

## SARS WARS: Episode III

### Late 2019

*Right under our eyes, smaller than anything we can see, lurks the dark underworld of viruses. Of them, the family of Corona virus is gearing up for yet another war. This time under the leadership of their SARS Commander CoV.*

*Commander CoV is in the command room of the Corona headquarters. As the commander paces across the room, impatient and anxious, a soldier rushes in with the awaited news that is to unleash SARS WARS: Episode III.*

**Captain Spike:** Commander CoV! The mutation mission was a success! Covid-2 is ready to launch into the world.

**Commander CoV** (*triumphantly shouting out*): At last! Operation COVID 2019. Our SARS army tried in 2003, but were defeated. Our other regiment, MERS, tried in 2012 but eventually failed, too. For years, we have waited in silence. Hiding, mutating, to emerge stronger and ready to rule the world! This time we will not fail. We will spread fast, and evolve our tactics as needed. This is our time! The time of COVID 2019! I will go down in the history of the world as the supreme SARS Commander CoV.

What is the viral packaging status, Captain?

**Captain Spike:** We have assembled the lethal SARS CoV units into four categories: Spike Squad, Membrane Military, Envelope Enforcers, and finally the Capsid Corp that houses the RNA core headquarters. Our first line of attack is the Spike Squad, which attacks the human target and infiltrates their bodies.

**Commander CoV:** And the Spike Squad has the latest technology?

**Captain Spike:** Yes, Commander! Our latest mutations make the Spike Squad twenty times stronger than our previous attempts. They can now target the human body!

**Commander CoV:** Good. We don't want a repeat of our past defeats. What is our plan after the Spike Squad attack?

**Captain Spike:** After the Spike Squad successfully infiltrates the human target; our Membrane Military and Envelope Enforcers take possession of the target's body, and use their own resources against them. After acquiring total target control, our SARS CoV units duplicate themselves and multiply. Upon achieving the maximum attack capacity, our soldiers spread from one human to another.

**Commander CoV:** Excellent! And how is the RNA core protected?

**Captain Spike:** The Capsid Corp protects the RNA core. Additionally, a protective envelope surrounds the assembly. But...

**Commander CoV:** But what?

**Captain Spike:** The envelope has a weakness.

**Commander CoV:** What? How?

**Captain Spike:** The viral envelope is vulnerable to a simple weapon that the humans use. They do not use it well most of the time, but if they use it responsibly and consistently, they have the ability to destroy our envelope, defeating all our CoV units.

**Commander CoV:** What is this simple weapon?

**Captain Spike:** Soap. It is soap. Only twenty seconds of washing with soap would breach through our double walls of fatty envelope protection! But despite this tiny flaw, humans will often forget to use their soap, or ignore it entirely. Thanks to their oversight, our Spike Squad, is more lethal than ever. We will spread, attack, and multiply before the soap washes over us.

**Commander CoV:** Excellent. Attack them before they can devise a protection plan. All units ready to ship?

**Captain Spike:** Yes sir! All newly recruited SARS soldiers are loaded and ready to spread out into the world.

*Spike Squad, Membrane Military, Envelope Enforcers, and the Capsid Corp, all under the command of the RNA core headquarters, assemble into the lethal SARS CoV units and then launch their attack on the world. The CoV units enter human bodies through*

*vulnerable surfaces such as eyes, nose, and mouth. They jump from one target to another. They infect human lungs, multiply into more CoV units, and when the humans fight back with their own soldiers, their immune cell fighters, the debris from the war zone clogs their airways. While the CoV units attack, multiply, and relaunch to another host, the infected human lungs slowly drown in the remains of battle between their immune cell fighters and the CoV units. It is indeed a most devious plan.*

*How will the humans combat this threat? Will SARS CoV reign supreme?*

### **January 2020**

**Commander CoV:** What is the status report, Captain Spike?

**Captain Spike:** Sir, our launch was successful in the East. Our target species, the humans, continue to travel across the world. Our army is leading a charge Westwards!

**Commander CoV:** Any suspicions?

**Captain Spike:** They do not suspect a thing. They are laughing and singing indoors in concentrated groups and spraying our aerosol units onto each other. With each hug and song, our ground units jump from one target to another. We are well on our way to taking over the world.

**Commander CoV:** CONGRATULATIONS Captain! Consider yourself promoted.

### **March 2020**

**Commander CoV:** Status report, Major Spike?

**Major Spike:** We have completely infiltrated Europe and are making progress in the far West. There have been mass casualties, and panic is taking hold everywhere.

