

This story is a different take on lockdown written by a local, regular contributor to the *Deddington News* whose creative writing has amused, entertained or baffled us for some years. It's a take-off of Stanley Kubrick's 1980 cult film, *The Shining*, a psychological horror film widely regarded as one of the greatest and most influential films ever made.

Horrific Lockdown Diary

Day 1: It was a heck of a drive up here, but the scenery is pure Ansel Adams gold. Job interview went smoothly. There's even a dramatic backstory of a massacre by a previous caretaker. Wendy loves that kind of thing.

Day 2: Brought the family up to the hotel, where we hear about the lockdown at the end of the day. Sounds perfect to me; plenty of time to work on my novel and nobody to bother us. Time alone with just the family for a few weeks, what could go wrong?

Day 31: Suffering from serious writer's block, and Wendy doesn't help waking me up at 11.30pm. I need to get into a better routine, with no disturbances.

Day 32: Wendy's constant interruptions are breaking what little concentration I have, barging in whenever the typewriter keys are finally clacking, and her constantly sunny disposition is offending my ennui. She and I may fall out soon.

Day 36: Seems like there's been a hell of a snowstorm outside. Still struggling with the damn writing. Wish there was somewhere I could grab a cold beer and friendly ear around this dump.

Day 40: Had a horrible nightmare. I probably need to stop getting on the port at 10.00am and passing out on the desk. Wendy compounds it later by accusing me of throttling our son Danny. I catch up with my old mucker Lloyd down at the bar, who serves me a Bourbon on the rocks while I explain how wrong she is.

Suddenly Wendy accosts me just after I was relaxed for once, but this time insistent that a crazy woman in one of the rooms had strangled Danny. Gets me off the hook at least so I check it out to humour her. The least said about that experience, the better. Wendy is now trying to coerce me into breaking lockdown, and then I run into none other than Delbert Grady in one of the toilets. I swear he was the previous caretaker, but now he's the butler? Just how much have I had to drink today?

Day 41: Not entirely feeling myself to be honest, this social isolation seems to be getting to me now. I thought I had finally made a breakthrough when I pulled an all-nighter to finish the first draft of the novel, but Wendy thought it was a bit derivative. We had a bit of a disagreement, which escalated rapidly and culminated, would you believe, in me sleeping in the meat locker. There's a fine how-do-you-do for you! Being a man of great intuition, I had foreseen this potential treachery and pre-emptively sabotaged the snow-buggy so good luck to Wendy and Danny breaking lockdown. That damn Grady returns to haunt and taunt me, but to be fair to the guy he does spring me out of the meat house so I guess I owe him one. Now, where do they keep the axe around here?

(With apologies to Stanley Kubrick's 1980 film, *The Shining*)