

Globe Trotting in Confinement

**Lukshita Nayyar
Teen Tidings Family**

C ONTENTS

Sr.	Title	Page No.
*	Contributors	v
*	Introduction	vii
*	Foreword	ix
1.	That Which Does Not Kill Us Makes Us Stronger	12
2.	Unpopular Opinion of a Contemporary Teen	16
3.	The Account of a Teen from the Land that Won	20
4.	Diary of a Typical Teen	24
5.	Lockdown: A Boon or A Curse?	28
6.	The Struggle of Making A Perfect Roti	32
7.	Viewing the Lockdown from an Introvert's Vantage Point	36
8.	A Walk Through the Thorns Which Made Me Value Roses	40
9.	Reconciling with the Lockdown	44
10.	Making Lockdown Productive	48
11.	Lockdown Diaries	52
12.	Covid 19: Turning Adversary into Opportunity	56
13.	A Rhythmic Take on Covid-19	60
14.	Lockdown- A Blessing in Disguise	64
15.	God and Desires	68
16.	A Binding Force Guised as a Pandemic	72
17.	Finding Familiarity in Unfamiliar	76
18.	Acknowledgements	80

Contributors



1. Lukshita Nayyar (India)
2. Aarush Bhandari (India)
3. Amreen Virk (New Zealand)
4. Anvi Aggarwal (India)
5. Deeksha Nayyar (India)
6. Deepika Middha (India)
7. Jaideep Singh Lalli (India)
8. Harkriti Singh (India)
9. Aaraisha Sood (Ghana)
10. Mehak Gawri (India)
11. Mystic Wolf (Spain)
12. Nidhi Sharma (India)
13. Parul Sarvar (India)
14. Prabhir Mann (India)
15. Shaleen Sarvar (India)
16. Shreya Vohra (Canada)
17. Surya Sharma (India)

Teen Tidings

About the Book...

The year is 2020, the time is difficult and the location is everywhere humans exist, it is the Corona Virus pandemic. A reminder of the influenza scare a 100 years back in 1920, and a similar situation to have occurred 200 years back, in 1820, due to cholera pandemic.

From dreams of stepping into the school for the first time, to getting their child married, from plans of travelling all around the world with friends and family, to graduating college with a good job in hand.

All dreams, all goals and all plans were done and dusted, all involved were completely disappointed and dejected. but alas! Fate had a different plan

But there was an even bigger problem than just worldly pleasures remaining unfulfilled, this was the acid test of humanity. Ordinary people, normal, ordinary people were dying, if not from this deadly virus, then from a plague of hunger. Humanity was put into question; every individual was seen as black or white. Stark contrasts were made to define an ideal human and hearts were put to tests to check if they were of gold or lead.

But like two sides of the same coin, this pandemic had two sides as well- the heads and tails or negatives and positives.

We are well-aware of the negative aspects of the pandemic- millions of people sick and displaced and thousands dead or starved.

But, as unbelievable as it may sound, this pandemic has positive aspects too-millions of animals healed and their habitats restored and thousands gifted with life and food.

This brings us to our next topic of discussion- how has the nature repaired? Well, it is because of the worldwide lockdown that has freed the nature of any deteriorating human intervention.

Also, this lockdown has proved to be a period of self-discovery for many people. Whether it is painting, writing, dancing, singing, cooking, public speaking, or infinitely many others, it has been a period where we as individuals have explored our own selves. For others, it has been a time of making unique, one-of-a-kind or plain weird experiences.

So, as a breath of fresh air and a source of inspiration and optimism or just as a means to share unique experiences, Teen Tidings has decided to record lockdown experiences of the youth throughout the globe and keep the candle of hope in all of us burning.

We hope you enjoy reading the contributions made by writers from all over the world and be inspired to do something exploratory yourself.

Lukshita Nayyar

Administrator

Teen Tidings

Student of Carmel Convent School

Chandigarh, India

Foreword

As we were on the threshold of entering the year 2020, which appeared numerically fascinating, a special leap year and the last year of the decade, we as a whole sect of humanity kept ourselves busy exchanging greetings and prayers for a blessed 2020. But somewhere deep down, I feel those wishes were only ceremonious and ritualistic and did not carry our heartfelt good wishes for our near and dear ones, because had it been so, maybe we could have seen a better 2020. Anyways, I think I have chosen a very easy way out of indulging in blame games and levelling accusations. The truth is that 2019 had left some sting in its tail and the results started becoming visible right in the first quarter of new year. Initially it all seemed to be happening in some foreign distant land and we thought we were far away from its effects safe and sound in our warm haven. But eventually the reality dawned, soon as the cliché 'world as a global village' (which was hitherto used for faster means of communication owing to technology), became equally applicable on the scary term Covid-19 and the word 'pandemic' floated by WHO paved a way into our personal dictionaries. Soon, the horrendous figure of the new arrival started showing its extent and reality started dawning on us as our movements were restricted and the new terminology 'lockdown' became the new

normal. The definition of life changed and we started to understand and internalize the extent, scope and inevitability of the unseen microscopic monster which has engulfed the macrocosm.

Now that the new normal has words like masks, social distance, virtual mode, work from home, study from home, sanitize, self restricts, quarantine and self-isolation which have transformed us, we also need to sit back and introspect whether all was right from our end. This question is now raised by our children who have every right to interrogate and corner us on the massive and monstrous loot and plunder of mother nature and its resources in which we had indulged ourselves. We also have to answer who gave us this authority of reckless exploitation of natural resources available freely to us. This generation which was deprived of the basic goodness of nature which we all freely enjoyed as kids is now questioning us about their rights. The silver lining beneath the dark clouds of Covid-19 is the emergence of humanity as a cohesive whole with one universal concern and that is fighting the pandemic together.

