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- The Strange Adventure of Maria Mercado

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Rebecca Stol.

Well here's a book I never thought I would write. Who are we to know that the novel coronavirus COVID-19 would spiral into a pandemic, killing all kinds of people, causing disruptions to the world's economy and general screwing up our daily lives?

So I am out of work and mandated by the government to practice social distancing and quarantine / self-isolation for several weeks. What else is there to do but make light of this serious situation through art, comedy and poetry?

### -Jenell

PS. Hope you're recovering / have recovered well from the effects (physical, mental or emotional) of that pesky virus.

PPS. I'm more in love with you than ever before.

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We are all stuck inside
But some of you got too much pride
They think that they're above the rest
They put this quarantine thing to a test

We were told to stay at home As the virus spread fast in Rome But since we're pretty far away Some of you went out to play

You even went to your friend's house To return a borrowed blouse And while you were there you had A drink with her cause she was sad

Then you invited more friends over All of you no longer sober Singing, dancing, having a great time Having coronas - the ones with the lime

Then you all went your separate ways
And you only found out after a couple of days
That one of you had contracted the virus
She thought it was only an infection of the sinus

And now all of you are sick
And your families too, you little prick
If you just listened and stayed in
This coronavirus would never win!

It's been so long
Since I took time off work
What do people do
I know - pop a cork!

I drank a full bottle
It only took 30 minutes
But I was still thirsty
I believe in no limits

Not like there are other
Things I could do
We were told to stay in
To not catch this flu

Sorry - this virus
The COVID-19 to be exact
Extremely contagious
I'm glad I'm still intact

So for now sipping wine
Is the only thing I can do
And good thing I've got plenty
I'll just drink for you too!

So much to do at home For when I am stuck! So many chores So much time to f\*\*\*!

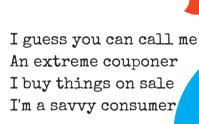
I'm so excited Like going on vacation Except we can't travel That goes for all nations

But wait, what is this? Schools are closed too? So the kids will be home? Now that's a big boo!





I'm kinda stressed out I don't know how to feel Kinda thankful for the time off Don't even feel real But what will I do To earn some more money The bills keep on coming I ain't got no honey! They said this will last A couple of weeks But it's been a full month I'm starting to freak The savings have gone Down the bank balance goes Feeling so helpless I keep watching my shows I really hope that We re-open again soon I think I can barely last Until the next full moon!



I'm ready for it
This crazy pandemic
I have lots books
I'm such an academic

I have sanitizers
Soaps and toilet paper too
Sold out at grocery stores
I pity all of you

When the time comes
Don't come to my house
When you run out of things
These are for me and my spouse!

They worked hard before
They work even harder now
The people on the front lines
Have no time to take a bow

Hundreds flock to hospitals
Worried they got the virus
The staff are swamped with cases
Yet they continue to inspire us

Their own lives on the line
For the virus is highly contagious
Their supplies running low
We all pray to end this crisis

To watch them work is inspiring
We know what they do is essential
We all need to treat them well
Because we know they all are special

There once was a lady from Toronto
Who flew back from her trip with Armando
They were told to isolate
Lock their house, lock their gate
Go home and quarantine themselves pronto

But the lady is stubborn and haughty
Who knew that going outside was naughty
Yet she went anyway
And at the end of the day
She'd made several stops in her Audi

So what do you think happened?

This lady was later examined

She looked so distressed

She was given the test

For the virus that hasn't been flattened

Of course the results came back positive
For the lady so that was informative
She had spread it around
Outside of her grounds
We just hope they all come back as negatives.

I'm so borrreddd

Nothing to do in this house
I've checked social media
A hundred times already

And you're telling me it's

Only 10 o'clock?

I'm so borrreddd
I've been cooking everyday
The fridge is full of Tupperware
I have food for days
But why can't I stop eating
All the snacks?

