

# The Coronavirus Lockdown. “The Whole World Brought to its Knees by Coronavirus”

By [Pierre LeBlanc](#)

Theme: [History](#), [Science and Medicine](#)

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*Author’s Note: Following is a somewhat fictionalized account based on factual circumstances.*

*I’m feeling numb. My throat is tight. My breath is short. I look outside. The street is empty. I look inside. Can’t see my lover; she’s on the other side of the door. Double-quarantined am I. Got my wires crossed with Coronavirus.*

*“In domus”, and out. Am I alone in this?*

*Local news says “whole city shut down by invisible foe”.*

*National news screams “whole country in lockdown”.*

*My heart is racing now.*

*World news moans “whole world in grips of terror”. Terror? What terror? Who’s terror? A weird terror I can’t see nor smell. My head drops.*

*This “thing” is too big. I can’t grasp its breadth; I gasp for breath. The whole world has shut down. Like some humongous, cavernous boarded-up Michigan car plant. Bugged by this what - virus - Co o o v v I - can’t even bring myself to say it. Nor conceive of it. My arms are heavy. Caught in the backdraft of the media onslaught of self-contradictory “BREAKING NEWS”. I can’t get my brain to turn over.*

I shuffle my lead-laden legs to my man-cave. AH HA! A voice from the TV screen. A young, innocent voice that asks “How you like Lockdown?”

I’m taken aback. I answer “Why ask?” Six-year-old Ayesha asks on, “Has a bad man thrown bombs on your house?”

Shot the knees out of your brother? Killed your baby sister?” “No”, I answer. “I am only isolated and disoriented. I’m scared I will get very sick.” Ayesha answers “I am already sick! My chest is burning. I am choking. The big, scowling man in the Knesset is blocking my medicine from coming into Gaza.” Her father Mustafa yells, “No masks, no test kits, no respirators. Full blockade. No food either. Only bombs and IDF snipers. NO HOPE. Why does Canada support Netanyahu?”, I see Mustafa’s eyes pleading, accusing. “I’m hungry” cries out Ayesha. “Why do they want me dead?”

Another voice arises from the TV screen.

A thin, weak voice. Pablito from Valencia, Venezuela. "I feel so hot. Ooooh, huuuh. I can't see." "We have to go to hospital! The insulin finished" cries his mother. "We can't", says his father. "The car's transmission is broken".

"Fix it", says Mother. "I can't. Trump is strangling us with sanctions. Can't import parts.

Wouldn't help anyway. The bridge was fire-bombed by Colombian paramilitaries. NO PARTS because of Trump and Canada sanctions."

"Up to now, we were dying of hunger and diabetes because the US steals our insulin and our oil" says Uncle Alejandro.

"Now, this COVID could crush many more of us. Do you see the US ships blocking the medicine and food ships from China?" "We beat them back before." says neighbor Alfredo. "We'll do it again". "Where is my sister?" whimpers Pablito. "She went to look for Abuela in Columbia. Bad men kidnapped her; are hurting her" says Mother, weeping uncontrollably now. Holding her son tightly as he coughs; his small body arching in pain, air hissing achingly from his lungs. He stops breathing. "NO PARTS." "ONLY SANCTIONS".

Bahadur, walking heavily, back bent forward, eyes transfixed on the wooden box. In front of him, below the rim of the hill, machines from Teheran at work, digging long, narrow trenches. Behind and in front of him, more boxes, more families, trudging, weeping in single file. In the box, his wife and two young daughters - his whole family. Each in turn suffocated by the new plague. Wracked with sorrow, is Bahadur. Seething with anger. At the orange-haired, woman-grabbing president halfway around the world whose sanctions have prevented his family from receiving life-saving COVID treatment and medicine. "Why? Why would a human being deliberately and knowingly do that to another human being? To my precious Jasmine, and my little Bahar and Farzeen?"

I'm stunned. I can't take it. I can't shake it. The whole world brought to its knees by Coronavirus.

Or is it by some faceless band of greedy men wielding their lung-freezing, microbial scythe, culling the herd of the world's dispensable and riffraff, as they have joked about in their private clubs and yachts? I can't think in my brain. I'm paralyzed, exhausted. I'm haunted by the ghosts of those killed in my name.

I go to bed. It's 3 pm. Fall into a kind of deep trance. Not sleep really. Nightmares. Flashes of light. Room shaking from my convulsions. I wake up suddenly, in a dead sweat. Deer's eyes in the headlights. It's midnight.

*Ayesha's stare and dare hit me, right in the chest: "How you like Lockdown?"*

Blood seeps from my face. I steady myself against the wall. What do I do? Go back to bed? Scream out into the empty night? Keep feeling sorry for myself in my little white-picket-fenced, alcohol-imbued, privileged lockdown? Storm the Bastille? Demand an immediate end to the sanctions? Call for reparations? More, much more! Storm the boardrooms and bedrooms of the dystopia-fantasizing uber-rich and powerful?

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