In this case what emerged as a binding factor is the similarity of circumstances and situations. The common experiences have given rise to accentuated empathies and the narrow boundaries of self have faded. The result is the feeling of friendship, camaraderie and fraternity for each other. This book is a step in this direction where the editor, conceiver

and conceptualizer, though only a teenager, is a promising writer and thinker who has tried to step forward and bind the vibrant and impressionable youth of contemporary times through their writings. It is a very thoughtful initiative and I am sure such a collection will serve the purpose of chronicler in the times to come. The writer and editor has merged the boundaries of countries and recorded the experiences of global friends. The book is a beautiful montage of future writers, poets, sports persons, scientists, lawyers, political thinkers and citizens of tomorrow.

How I strongly wish and pray that the contributors of this book and all of us pull through this time of crisis unhurt and continue reading this book even after 50 years and thank God the ordeal is over!

Happy Reading.

Dr. Chanchal Narang
Prof. of English at UILS,PU,Chd

Lukshita Nayyar



Introduction



Hi there! My name is Lukshita Nayyar and I am the authoress of this book along with many other amazing contributors. I am a teenager who is trying to reach-out to people from all geographies and of all cultures to make this world a peaceful and better place for everyone. This book is my first leap towards making my voice along with numerous others' voices heard. I hope you enjoy reading it and become part of our future endeavors!

*"That which does not
kill us makes us stronger"*

-Friedrich Nietzsche

Living in a country with 1.3 billion people is really scary during a pandemic. This fear was no different in my case.

I still remember, it was 19th March, 2020, when we had received a message from our school authorities saying that the school will be shut down to practice social distancing until further notice. Needless to say, it was the last time I saw my school with reference to the present.

At first, it was a beautiful time. It felt like a utopian getaway, no school, no uniform and most importantly, no waking-up at 6 in the morning every day! I was like a child who had received a toy with melodious jingles which kept me happy all day. I learnt some cooking, started sketching, binge-watched Netflix and Prime and also started my own creative writing website, Teen Tidings (teentidings.com). Also, the perfect cherry on the top was my baby brother, whom we saw growing-up during this time of absolute freedom. But let me give you an observation, seeing my brother grow from a new born to an 8-month old, I have realized that a brand-new toy, no matter how pretty or melodious, becomes a boredom for the child as fast as he loved it. Get where I'm

headed to? Yep! You got it right! This seemingly perfect lockdown became a period of scary isolation for me soon after my ecstasy period ended.

Staying away from friends was a bleeding void which ate away my minute extrovertism, having the same boring food once we finished all our snacks was the biggest torture I had ever endured, but most importantly, not being able to go to the malls for a shopping spree or the lake for a refreshing walk made my soul weep. Here, I would also like to add, that we (India) are still in the race of reaching the top of the global list, because of our rapidly growing positive cases, which implies that the lockdown isn't ending anytime soon.

However, like I quoted in the very beginning of my article, corona hasn't killed me (and I hope it never will), so all it has done to me is made me stronger. I now have better survival skills in the form of making pizzas without ovens and cakes without fondant, designing my own clothes, having karaoke nights without professional mics or co-singers and most importantly, having more will-power and endurance than I have ever had.

To conclude, I would just like to give a heartfelt shoutout to the all doctors, nurses, medical and paramedical staff who are working tirelessly to rescue all the people from the clutches of this deadly virus, a special shoutout to Amazon, for being the only link of ours with the outside world and lastly, a request to all the readers to practice social distancing and follow the SOP religiously.

I hope you all become strong and not the former, because either result is in your hands. Stay home, stay safe.

Lukshita Nayyar

Lukshita Nayyar





Introduction



Hey! My name is Aarush Bhandari and I'm 15 years young. I have been playing cricket for more than 8 years. I like to read, debate, speak in general, produce music, travel, run, make people laugh and loads of other things. Writing to me is how I like to express myself, how I let out anything weighing on my head, therapeutic in simple words. I hope you had an amazing lockdown and I hope you have fun reading this amazing book!

Unpopular Opinion of a Contemporary Teen

This break from our hectic, hurried lives was actually needed and quite enjoyable personally. The funny thing is, it took a pandemic to make us realise that we could stay at home happily for longer than we expected, get tired of using our mobile phones and most importantly, learn to be gratuitous.

When everyone I know said that they couldn't take lockdown anymore, the seriousness of the situation somewhat sank in my brain which resulted in the first few weeks seeming like forever. But when I finally got fed-up of my phone was when I realised that I had exhausted everything to do, which meant that I could do *ANYTHING* and *EVERYTHING* I had ever wanted to do or learn. Then something clicked and lockdown became paradise.

At one point I used to crib about how we couldn't get cricket nets built at home but this time I needed to find a solution, so I did. I found a way to practice which accounted for 4-5 hours of my day at the least. I have become quite the workout lover through the course of this lockdown too.

Coming to the family front, what I loved the most was hours of late-night charades, when we intended to act out two

movies. Watching nani and dad keenly watching Mahabharata is etched in my mind along with nani sleeping halfway through the show.

My mom unleashing her cooking, painting and writing talents was amazing. I never really thought dad would have to cut my hair which was really unexpected when it happened, and I've had the most fun and fights with my younger brother than ever before.

When I remember these two months in the future, I'll definitely remember all of us sitting together and laughing and enjoying, which is priceless.

Families are separated, people are stranded. People are walking miles to see their loved ones, all when we are comfortable at home and that too with the people we love the most. That just says out loud that we are blessed.