I'm so borrreddd
This apartment is so clean
I've wiped and scrubbed
Every single inch
But I'm so paranoid
So I'm doing it again



Some of us never thought that Something this big would happen So we basically spent all The money that we made Except for maybe a small stash Now we are stuck here Jobless for several weeks Who knows how long this will last Will business even be the same after? What can we do? Thank god the government is helping We just hope that we qualify And have the necessary documents To apply for these benefits Cause if not then we're screwed We'll have zero dollars To pay for the bills That aren't stopping.

I don't think there is anything
I haven't ordered online
I got the gifts for birthdays but they
Won't get it til the virus count declines

I also ordered the furniture
That I've been wanting for some time
I even got a few of the same outfit
Different colours though, even lime

Then there was a special on candles
And a whole bunch of trinkets too
I got one of each thing on sale
And even a few of them for you

Oh wait - what's that?

Another email from another company
I used them once a few years ago
But now I must help the economy!

I go on social media There's different 'challenges' Being passed around Because everyone is just trying To help each other's boredom Some involve silly things 'Post the 7th picture on your phone' Others are more physical 'See 10 (pushups), Do 10, Tag 10' Then of course there are those Purely for alcoholics 'Do a shot challenge' 'Take a sip of wine challenge' And don't even get me started On those damn TikTok videos Too many of them to mention And I don't do them cause I can't dance.

They used to work the night shift
But then all clubs got closed
As the pandemic worsened
They don't want to be exposed

Now they're all stuck at home
And do not know what to do
They now have all the time they need
But they're running out of dough

Day in and day out they just wait

Not a whole lot to be done

Some did FaceTime parties

The others did not have one

Some we're drunk the whole time Others appeared more sober Is this what life will be like All the way until October?



Wake up! Workout!
You don't want to get Quarantine Fat
If you just stay home
You'll eat all day
What will happen is exactly that

Wake up! Cook!
You don't want to spend too much
On takeout food
You'll go broke fast
Just make your own snacks to munch

Wake up! Clean!
You don't want to be a huge slob
You have all the time
You have no excuse
It's not like you have a job

Stuck too long inside Some start to go crazy Facing mental things That they have stored

Out of sight
Out of mind
But now it's all
Coming back out
Nothing else to do
But face them
Face your issues
Face your insecurities
Face your regrets
Face your demons

Now is the time
So when this is all over
You can be yourself again.

There once was a man from Halifax
Who believe everything but the facts
He didn't think he could get
This virus no sweat
A serious comprehension he lacks

He disobeyed the self-isolation order
He attempted to go cross the border
They stopped him just in time
Before he spent a dime
Trying to bribe on of the soldiers

They told him to go back to home
They told him that he shouldn't roam
He scoffed at them hard
With blatant disregard
And declared he had to go buy a comb

So what happened next was unprecedented

They went ahead and had him arrested

He started to protest

But he lost the contest

To this day he is still unrepentant

Today I made a documentary
Of my dog's daily activities
I followed him around
I giggled at every sound
In the end he was so annoyed at me

At first he thought it was fun
We went outside for some sun
Just in the backyard though
It's quarantine time, we know
I waited til his business was done

Then we played a bit of frisbee
Before he chased a small bee
I thought it was so cute
He's wearing a little suit
Then he turned and barked at me

I guess the bee had stung him
I kept recording based on a whim
The footage earned us some awards
So I give him a few rewards
Because without him there'd be no film!

I used to wake up at noon My day starts in the afternoon But since this lockdown thing I've become a morning being I now get up at 6 am Feeling like a genuine gem I start off with fasted cardio Next a movie with Leo DiCaprio I make myself a nice breakfast While I check out the film's cast Then I check my Instagram Spreading love to the IG fam Then Tana Well to be honest The steps above gets repeated Multiple times Except for the exercise part.



Finally The clothes I ordered have arrived I tried them on They all fit fabulously Except for the one From Fashion Nova I can never get my size right But anyways So many new outfits! So many different combinations! I got excited I put some makeup on Washed my hair Styled my hair Got dressed in my new clothes Then remembered I'm not allowed to go outside Except for one place The grocery store

So off to Metro I go.

