ENGL 301B Sec 06

Who Knows What Day It Is?

I remember being in my Political Science 212 class and hearing the rumor about the school possibly being shut down because of the COVID – 19 pandemic. The other students in my class were asking our professor if the rumors were true or not but she was unsure. We settled the discussion and returned to learning about how democratic the United States is when the majority of the class received the email. School was going to be shut down until April 20th. After class, I immediately called my mom to tell her the news. She was not surprised that this was going to happen because we had already been discussing the pandemic and how it was going to affect our day to day lives.

The changes in my life did not just stop at school. After coming to terms with the fact that I wouldn’t be in school for a month, another bomb was dropped on me. I received a text message from my manager telling me that a lot of the employee’s hours were being cut. That week alone I went from being scheduled to work about 18 hours tot not having any hours at all. I was fine with that because I still believed that I would have something to go do now that in person schooling had stopped but that feeling did not last long. Not even a day later, my manger sent another text message saying that the Wetzel’s Pretzels that I worked was being shut down until further notice and my last paycheck is going to be sent to me. At the time, I did not know that that text message would be the last thing I would receive from that job to this day.

Without the need to physically get up and go to school or work, I started to lose track of what day it was. There was absolutely nothing for me to do to be productive until the online schooling was put into effect. My day consisted of waking up, checking my phone to see what day it was, attend the appropriate classes, and figure out how to spend my time for the remainder of the day. I remember there being so many memes about how this is the end and how we need to stock up on supplies for when the government enacts martial law. It was insane how many people believed that supermarkets were going to close and how companies were going to stop manufacturing toilet paper. It was hard to find the basic necessities because people were being paranoid.

When school transitioned to virtual learning, I found it difficult to stay focused in school. It didn’t feel real that this was how I was going to finish the rest of the semester. I know my professors tried their best with the time frame they received to make the most out of the rest of the semester, but it didn’t feel the same. It felt like half of the month back into classes was spent trying to learn how to navigate Zoom. Half of my classes tried the Zoom lecturing and the other half just gave us deadlines to turn in assignments. I felt like the semester became more about turning work in than actually learning things.

With not having a job to go to and having to do school online, my car seemed almost abandoned. I would only move it twice a week when the street cleaning would happen. My car was a 2009 Volkswagen Jetta so I would spend about 30 minutes driving around the neighborhood just ensure my battery wouldn’t die. My older cousin was still working during the beginning and middle stages of the pandemic and said he needed a car. I had been wanting to sell my car for a while even before COVID, so it only made sense that I sold it to him when I wasn’t planning on using it.

I knew I couldn’t rely on my work paycheck anymore, so I applied for unemployment. I was receiving my regular income plus the extra $600 the Unemployment Agency. It was going really well for me until they announced that the extra $600 assistance was going to end. I knew that after that ended, I was only going to be getting about $100 every two weeks and wouldn’t qualify for the $300 assistance being offered so my only option was to get a job. I am still technically employed at Wetzel’s Pretzels, but I know that they aren’t planning to reopen anytime soon. I ended up getting a job at Target. Fortunately, I was able to buy a new car in order to commute to work.

At first the pandemic felt like one big joke until the death toll started piling up. During the time that I had nothing productive to do, I began to research what exactly is going on with the pandemic and how it effects people. Reading about how the virus affects older people and people with underling health conditions really slapped me in the face. I remembered that my older sister had a heart condition and fell into the category of underling health conditions. I realized just how much this virus could affect my family if I wasn’t careful. It became a part of my everyday routine to get home from work, leave my shoes outside, put my clothes in a separate laundry bin, and immediately hop into the shower.

Going through all these bumps in the road is something I know others have had to have faced during his pandemic as well. The pandemic changed all of our lives. We had to come to terms with the fact that facemasks and constant disinfecting became the new normal. We all need to just take things one day at a time and stay safe.