In the end, lockdown wasn't exactly a productivity race for me, rather, it was time for our families and ourselves and it taught us that nothing can be taken for granted. Putting it simply, lockdown was an amazing, once in a lifetime experience for me, until schools started, of course.

Aarush Bhandari

Aarush Bhandari





Introduction



Hi there! My name is Amreen Virk and I am a student of Rototuna High School, Hamilton, New Zealand. I spend a lot of my time writing and composing. Other than that, I am a very passionate badminton player. I have represented Waikato on a national level and also represented my country on an international level. I dream of bringing laurels to my country on the most prestigious level, i.e., at the Olympics. I hope you guys enjoy my lockdown experience (though short). I would also like to motivate you all to be optimistic and brave because if we can defeat this pandemic, so can you!

The Account of a Teen from the Land that Won

It all seemed so surreal, the thought didn't spring to mind about how serious or dangerous this virus being spread throughout the whole world could potentially become, especially living in New Zealand, where the population is less than compared to most countries. I was alarmed. The news of COVID-19 reaching the stage of level 4 blew me away like a paper bag; only directed to wherever the wind led it. Being an extrovert, comprehending the fact that I was completely trapped in the house with my family until this preposterous pandemic resolved was strenuous. Nowhere to go, nowhere to be.

Drowning in a sea of stress, time became a storm I suddenly became lost in as workload from school had rapidly increased. Teachers were throwing out assignment after assignment, leading my peers and I to drown in increasing anxiety as due dates approached rapidly, my brain was frying.

I also thoroughly missed the urge of picking up my racket every day to participate in the sport I love most; badminton. The 8 weeks in the quarantine was the longest break I had

ever experienced ever since I had started playing. Tournaments stood cancelled, physical training was off, and although training was continuing through an online base, it still felt as if a slice of ecstasy in my life was pre-empted from the norm of my routine.

As time passed, slowly my motivation towards productivity had begun to decrease- but that didn't stop me. I still went for runs, still lifted those weights, still pushed my body to an extent, still sat in front of my laptop for hours working through assessments, still woke up early on the days a sleep-in would've felt ideal, and most importantly; I still had my goals and morals in mind. This was what pushed me to keep my head held high through this extremely unconventional ride no matter what was deterring me to give up and let it go.

All I can say now is... lockdown was a good riddance.

Amreen Virk

Amreen Virk



Anvi Aggarwal



Introduction



Hey guys! I am Anvi, a 10th grader. I am an aspiring astrophysicist and a person who is deeply in love with social work. I am the Brand Ambassador of Selfie with Daughter foundation. I pass my time by singing and playing musical instruments, reading and sometimes writing! An unpopular opinion- I hate pineapple on pizza.

Diary of a Typical Teen

Everyone is stuck at home due to the virus and has nothing better to do than throwing birthday parties for their cats and dogs on zoom.

Well, I have also been doing the typical teenager stuff, binge-watching various TV shows on Netflix as per my roots. Personally, this lockdown has made me a bit more serious towards my studies even though this determination only lasts for a day or two.

This pandemic has brought about many changes in every person's life. Not being able to get deliveries from Domino's or Amazon is pretty tragic for all of us. This lockdown has made my family come closer which is pretty rare for us. We have been watching movies till 1 in the morning. The irony, however is that my mom has loved these movie nights while she is the one who complains about us sleeping too late.

These days, I have been spending too much of my time on TikTok and learning various dance forms and have also been enhancing my music skills.

To be honest, this lockdown has helped me find my hidden talents and also improving my discovered skills. During this

time, I have been busier than usual. The online classes have been driving every kid crazy, including myself. The burden of assignments and homework has been real! The very unlikely thing that I've been doing (forcefully) is studying. This crisis has made me read many books which I obviously like.

But in all seriousness, this pandemic has been painful for some and has created many beautiful memories for others. The situation can only get better if we learn to remain calm and happy about it. At this point, we need to have strength and patience and also pray for the best!

Anvi Aggarwal

Anvi Aggarwal





Introduction



Hey there! My name is Deeksha Nayyar and I am 13 years old. My writing journey is still in its learning phase and I am working on perfecting it. My interests include writing, eating, watching movies, eating, playing the piano, did I mention eating? Well, I am really excited for this venture and equally excited for becoming a teenage authoress. I hope you have a great time reading this book and that you sail through these tough times unscathed.

*L*ockdown: *A Boon Or A Curse?*

It all started on 25th March 2020. Houses were packed, essentials were bought, extroverts were in despair and introverts were rejoicing. And that is how, my friends, big boss season 14, oops? The lockdown began.

At first it did not seem like a challenge at all. I mean, all we had to do was sit in our houses and scroll through Instagram, right? But unfortunately, we assumed things too early.

First of all, wasn't this lockdown enough that online classes started? And secondly, to make that worse, cases spiked in India leading to Lockdown 2.0, 3.0 and 4.0.

However, in this lockdown, I have mostly spent my time enhancing my knowledge about the Marvel Cinematic Universe, watching videos, making myself an international level playing-cards player and improving my badminton skills. In addition, I have become an expert karaoke singer and have entertained my family with late-night concerts.

Also, there are some things which this lockdown has taught me which I did not give due importance before like adjustment, hope and consideration for others. I inculcated

the value of adjustment in myself when lockdown 1.0 was about to end and lockdown 2.0 was about to begin. I was becoming very restless but slowly I adapted myself to the routine and the restlessness was gone.

Consideration was something which I learned when I got to know about those poor migrants who have been travelling away from their homes in despair and poverty.

Hope is a very important aspect of life. Hope is literally the only thing which kept me going during that time.

