

Juliet's Lockdown Diary #Week 1

Like most of us my definition of hell has changed, but it used to be unannounced visitors: "I was just passing and thought I'd drop in to say hello!"

Well think again, chum. I'm a very sociable person and love to have company but only when I've steam-cleaned the flat and the child, hair brushed and parted and lip gloss in situ.

It's a cruel irony that now I've the time and will to be my perfect self nobody can pop in for cocktails. However this new regime of constant cleanliness and polish is paying off on FaceTime.

Nobody in your life has the ability to insult you more than your Facebook sponsored ads. I used to be inundated with Mature Dating sites and fitness for the elderly. I'm 45.

Now every second one's for some form of constipation remedy. Facebook must presume me to be a panic buyer with a pasta, rice and loo roll clogged up colon. Not so. It's all protein and fibre BTW! Shouting this at my phone screen is making no difference. They've stopped listening...

I also noticed a promotion for hand sanitiser. Joy to the world! However this one was from Neals Yard Remedies for 100ml (limited availability, natch!) containing 70% alcohol and a 'purifying blend of essential oils'. It's £10. Not affordable to either front line workers or the many great people stacking shelves, collecting rubbish or doing many of the services that

would very much benefit from anything that kills bacteria.

Anyway, if this depresses you, Neal's Yard also sell various herbs and snake oil treatments to alleviate your symptoms of despair. Meanwhile MedFetUK have donated their entire stock of medical scrubs to the NHS. A fetish site who "don't carry very much stock" have stepped up to the plate. Bravo to them and condolences to all their kinky clients. You'll be back playing doctors and nurses soon, let's hope.

"I wouldn't wish it on my worst enemy!" One of the most detestable phrases and a sentiment I'm hearing more of on media outlets: "The wife and I were trapped on a cruise ship for five months due to corona. It's an experience I wouldn't wish on my worst enemy." The poor sods have spent too much time on the ocean waves and been somewhat tardy in the 'gaining an adversary' department.

If someone asked me if I'd wish some fate worse than death on an enemy, I'd have to ask, "Which one?" Furthermore, I take comfort in the notion that some people feel the same about me.

There are rare individuals who are universally adored but possibly because they never ventured a controversial opinion. For example: "Here we gather to say goodbye to Betty, a woman loved by all." Betty, a kind old soul to those she knew, could've been riled up from time to time. Might this kindly pensioner have wished cruise ship hell to Hitler or Kim Jong? Probably. A very kind woman I know campaigns for the rights and protection of women raped during wartime. We all have enemies, wish your worst on the most deserving.

Funerals have been playing on my mind, mostly because I've no desire to have one for myself. Years ago I lodged the paperwork to donate my body to medical science, namely Edinburgh University or any other with a spare fridge. I once had the notion of planning my own send off (music, poetry, etc) but then hoped my fate to be a slow death on a diseased

cruise ship, the insufferable prat I'd become. Yet might the current crisis change the way we view funerals?

My idea for a send off is whatever my loved ones want, it could be a pint in the pub or something entirely unsuitable to my personality. I care not a jot, I'll be dead. Our culture of grieving takes on an awkward structure. Might it be better to continue in the 2020 way?

Paying respects and love to the physical in a private ceremony and a memorial of happiness and joy for wider associates sometime later? I'd like to think my daughter would need no memorial, just a reminder to say 'cheers' with every new drink in good company. It's our 'thing' and if it lives on through the generations I imagine myself living my best life forever.



First Minister Nicola Sturgeon at St Andrew's House 2 March 2020 PHOTO ©2020 The Edinburgh Reporter

Whatever your politics, it can't be denied that Nicola Sturgeon is, despite the shortage, wiping the ass off Boris in her stance, delivery and knowledge during her daily Covid-19 briefings. As we're all sadly aware, doctors are going to have to make some very difficult choices in days to come, a situation most politicians, experts and consultants may have no affinity with.

My friend tells me about attending a Global Citizenship Conference in 2019. The key speaker, a British doctor, told of her time working in Africa where another young doctor was faced with the challenge of two women giving birth. Both were going to die without intervention and he and the medical staff only had the resources to save one. Only one mother and baby survived. The doctor asked what he had based his decision on? He said that the lady he saved had more money and was more likely to save the baby she gave birth to, that the child had a better chance of living into adulthood. Naturally there wasn't a dry eye in the room.

The British doctor and speaker was Dr Catherine Calderwood. Is it any wonder she exudes experience and authority on her remit as Chief Medical Officer? The Scottish press briefings are reassuringly different from the Westminster ones. No grandstanding but true information, kindness and empathy.

Thank you to Fiona Bennet, who was a Board Member of Yazda UK attending the Global Citizenship Conference, for sharing this story. Yazda.org



Dr Catherine Calderwood the Chief Medical Officer at a media briefing at St Andrew's House on 2 March 2020 PHOTO ©2020 The Edinburgh Reporter