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What were your thoughts when the first COVID-19 cases were being diagnosed in China?

Everybody was joking about it so I didn't take it as seriously as I should have. The whole internet was full of memes about the virus and I barely knew anything about it at first.

How have things changed for you and/or your family since the outbreak?

We don't leave the house much anymore or go see the rest of our family, who we used to visit at least once a week, especially on weekends. Our day to day life is basically a constant loop of the same thing every day. For me it's basically: wake up late, take medication, get on Schoology and spend hours and hours doing work (because I can't stay focused), free time, dinner, more free time, go to sleep at some time between 12-3 AM. It goes like this every day and it's gotten a little boring, but I can live with it. When we get to the weekend and there's finally no work it's such a relief, but when we have to start up to distance learning again it's such a bummer! I just wish the weekend breaks could last longer, so I can spend time with my family playing games and watching movies and having fun; or I wish I could have more days to just sleep and watch TV and relax instead of stressing over how to do my gym homework.

For you, what is the worst thing about this?

The work being assigned from online school seems like a lot more than was being assigned when we were in school. It's hard to stay focused on the work because, when you're home, it's harder to get motivated to do work because I'm in my own house and there's so many other things I could be doing. Another huge thing I hate right now is that I find that I have to do the dishes so much more often and I'm really getting tired of it. The WORST thing, though, is the social distancing and the stress over the disease. I miss my best friends so much and I miss my family. Despite already being a very introverted and socially isolated person in my normal life, I've found that I'm still struggling to deal with not being with these people in my life. The stress and hysteria over the virus, however, is absurd. Whenever my parents will go out to the store, they'll come home and IMMEDIATELY throw their clothes in the wash and begin disinfecting EVERYTHING. We're finding out more and more people from the school in the city where my mom worked are being diagnosed with the virus. It's scary and we're constantly worrying about what would happen if one of us got it and fearing for the absolute worst at all times. Also, what was up with everyone buying out all the toilet paper???

Another thing that is worrying me is how long this will go on. People continue to go out and be around people, totally breaking the quarantine and social distancing, which is annoying and unhelpful. I'm worried that this will stretch into summertime and ruin all my summer plans, which mostly involved spending time with family and friends and swimming and doing theater/acting camps, which I was very excited for, because I get to see the friends I made at a camp I did last year again.

In your experience so far, what, if anything, has been positive about this?

I get to stay up later and sleep in during the week, waking up whenever I want to. I'm getting closer to my sister and spending a lot more time with her since we're home together. I have a lot of free time during the night and I use a lot of that time creatively, often writing stories, drawing, making music, or making videos with my sister. I personally like not



leaving the house, which is unhealthy, I know, but I just like to relax and hang out at home because home is just a safe and comfortable place to be.

Tell us about a moment or experience during this time that you will never forget.

On April 1st, my family planned a Zoom birthday for my aunt. When we did it, I just remember being so happy and excited to see so many people I hadn't seen in a while all together again. It was really exciting, and it made me truly realize how important my family is to me. More and more people joined the call, people I hadn't even seen for a while BEFORE the whole quarantine situation. I just couldn't help but smile while it was happening.

Pretend it is the year 2050 and another pandemic is looming--what would you tell someone who has just asked what it was like to live through the 2020 pandemic?

It was odd. Get ready for a lot of fear and stress and panic. Get ready to see a lot of people walking around outside for some reason. Get ready to stay in your house for a long time and to feel like you have so much work to do all the time, even if you don't. Also, get ready for some bizarre and hyper-realistic dreams that almost always involve something to do with the disease (at least that's how my dreams have been). Really, I wouldn't know what to say to them. The pandemic is still ongoing.