But the most precious thing the pandemic has done to me is that it has brought me closer to my family and in addition to that made an improvement to the environment.

That's it for my experiences. I hope I made this lockdown a happier and a more interesting one to live in. I am going to end by saying (or writing),

***“Be strong now, because things will get better.
It might be stormy now, but it can't rain forever.”***

-Anonymous
Deeksha Nayyar

Deeksha Nayyar



Deepika Middha



Introduction



Hi ! I am Deepika, a student of last semester of B.A.LL. B(Hons) from Panjab University. I am an eager learner wishing to learn new things in life as well as new dishes in the kitchen. What I believe is- enjoy every moment of life and pay gratitude for everything you have and you'll feel your life has become happier and more blessed.

The Struggle of Making A Perfect Roti

“Once you stop learning, you start dying.”

-Albert Einstein

All this started about two and a half months back, when nobody would have thought that this lockdown would go on for so long, especially the hostellers who came home with just a couple of clothes, or, to be more specific, the “night suits.” This lockdown started to appear as a curse but eventually it proved to be a blessing in disguise. It has given me a chance to spend more time with my family. Besides this, it has brought back many childhood memories like playing ludo, chess, tambola, carrom etc. with my parents and siblings. These days will always be cherished as the waking-up ringtone was now replaced by the sound of the Bhajan of “Ramayan” and the evening snacks with the tale of the “Mahabharat”.

Though this lockdown has made us (especially me) a bit lazy, nonetheless, it helped me to hone my skills like helping my mother with the household chores and enhancing my cooking skills. It all started with the making of evening snacks and reached the preparation of meals.

I still remember that few days after the lockdown started was when I started to browse my YouTube along with my mother and sister to look for the various recipes of snacks. Thereafter, this became an everyday task for the next few days. From trying to bake a perfect cake to make a round roti, it is indeed a tough job. I found it tougher than remembering and writing the case laws in the law exams. To improve this skill, I resolved to focus on making meals more than making snacks.

But this task is easier said than done. However, my mother's guidance and family's support keeps me motivated and I practice hard every day in the hope that one day my hard work and struggle will definitely lead me to success.

Deepika Middha

Deepika Middha



Jaideep Singh Lalli



Introduction



I am an undergraduate student reading for BA LLB(Hons) at the University Institute of Legal Studies, Panjab University, Chandigarh. I have previously interned with Senior Advocate Anmol Rattan Sidhu, Senior Advocate Sacchin Puri and the Punjab State Human Rights Commission. My academic interests include constitutional law & jurisprudence, criminal law and human rights.

Viewing the Lockdown from an Introvert's Vantage Point

In a social milieu where proficiency in the art of small talk has become an indispensable exigency to satisfy and outgoing chirpiness engenders peer approval, the lockdown has really come as a breath of fresh air to introverts like me, wherever they may live.

With enforcement avenues for obligations of interpersonal interaction limited (because we no longer meet people), the magnitude of an introvert's social insecurities has certainly (and pleasantly so) diminished. No longer does an introvert have to fret about spontaneously coming up with an apposite response to a question that does not concern one's 'intellectual actualization' (that domain is excluded because, well, questions related to that are mostly a driven introvert's forte).

The latitude that this shut down of distractions provides us is best enjoyed in the pursuit of the hedonistic idea of pleasure. For some, that idea implies books on formal logic, epistemology and political philosophy, and for others, bovine complacency with lethargy (no value judgment there). However, living under the threat of being infected by

a deadly virus has brought me to the realization that the COVID experience has reduced the strength of identifying with our varied group identities (nation, ethnicity, religion etc.), in favour of a more globalized species association. The recognition that viruses transcend all these superficial boundaries seems to have brought mankind closer to the fruition of humanism. But, conversance with the idea of perils that endanger humanity also provides fillip to anxiety that stems from not being able to narrow down the sphere of our concern. Global warming, destructive volcanic eruptions, disease pandemics, carnage in armed conflicts, forest fires, capitalist exploitation of workers, ethnic cleansing, rogue biotechnology etc.; the inundation of our minds with innumerable things to direct our care and attention towards, produces exasperating bafflement. A similar concern is of streamlining the choice of what things deserve our time during this period of liberation from the dreariness of 'normal life'. Be that as it may, those who have come to appreciate the peculiarities of this 'new normal' will all agree that the lockdown has revealed truths about one's priorities, truths that are otherwise lost in the cacophony of gregarious lives characterized by limitless loquacity.

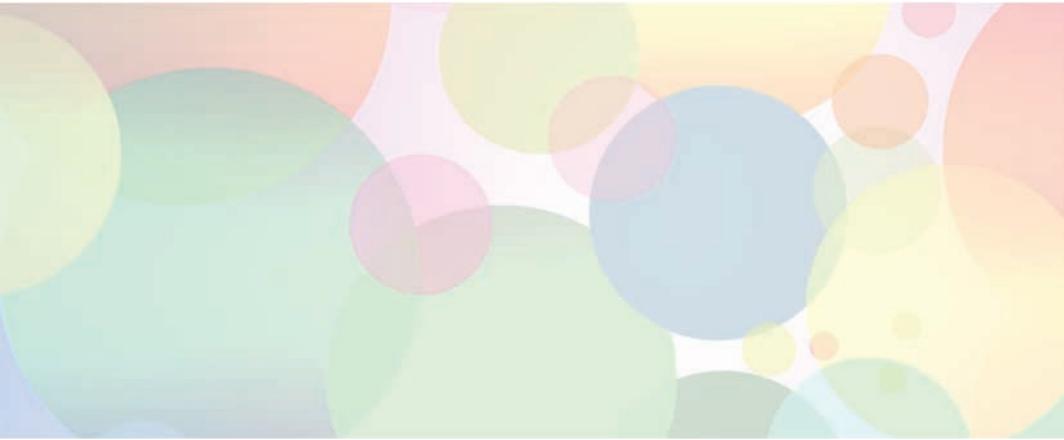
Jaideep Singh Lalli

Jaideep Singh Lalli





Introduction



Hi! My name is Harkriti Singh and I am 15 years old. I have had many hobbies throughout my preteen years like drawing, skateboarding and swimming but the one that has remained constant is my passion for writing. Since the day I started writing I have never looked back. Other than writing my one true love is music. In the end I would just like to say I am like any other teenager in the sense that I love hanging out with my friends, going for eating out and fangirling over celebrities.

