

## **The Last Rose of Summer, 30 September**

I've just looked back at my blog for April 2020:

'When we go back to normal, what will normal be? Wearing a mask and keeping 2m away from my family? Are we endangered species going to be confined to barracks until a vaccine is found – which could be a year away? Right now I've told myself 12 weeks lockdown – if it's less so much the better, and we're already a third of the way through.'

That was nearly six months ago when we hoped this would all be over by October. But it's not and we must expect to be in it for the long haul.

We're facing a second wave of infections which will only get worse as we go into winter when we're huddled indoors where the virus spreads more rapidly. The exponential rise in cases is, apparently, in the affluent 20s and 30s age group who, so far, have been little affected. That's probably because many of my age group, the more vulnerable, are just keeping their heads down and apart from friends and family.

What will Christmas be like under the 'Rule of Six'? Can I see one of my sons and his family (my support bubble), and then the other, separately, but not together? I've told them I'll give them all a hug next March! The thought of wiping out a year of one's life is pretty drastic at my advanced years, so it becomes even more important to make every day count. Yea, yea, it's a cliché, but it's true so I'm hanging on to it. I won't go down the road of thinking is this it?

At least I have a roof over my head, I'm not starving and I'm not worried about losing my job, as many will be. I like to think we war babies are pretty resilient, maybe the years of post-war rationing have something to do with it.

I refuse to give in to gloom and doom. I'm quietly putting the garden to bed and putting the garden chairs away while planning new sowing and planting for next spring. Gertrude Jekyll has produced one last defiant, gorgeous shockingly pink bloom which I will cherish. My planned surgery has been ditched temporarily, there's no urgency and best avoided with all the extra anti-Covid factors to take into consideration. Let's keep the medical focus where it's needed.

I read a new mantra to describe our current government's chaotic attempts to keep a grip on the ever-evolving situation: 'Promise the Earth, Deliver Nothing, Blame Everyone Else'. 'Nuff said ...

*Mary Robinson*