

Quarantoons - Cartoons From A New Normal

James Mellor, prominent corporate cartoonist and Private Eye regular, presents Quarantoons – his best cartoons from the time of coronavirus.

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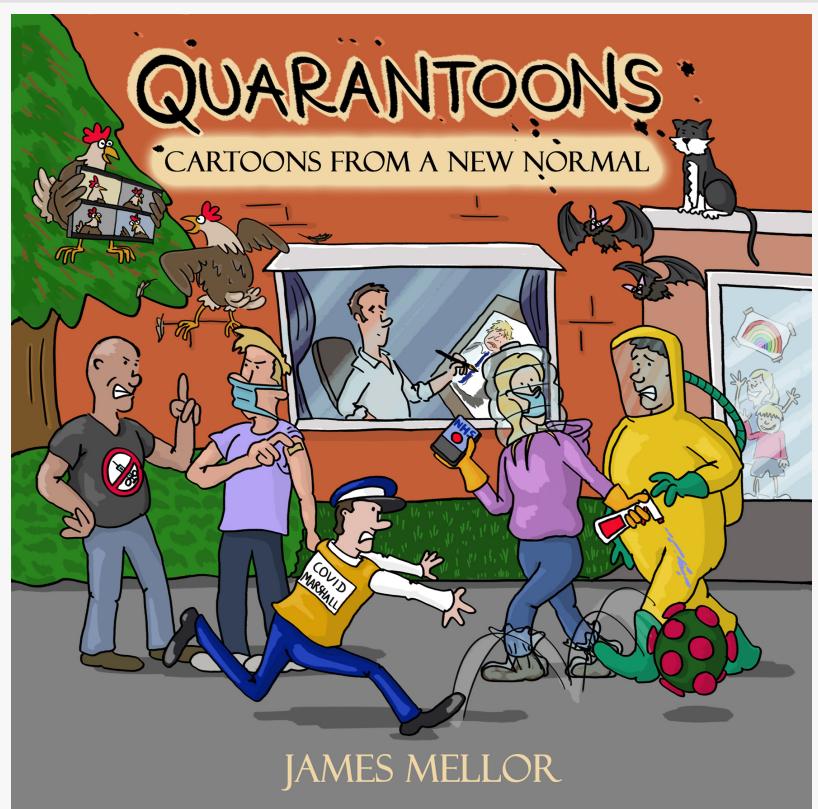
"There is nothing very normal about the New Normal. If you ask me, there was nothing very normal about the Old Normal, either," is how James Mellor introduces us to his latest collection of wry and sharply-drawn observations on a world and its elect, bumbling through chaos and confusion, dragging the rest of us along behind.

A Bedfordshire-based professional illustrator and regular contributor to satirical magazine Private Eye, James takes a sideways look at global events from the perspective of an ordinary Brit, battered by Brexit, confounded by COVID and, frankly, despairing of leadership as everyone heads toward climate catastrophe in a handcart.

“

Most importantly, however, were all the silly, surreal, and sometimes downright strange cartoons put out there to make people laugh and keep them entertained during a downright strange time,”

James Mellor, Cartoonist



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But take heart – Quarantoons: Cartoons From A New Normal isn't a deep-dive into dystopic despondency. Rather, James focusses on the laughable absurdities of our uncomfortable lot as he continued to draw it through 2020 and 2021.

"Cartoons aren't going to solve the great societal issues of our time," he admits, "but cartoons can help people get through another day."

Quarantoons: Cartoons From A New Normal follows James' previous collections, Drawn From History, and Brexit: A Drawn-out Process, and brings together the satirical and silly from all areas of his work.

From pre-pandemic events that (from the bizarre vantage point of lockdown) came to be regarded as the only mildly odd, to the surreal, stockpiling depths of 2020, and our release into a strange, circumscribed world of new social customs, his drawings prod us into chuckles of recognition and reflection.

"The coronavirus pandemic has caused the biggest changes to our society in our lifetime," he says. "I never would have imagined prior to 2020 that the people of the UK would spend months legally confined to their own homes except for a brief period of daily state-sanctioned exercise. The changes have been extreme and have affected all aspects of how we live and work. Some of these changes to our lives may remain with us, but many will pass into memory."

During that period, James's cartoons came into novel – and deadly serious – demand: as a way of introducing people to new Covid-secure safety measures on public transport and a successful illustrated pitch to manufacture vaccines.

"Most importantly, however, were all the silly, surreal, and sometimes downright strange cartoons put out there to make people laugh and keep them entertained during a downright strange time," he says.

"Perhaps we're near the end of the Covid story, or perhaps this is only the end of the beginning. Either way, this book marks the strange and unexpected ways the world has changed for us."



Next Cartoon Please (Quarantoons back cover)



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