A Walk Through the Thorns Which Made Me Value Roses

From a country of 1.3 billion people with crowded flea markets and constant hustle-bustle, we have transformed into a country where the roads lie empty and an eerie silence can be heard all around.

A pandemic which started out as a flu-like disease in Wuhan, China, has taken over the world as a fatal threat today. Numerous people are being diagnosed with the Covid-19 virus every day. It has become a challenge for mankind as there is no known cure for the virus and the only way to prevent it from spreading is to practice social distancing. But, for social animals like us, living without human contact can be difficult and frustrating. The long walks at any time of the day, the late-night movies, the fun with friends and the refreshing car rides, puff! Gone.

But above all this, the so call mundane and boring school is now remembered as the most interesting, exciting and eventful part of the day. As a student, living in quarantine changed me as a person.

I developed new hobbies and interests during this lockdown. During this time, I have also learnt how life is too short to

worry about petty issues and that there is much more to us than always wanting more than what we have. I have learnt to respect other people's opinions and have become more patient and considerate. Last but not the least, I have learnt the value of family.

In the end, I'd just like to say that let's all stay positive and work together to eradicate this virus.

Harkriti Singh

Harkriti Singh



Introduction



My name is Aaraisha and I am 15 years old. I am an Indian who has been living in Accra, Ghana for about 12-13 years. I have spent the best years of my life in Ghana and my mind has captured and built my memories based on my experiences in this country.

Reconciling with the Lockdown

During the pandemic days, my situation at home is likely to be different from most, although I'm sure no one's situation right now can possibly be classified as "normal." My quarantine started about 4 months ago, and I think I can confidently say that I've played my role as a lazy person and stayed at home for most of the time until my dentist appointment calls started ringing. At first, this quarantine was actually very simple and easy to me as the online school work would usually keep me busy and occupied. The first two months were very simple for me to spend except, when school work would just get way to stressful. But, as my school ended, during the beginning of June, things started landing into the situation called boredom. It seemed like Netflix and Youtube were running out of good options. So, I decided to go a little bold and give myself a little haircut. One may feel this out of context but before the onset of pandemic, one would have thought this to be a bizarre idea. Apart from this, I started reading and found myself a hobby that I absolutely adore, dancing. This quarantine even helped me try my hand at new things like painting and I managed to paint myself a new portrait for my room. I decided to start helping my dad with his work a little which not only made me get closer to him but also, helped me cope up with my boredom.

Obviously, I really miss my school, my friends, but, the worst

part of all this is how all the summer break plans have gone down the lane. I forgot to mention how my adorable mom managed to make me learn how to cook some Indian food. Even though they are the very basic Indian dishes you'll find in the menu, they're still good enough to satisfy your hunger. Even though the quarantine has managed to push me deeper into the holes of boredom a couple times, it has still helped me focus on myself and try to shape myself into a better version of myself as I also tried exercising. My routine that I surprisingly managed to build couldn't last for long as the Covid-19 situation outdoors reached its peak. But, fortunately nowadays, I still manage to explore the outdoors. Lately, I've really been missing the froyo at pinkberry (which if you haven't guessed yet, is a really famous frozen yogurt shop.) It's been almost 4 good months since the lockdown over here at Accra, Ghana started and it's still kind of tough for me to settle down around this quarantine. I really hope the pandemic disappears as soon as possible. Also, these zoom online classes aren't as exciting as I was hoping them to be. Of course, I get to wake up at 9 o'clock rather than 6 which used to be really fun, but has now become monotonous.

However, I've got the time to stand or sit on a couch at my balcony/veranda to look outside on the calm, still and silent roads. I think I have never seen such a beautiful and clear sky in my life, to feel the breeze and listen to the birds chirping outside. Anyway, I really hope everyone reading this is safe and healthy! Hang in there, folks, and please do not go outside unless you have to!

Aarisha Sood

Aarisha Sood



Mehak Gawri



Introduction



Hi! I am Mehak Gawri. I am a 10th grader. I am very fond of reading and writing. I like music, socializing, playing badminton and sharing my opinions. Vintage and elegant items make me happy. I enjoy facing challenges. I am also an eager learner.

Making Lockdown Productive

We all are trying to practice some good habits and indulge in activities during lockdown, for example- reading novels, watching movies, writing, dancing, cooking etc. Personally, I have tried a lot of activities.

In the very beginning of the lockdown, I read a trilogy which was really enthralling. Reading makes me happy. A good book brings joy to everyone. I like how everyone has different opinions and visions to a story. The best part about reading is that there are no limitations or restrictions to one's imagination and fantasy. You can have a very unique perspective to a story through books. It is a very personal and special experience while reading.

Next, I watched a lot of movies including Disney movies and Bollywood classics with my parents which I really enjoyed because I identify myself as an old school girl.