There once was a man from St. John's
Who always think of pulling cons
He spends day and night
Trying to get one right
This time he'll pull one on salons

He went to the nearest haircutters
When he got there he saw the closed shutters
He still tried to peak
Like playing hide and go seek
He deduced that he'll need a lock cutter

He then went to the hardware store
Couldn't find what he needs on the floor
So he asked a cashier
Who wouldn't let him get near
And told him they've ran out before

Distraught the con man bought foam

He went back to his own home

To think of another

Good con job or other

In the meantime he'll stay in his dome.



Kids are home from school
Parents home from work
This is the setup for a while
Try not turning into jerks

The lessons shall continue School work hasn't stopped But when Mom and Dad teaches It feels like it will flop

Parents are still working
Out of phones and laptops
They have to take a few breaks
When the kids ask for soda pop

A schedule is essential
Both for kids and adults alike
Squeeze in time for house chores
For naps and riding bikes

Wash your hands!
They say the virus stays alive
For 3 hours in the air
Longer where it thrives

Up to 96 hours
In plastics like our money
You better wash that sh\*t
With water and soap, honey!

For cardboard and metals 24 to 72 hours they say WTF are we to do But wash everything and pray

This is the perfect time
To practice hygienic habits
And also to procreate
Stay home and f\*ck like rabbits!

From a cat's perspective
This quarantine thing is stupid
The humans stay home all day
My space is disputed

I wanted to lie down
And sleep all damn day
These silly people won't stop
Trying to get me to play

And now they won't leave

Me alone in peace

'Here kitty, come kitty'

Just go away, please!

How long will this last?
Is this sh\*t forever?
I'm so not down for this
Life needs to get better

Lessons learned during a quarantine
I now know how to cook
Italian Florentine
Toilet paper is a commodity
like gold

Put away your laundry, wash, dry then fold When you make a mess clean up right away Don't depend on leaving it for another day You never know what the next day brings You don't know when you'll need some things Don't forget to keep in touch with friends and family And don't neglect the lonely and the elderly!

Why, oh, why did someone eat a bat It's so weird now who thought of that Now we all suffer all over the globe Still no cure now where is the probe

People in everywhere got infected
We're not the only ones affected
Everyone needs to work together
Or risk battling this thing forever

Pointing fingers blaming others
Instead let's just help one another
How we can rebuild this economy
No more of this global hypocrisy

Only one Earth let's help it heal We all work together, that's the deal Save each other, save the planet All together now – we can do it!

There once was a dude from Bermuda
Who made plans to come to Canada
But the flights got cancelled
He cried like a damsel
And then tried to fly to Aruba

They told him all flights were done for He threw a tantrum on the floor They carried him out And without a doubt He tried to get back through the door

It was hard to explain to the man
That the virus that came from Wuhan
Has now just arrived
And it has survived
It hasn't stopped since it began

Defeated the dude just went back
There's no point in trying to attack
He'll travel next year
Right now he'll have a beer
And he'll make himself a hearty ol' snack

Brand new week! This is number three 14 days down Who knows when we'll be free They say it takes 21 days to build a habit So after this week Will we hate it or love it? Some are content Staying home, relaxing Others are restless The stillness is taxing! Let's hope it ends here Week 3 is the last But of there's a week 4, 5, 6 Let's hope it goes fast!



And so here we are
Just waiting to see
How all this will end
How long til we're free
But for now make sure
You're using your time
Wisely and happily
And save every dime
I know that eventually
We will all look back and laugh
At this



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# Quarantine Poetry About the Author



Jenell Diegor is Filipino-Canadian who grew up in Newfoundland and loves to travel around the world. She is the author of numerous travel guides, short fiction, screenplays and two novels. She is an award-winning filmmaker who has produced several short films as well as the web series Change Room Chronicles. She continues to work on various art, film, and writing projects.

After the pandemic she hopes to still be employed in a strip club in Toronto.