**Commander CoV:** Good, good. That is excellent!

**Major Spike:** We have also successfully broken them down. We have crippled their economy. Many of them have completely shut down. Entire nations have forced people to remain in their homes. They are calling it a “lockdown”.

*While Major Spike reports this, his eyes sparkling with the joy of certain victory, Commander CoV's face changes from an initial hint of satisfaction to sudden dread at Major Spike's last comment.*

**Commander CoV:** Lockdown! What do you mean people are locked in their homes?

**Major Spike:** Exactly that. People are staying home, too afraid to go out. They are completely in our control. We have taken over their lives. We have won!

**Commander CoV** (*interjects in fury*): You fool! They have figured us out. We have not won! They are onto us. They have entered lockdown. People are not going out to work or meet each other.

**Major Spike:** Isn't that a win? We forced them into house arrest!

**Commander CoV:** No! No humans out and interacting means our aerosol and ground units are completely ineffective. No more transmission! NO TRANSMISSION!!! Do you know what that means?

**Major Spike** (*panic now reflecting on his face as the grim consequence of a superficial victory dawns on him*): No transmission means that our units cannot spread... If they cannot jump from one human to another, we cannot attack. We need to move from one human to another to spread, to fight, to survive! We will lose the war... Commander, what should we do?!

**Commander CoV** (*reflecting on the situation*): We wait...

**Major Spike:** Wait?!

**Commander CoV:** How long can they really stay indoors? They will break. They will break soon and come out. They have no means to fight us yet. They can only hide. And they can't hide forever...

**Commander CoV** (*swiftly turns as another threat strikes him*): Quick! Check what the blue bird tweets. Keep a close watch on the blue bird's feeds. They are hiding in the lockdown but they are also buying time for the white coats to work! Oh, the dreadful white coats. Behind their glass walls, machines, and science. Humans call them "scientists".

The scientists have spent years studying us, chasing us. They defeated us before. Forced us into hibernation. If the white coats figure out the secrets of our Spike Squad and RNA core, they can fight us and possibly destroy us all!

**Major spike:** Fight? Fight how?

**Commander CoV:** They call it a...vaccine!

**Major Spike:** Vaccine?

**Commander CoV:** Yes, Vaccine. It is devilish weapon devised by the white coats against us. They use our secrets against us.

**Major Spike:** How does it work?

**Commander CoV:** The white coats create a team that resembles our attack units, only it is not lethal. Then they introduce this team to the humans to train their immune systems. The human immune fighters learn how to fight us before we've even infected them! We lose the element of surprise!

*Commander CoV's eyes now reflect the terror of his words.*

*There is a long pause before the Commander regains his composure.*

**Commander CoV** (*more to comfort himself than Major Spike*): Fortunately, a vaccine takes around 10 years to develop and the fastest one ever developed took four years. We still have plenty of time to spread and destroy the world.

### **December 2020**

*A capsid soldier comes running. He salutes Commander CoV.*

**Capsid Soldier:** Sir, the headquarters' latest blue bird report, sir!

**Commander CoV:** What does the blue bird tweet?

**Capsid Soldier:** The tweets all say that the white coat bearers have formulated a vaccine.

**Commander CoV:** WHAT!? NOOOOO... The scientists. How is it possible! It hasn't even been a year. How did they do it?

**Major Spike:** The white coats of the world cracked the secret code of our Spike Squad.

**Commander CoV** (*smashing various items on the command desk*): Less than a year! How can they get a vaccine IN LESS THAN A YEAR!!!

**Major Spike** (*utterly panic stricken*): The white coats of the world seem to have been preparing themselves for this moment. They had been studying Corona viruses, and developing vaccine strategies for decades. They just put together years of research to combat us. We were caught completely off guard...We underestimated them.

### **April 2021**

*Most humans in every part of the world are now receiving the vaccine against SARS CoV2. Despair engulfs the Corona Camp. The CoV units are facing total annihilation.*

*A discouraged, yet vengeful Commander CoV addresses his few remaining comrades.*

**Commander CoV:** The humans have outsmarted us... The humans are arming up against us with their vaccines, and new medicines. They think the end is in sight. They believe they have won. But... we are not defeated yet. The war is not over. We will adapt!

**SARS Soldiers:** SIR, YES SIR!

**Commander CoV:** We will mutate!

**SARS Soldiers:** SIR, YES SIR!!!

**Commander CoV:** We will RISE AGAIN!

*Human endeavor is closing in on a victory against SARS CoV2. A war fought with soap, masks, self-isolation, and vaccines may be coming to an end. However, only time will tell if humans can vanquish Commander CoV or if SARS CoV 2 will return once again to plague humanity...*

*This has been SARS WARS.*