I also revisited some of my storylines and framed impactful dialogues. I really like weaving stories. Some of my stories are inspired from music. Now that I have mentioned music, I would like to add that music is really dear to me. It is like a comfort to me.

I heard a lot of songs during this time. I tried to learn the choreography of these songs as well. I also tried cooking.

One of the biggest parts of my life is studying, I don't study much but I enjoy it. I like learning. I enjoy Mathematics and Science. During the lockdown, I enjoyed the limited studying I did. Although I like brain storming sessions and classroom environment, online classes were also all right.

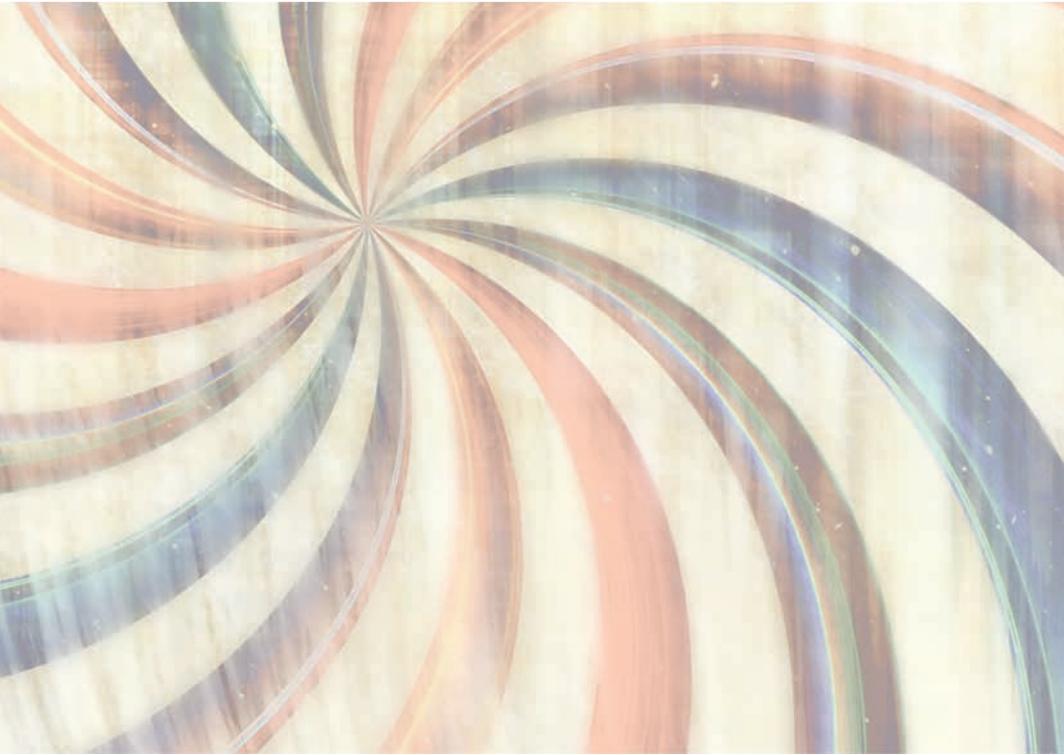
Lastly, I would like to say that we should revisit some of our hobbies (the ones which can be practiced at home) which were long lost due to our busy schedules.

Mehak Gawri

Mehak Gawri



Introduction



Hi there! I am a Spaniard and live in the city of Valencia. I am a 7th grader of Indian origins and use the pen name 'Mystic Wolf'. Hope you enjoy reading!

*L*ockdown Diaries

*"Tough times don't last, tough people do."
-Anonymous*

This line pretty much sums up the patience and co-operation we all as citizens are showing. But I think that now as we all are locked in our houses, we have experienced the most hilarious moments of our life with our families, unleashed the artist, musician, cook, actor, etc. hidden in us, and most importantly, we have grown closer to our broad bands.

So, the first good thing about this lockdown for all the students in the world is not going to school. These days bunking is only two clicks away!

Next, the lockdown became an opportunity to unleash the dormant pianist within me and hone my musical skills. I woke-up quite late and practised songs tirelessly, ranging from soft classics like A Thousand Years by Christina Perri and Faded by Alan Walker to blockbuster dance hits like Dance Monkey by 'Tones and I' and My Oh My by Camila Cabello.

Late night concerts with our in-house band, Gen M, was a truly blissful time. To conclude, I would just like to remind you to stay home, stay safe and enjoy your lockdown.

Mystic Wolf

Mystic Wolf





Introduction

An old soul who has always been intrigued by the mysteries of this Universe, I'm a passionate human who ardently believes in going beyond the ordinary, in order to tread 'the road not taken'. Apart from having an interest in literature as well as aesthetics, I also have a penchant for reading the scriptures, particularly The Bhagavad Gita, which, through its timeless wisdom has been guiding man for ages.

As an aspiring legal practitioner, my goal has always been to re-awaken the much needed 'human' element in humans, by turning to our roots-our innate goodness.

Covid 19: Turning Adversary into Opportunity

"All that is important,
comes in quietness and waiting."

History has witnessed a plethora of epidemics and pandemics, it isn't something novel to us as humans; however, never have we been rendered so helpless, so vulnerable in the face of nature, never have we as a global community been so united despite our differences and never before have we been forced so ruthlessly to take inventory of our actions.

It is in times like these that we are apprised of the bitter truth that but for all our advancement in science, technology and healthcare systems, our lives continue to remain utterly fragile in the wake of the forces of nature. It is in times like these that we need to just step back, reflect and pay attention to the subtle undertones of the song of all life, of the song of nature and of the song of God.

