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Locked Down

by Vera Gajic

After so many years of this insidious virus I moved through the days like a severed head that finishes a sentence, mine usually, a while after I started it, or other people's as the technology failed them and they'd stop or disappear mid-sentence, sometimes mid eye blink, gross expressions freeze framed, never meant to be seen let alone inspected through the invisible waves by known or unknown persons. If you had the choice you would never agree to those images of yourself be seen.

At the time I thought these interactions a poor substitute for speaking to people in the flesh or watching people in the real world going about their daily business but now I only finish my own sentences, the virtual meet-ups dried up as people couldn't take them anymore and ventured out, some to their deaths. I am not brave enough. I have not left my home since the beginning. The thought of it terrifies me. Most of the little family I had have been taken by the disease and I am left adrift with little contact with the outside world. My only living company the mice who share my home.

I have stopped looking at screens of any sort. I cannot bear to hear about the devastation that is being wrought on mankind. A devastation we were warned about but took no heed off. We are being punished for the disregard we had for the natural world and the power of its creator. I am lucky I have lived my three score years only missing out the last ten. I will wait for the end in my cocoon. I don't want to see what has happened outside

Oh was that the doorbell? the supermarket delivery, why aren't they leaving it on the doorstep as instructed? I don't want to see anyone. I'm not opening the door to the outside world, they'll go away. No there is goes again and again. Where is my mask and visor?

"Hello, can I help you?" I peek out with my protection in place.

“Hello sir, I am from the council, we are checking up on people who haven’t been seen for some time and are not responding to messages,” said a nice young man

“Why aren’t you wearing a mask I can’t speak to you without a mask?” bloody cheek not wearing a mask.

“We don’t have to wear masks anymore sir, not for the last six months but I have one in my pocket if you like?” he seems nice

“Why would anyone stop wearing masks, yes please put it on.”

“We are in normal times now, have been for a while, but we understand there are some people who aren’t able to let go of the lock-down rules and are imprisoned at home, we are trying to help. Can I ask have you left the house in the last two months?”

“I haven’t left the house in three years and I have no intention of starting now, it is not safe,” the door only open a crack.

“It is much safer now, safe enough to come out.”

“No thank you,” I said and shut the door. Who do they think they are trying to make people leave their houses?

Later that night a thought comes to me. We can only die in the future; right now we are always alive. Or as Snoopy said, you only die once, you live every day.

Maybe I should go out tomorrow if I am still alive?