER CONTRACTING COVID-19

Judy (Retired Occupational Therapist, 60)

Being able to hear the birds has just been fantastic, because there hasn't been as much traffic and you've had the time to look at nature and almost see each tree come out on a daily basis.

Week 3



VENICE
WATER
STARTING
TO CLEAR
JELLYFISH
SIGHTINGS.

6th April



Darryl (Vicar, 47)
We didn't get the chance
to say goodbye to each
other. We didn't get that.
We got 'close the doors,
close the doors -
no more services'.

6th April

Tamsin (Civil Servant, 52)
Massive hand-break turn has gone on in society. It's like living political history in real time - the Tories have become socialists.

DEATHS REPORTED IN THE LAST 24 HOURS.
NEARLY 1 MILLION PEOPLE
HAVE APPLIED FOR UNIVERSAL CREDIT
SINCE 16TH MARCH.



Week 4

13th April

Heidi (Photographer, 45)

Feels like when I was a stay-home mum. Just me and my girls. I can stare at them like I did when they were babes - get to know every detail about them again.

50 MILLION:
PINTS OF BEER AND
CIDER SET TO BE Poured
DOWN THE DRAIN.

18th April

70% CORONAVIRUS DEATHS IN LOUISIANA ARE OF BLACK PEOPLE EVEN THOUGH THEY ONLY MAKE UP 32% POPULATION.

Sarah (Office Manager, 54)
I fear the massive divide between those who have and those who don't have has just got bigger.



Week 5



20th April

Sarah (Supermarket worker, 23)

I miss my parents and I am worried about them. My Dad recently lost his job and he was already struggling quite a bit before the lock down began. Now he can't leave the house at all and is alone until my Mum comes home from work. I don't know when I'll next be able to see them.



DOCTORS RUSH TO DISMANTLE
TRUMP'S SUGGESTIONS THAT PEOPLE
INJECT THEMSELVES WITH DISINFECTANT
TO COMBAT COVID-19.

3rd May

Hels (Mum, 38)

Panic when I think of how long this could last and whether I have it in me to be a calm mummy all the time.

Week 6



Ian (Managing Director, 49)
I'm seeing nature more and I'm more involved with it.
It feels brilliant. It feels like there's regrowth out there.

30th April

60%
PEOPLE
SAY THEY'RE
DOING LESS
EXERCISE.

20%
SAY THEY'RE
DRINKING MORE ALCOHOL.

Mel (Retired Nurse, 60)

Not even remotely enough hugs
anymore, especially for me to give,
never mind receive.

2nd May

CARE: ENGLAND ESTIMATE 7500 DEATHS
IN CARE HOMES ARE COVID-19 RELATED.



Week 7

7th May

28.4 MILLION ELECTIVE
SURGERIES WORLDWIDE
PROJECTED TO BE
CANCELLED OR
POSTPONED IN 2020
BECAUSE OF DISRUPTION
DUE TO COVID-19.

Alena (Artist, 46)

I just feel overwhelmed with all the daily routines of homeschooling 2 young children, studying for my MA, and all the other bits and bats around the house.



8th May

Erin (Pupil, 13)
It's a bit lonely because
you can't see your friends.

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN DECADES
RESIDENTS IN JALANDHAR, PUNJAB
CAN SEE THE HIMALAYAS, 100 MILES AWAY.



10th May

LOCKDOWN
RESTRICTIONS
EASE.



VIRUS

Observations and
conversations
during the Corona Virus
lock-down, 2020.

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