For how long have we brushed aside things that really matter? For how long have we kept ourselves so engrossed in the rut, that we failed to take notice of what is really meaningful in our lives? Only so long as we were not shaken

by this overt reminder, a wakeup call, a factory reset button decluttering all the unwanted debris from our lives, leaving only the 'essentials'.

The silver lining being that, as unprecedented as it is, this global health crisis has scope for unprecedented opportunities as well. But, what kind of opportunities? Well, it is the time to pay close attention to our values, our desires, our purpose, and last but not the least – our relationships. By lifting the veil of our delusion of wealth and material, it is the time to figure out what direction do we really wish to steer to in our journey of life.

Our current vulnerability is providing us the opportunity to traverse a whole new path of self-discovery, provided we pause and reflect. And when we return with a fresh perspective, we'll be able to see things we were missing and may as well be able notice the world of possibilities around us.

I extend my sincere empathy and prayers to all those who have been affected by this deadly virus. I pray that may the suffering of all come to an end, and may the Supreme Lord bestow health, happiness and safety to all.

Nidhi Sharma

Nidhi Sharma



Parul Sarvar



Introduction



My name is Parul and I teach Law at Panjab University, Chandigarh. My utmost sincerity has always been towards Literature and art in general. I have sincere interest in English poetry and prose. The poetry of Emily Dickinson and Robert Frost is classic and has its own subtle magic. On any rough day jazz music rejuvenates me. Apart from that I enjoy understanding the cosmos and am an avid Space shows buff

A Rhythmic Take on Covid-19

I wouldn't call it quite a life, had I not had my own self to me to get through the deep and meandering questions about life. As a human being, one has questions and looking for answers to them is natural. The answers to the most profound and deepest questions can only come from a journey inward. Knowing yourself is such a big phenomenon, almost a miracle of the nature. It is a journey one must undertake to unravel the knots of her existence. It is a call which one must answer to, yet we often lose touch with our inner self and keep on going through life only half way until we cannot go on anymore. It is a tough time out in the world right now which shakes the

core of one's hearts. Yet deep inside I have been working to feel at home with myself. I choose to make this time about a journey inward and I rejoice meeting this person that I could be. A journey inward connects you to yourself and then you are not lost in the world any more. You find yourself yet again, patch the holes and heal yourself. Doing this you start valuing yourself not even realizing that this kindest act of soul-searching will ultimately be for the good of all those who surround you. That's what this lockdown has taught me to be more aware of each breath I take which is truly a blessing and a miracle.

Parul Sarvar

Parul Sarvar





Introduction

My name is Prabhir Singh Mann. I was born and raised in Sangrur. I am an alumnus of the Lawrence School, Sanawar and am currently pursuing law from the Panjab University. I have a keen interest in skeet shooting and am a national level gold medalist in the same. I'm also into making art and sculpture and have won the All India Art Competition for sculpture. I have been a member of literary societies at both school and college and also been a member of Asian society at the Fessenden School, Boston. Throughout I have participated at various recitations, debates, moots, trials and also at an MUN at Harvard University.

Lockdown- *A Blessing in Disguise*

When I started the way back to my farm on the twentieth of March, I had thought that within a week I would be back in Chandigarh. That was the condition on which I had agreed to come back.

When the first lockdown was imposed, I had assumed that it would only be till the end of March. But soon I realized that it was an erroneous assumption and as of first of September, the lockdown is still there. Nonetheless, I knew that it was imperative to maintain social distancing to ensure a safe environment for all.

Being a family of just four members and being the only child, I found a lot of free time. So I decided to use this time to do things that I was not able to do for a long time. I utilized the time to make and restore sculptures and draw sketches. It was not only a time to binge watch the pending series on Netflix but to learn new things too, so I took up online courses of art, history and landscaping. I also tried my hand at water colors and oil paints which I had been keen to do for a long time.

Instead of online games with friends, it was a time to play board games with family which I had not done since I was a kid. But I was upset too, when I realized that I won't be able to meet my friends for long.

I got a chance to go to Chandigarh after sixty days, and friends who used to make excuses came expeditiously to meet. The lockdown was a very different experience which made me value things no matter how small they are and gave me time to learn so many new things which, at least for me, would not have been possible.

Prabhir Mann

Prabhir Mann



Shaleen Sarvar



Introduction



I am Shaleen Sarvar. I am an advocate and I did law from UILS, Panjab University. During the BA LLB integrated course, I did my majors in English. I have had passion for English language and writing since I was a teenager! I am grateful to Teen Tidings for giving me an opportunity to submit this piece of writing.

God and Desires

The establishment of God in my mind and heart took place when I was new to life. I remember my mother's efforts at inculcating that which sums up fear of god and dependence on His blessings. Then on, prayers came very naturally and quite effortlessly. Conversations with God in the silence of heart have always dominated the clamour of mental chatter. In days and nights of despair and gratification, the temporary suspension from the realm of life to the country of God has always been a reparative process. Through trouble and infliction, attainment and glory, we can always find dependence on the One who is Supreme and not condescending. We can be selectively or naturally reticent about our state of life yet in the Supreme we find a confidant like no other. There is no disconcert he cannot restore, no wish he cannot manifest and no course He cannot alter. Given His magnanimity which is magnetic, He makes it so easy to declare to him that which is unspeakable or impenetrable. Confession after confession, we do become passive or complacent. And through these intricate patterns, He will send a soothing line of hope which restores us to normalcy and gratitude.

However, in these challenging times of a pandemic, when curfews have become the new normal, I have found myself pondering over my conversations with the Almighty. What I gather easily is that our relationship or contact through prayers mostly spring from desires, deep or shallow. And our consistent calling comes somewhere from that which is not possessed. However, without plunging in the nature of desires I urgently want to convey, that my time in this lockdown has been not as hard, mostly settled and grateful. Therefore, in the brief absence of desire, I find my prayers terse. And it makes me wonder, do we really know God more than our desires? Is our love and remembrance consistent without anything to receive? And do we ever think about him being more than a giver?

I am afraid I do not have answer to these questions which have been resurfacing time and again. Finding myself scattered in this mental argument I have now turned to prayer knowing in my heart, this is the only way I can simplify it!

Shaleen Sarvar

Shaleen Sarvar



Shreya Vohra



Introduction



Hello there! My name is Shreya and I am a student at the University of Toronto pursuing a double major in International Relations and Peace, Conflict and Justice studies. When not engrossed in academic work, I am usually found painting, baking, writing, or reading. I am passionate about social justice and activism and hope to bring about a positive improvement in this world through my works and my words.

A Binding Force Guised as a Pandemic

As the world came to a steady pause, my classes moved online, most of my extracurricular engagements were cancelled and the public health authorities declared it unsafe to step out of our homes. Being someone who plans their entire month weeks in advance, I was baffled. My planner was no longer an essential item (although apparently toilet paper was) and trying to adjust to the sudden changes in my academics combined with the uncertainty about the future led to great anxiety and doubt.

However, I admit that with the commencement of the quarantine I felt a sense of freedom I had never experienced before. I was able to bake, cook, write, paint, and sleep to my heart's content. Wearing sweatpants to (Zoom) classrooms became an everyday reality and daily banter with my family transformed into memories that I know I will cherish for the rest of my life. I was free of my routine. I could, and tried my best, to engage in all those activities and hobbies that I previously just didn't have enough time for. As I found myself falling in love with the prospects of self-isolation, the newspapers constantly drew my attention to the horrible stories of migrant workers in India, the political crisis in Brazil,

the anti-quarantine protests in North America and so on. I realized that “coronacation” wasn't as romanticized an idea as I had envisioned.

Although all our experiences were different and we all belonged to different corners of the world, this pandemic united us in a tragic bond of solidarity. For the first time in my life I felt a connection with humans all over the world as if we were all different pages of one single book, firmly bound together by a microscopic virus. This health crisis was therefore a period of realization of my existence as a tiny speck on the face of this planet and my differences and connections with respect to billions of other specks that co-exist with me and the fact that together we have the capability of launching a global pandemic, and hopefully ending it too.

Being hopeful is crucial. Therefore, to document people's positive quarantine stories from all over the world who've taken this opportunity to engage in activities that made their hearts happy, my friends and I have started an Instagram page called “Long Time No See”. It is evident from the submissions we've received that people everywhere are trying to make the most of this situation and this faith, I believe, will eventually get us through this year.

Shreya Vohra

Shreya Vohra



Surya Sharma



Introduction



I am a law graduate from Panjab University, currently working as a Risk Consultant at KPMG in Gurgaon. An old-school guy with a good sense of humor (as people say) and even better culinary skills. Passionate about travelling, fitness and sports. Food is something you'll always find by my side. A fan of comedies and thrillers.

Finding Familiarity in Unfamiliar

I drove to the Chandigarh Airport on the 8th of March, all excited to board the flight and to spend the next 3 months in Bangalore. As I landed in Bangalore, I was making plans to explore the city already. Only my second weekend in the city, and the entire nation was subjected to a lockdown. Least did I know while making all the plans that I only had 10 days to explore the city, which by then had all gone from home to office and back.

But I wasn't upset by that, because all the sports facilities were at a stone's throw and I could utilise my time working-out. So, I made a routine to do this every day. Just four days into the routine, and these facilities were also shut. On top of that, we were 6 people staying in a four-bedroom apartment. Best part was that none of us were very known to each other.

That's when the real test started. Working from home, cleaning the house and cooking food, all to be done by six of us. We planned to make one meal a day together and rest two meals, every man for himself! We devised an interesting strategy to cook that one meal. We divided the work into six

different tasks, one task for each person on first come first serve basis. The tasks varied from chopping vegetables to rolling the chapattis to washing the utensils. We took around 3 to 4 hours to cook this one meal, always, without fail! I was always into cooking, but the pandemic taught me so much cooking that I never knew I could do. From fancy dishes to basics, everything.

Coming back from Bangalore to Chandigarh on 30 May, all of us realized that these 3 months were amongst the best times of our lives and we made some amazing friends and memories.

That said, it's easy for people like us who have all the resources to let this pandemic pass through with ease. A humble request to all the readers to keep helping the underprivileged in every way possible.

Surya Sharma

Surya Sharma



Acknowledgements

This book is the result of the passionate and tireless motivation by my parents, Professor Chanchal and CA Vikram Nayar. It is the product of the dreams and aspirations of my pillars and inspirations.

This book could not have been completed without our amazing contributors and authors who have shared their unique lockdown experiences during this challenging time. I acknowledge their contribution towards this book.

A special thank you to my alma matter, my temple of worship, my school-Carmel Convent School, Chandigarh. My teachers, sisters and classmates have always encouraged me to think out of the box and do what I love. Their unflinching support and guidance has been a major factor towards this project being able to see the light of the day.

I would also like to acknowledge the love and co-operation shown by my dear siblings, Deeksha and Lakshya Veer, for giving their creative inputs if and when the book seemed to become boring and bring a smile on my face when I was out of ideas.

Last but not the least, my utmost gratitude goes to the Almighty, without whom nothing of this could have been executed. His blessings have made me fortunate enough to pen-down this book.