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COVID-19 Journal | Cassidy Riddle

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Cassidy Riddle
COVID-19 Journal entries

March 30th, 2020

Today is my boyfriend's birthday, he's turning 19. Originally we were gonna throw a party with all our friends, since our friend's 21st birthday was yesterday we were gonna do it all together. But because we can't have gatherings of no more than 10 people it just wasn't possible. I ended up just going to his house and spending time with his family.

Usually on his birthday his mom makes his choice of a homemade meal or to go out to eat at his favorite restaurant, but this year their oven is broken and it's impossible to go out to eat right now, we ended up ordering pizzas and watching movies. It isn't the best birthday he was hoping for but what are you going to do in a pandemic? There are probably so many birthdays being ruined by this.

April 1st, 2020

I had to work today, I work at one of the only grocery stores in my town, in the county with the most Coronavirus cases in Alabama. It's a little rough working in a grocery store during a pandemic, our shelves are barely even stocked. I got called into work so many times last week I ended up working 20 hours more than I was scheduled. The "social-distancing" thing is barely even working, people are supposed to stay at least 6 feet apart at all times to try and limit the spread of the virus but I still watch customers that know each other walk up and hug each other and people walk so close to each other they are almost touching.

I work at Winn-Dixie, and they finally announced that we are getting Hazard Pay. It isn't a lot compared to other stores, but I got an extra \$40 on my paycheck today. The more hours you work, the more Hazard Pay you get, so next week when it starts to slow down I won't get nearly as much.

April 3rd, 2020

I had to work again today, I've been working so many more hours than I usually would. During a normal week I would usually work around 20 hours, if that, and now I'm pushing 35 hours a week. There are a few of the cashiers where I work that took a "leave of absence" until the pandemic is over so we are a little short handed. Some of them took off because they live with their grandparents who are considered high risk, but I think some of them took off just because they wanted to be off for a while.

There is a big difference in how serious some people are taking the Coronavirus. I see some customers who come in touching everything, no mask and no gloves, and then there's the people who have on masks, gloves, gas masks, lysoling everything before they touch. I had one older customer come through my line who said "I'm not scared of no virus" and then lick his whole hand after using the pin pad when he was checking out. I just thought that was so bizarre because he was old enough that he caught the virus that could potentially kill him, but he didn't care.

April 5th, 2020

Today I went and cleaned out my dorm in Curtiss Hall. My roommate and I were going to move out at the same time so we could see each other, but since I work at a grocery store and there is a chance I have been exposed to the virus. I didn't want to get around her because there is a newborn baby in her house. It made us both really sad that we couldn't move out together because she lives 2 hours away from me so it isn't easy to see each other in person that much.

When I got to the dorm I had to stand behind a line of tape to talk to the RA for my move out instructions. They only allowed 15 people per day to move out of their dorms so it was kind of hard to get in the schedule on a day that my dad was off work to help me move stuff. I had already taken most of my stuff home when I first left because I figured we wouldn't really be coming back any time soon.

April 7th, 2020

They put plexiglass up on the registers at Winn-Dixie now. I don't feel like they help that much, the customers end up poking their head around the screen because they can't hear anything I say through the screen and the mask I wear. We have to clean the screens at least every hour on the hour plus any time someone touches, sneezes, or coughs on it. They really show how serious people take this pandemic though, because customers are either so glad and thankful we have that screen put up or they just make jokes about it, calling it a "spit shield."

I feel like I never get an off day, and when I do I'm either getting called into work or someone is texting me asking me to cover their shift for them. You would hope to think that there wouldn't be that many people in the store because people should be staying home, but there are still so many people who come in everyday with their entire family to get a few days groceries, rather than just having one person per buggy and getting enough groceries so they don't have to get out and possibly be exposed to the virus.

April 9th, 2020

I'm starting to go stir crazy sitting in my house so much. All I do is go to work and back home. I live in a really small town so there isn't a lot to do around my house, especially when everything is closed. There are a lot of fishing holes where I live though, so we have been fishing and walking outside a lot. My house is pretty small, and there are four of us that live here, and I'm right beside my grandmother and my aunt so I am always around somebody. Although I love my family it is hard being around the same people every single day.

I didn't think I would miss college this much. I haven't been home for this long since last summer and after being used to how things are at JSU I am a little thrown off at how things are here. Like I'm not used to having to ask my parents if I can go somewhere, or being able to stay up late without waking anyone up. I also get my work done a lot faster and easier at college because I have an actual desk to work at or to go to the library.

April 11th, 2020

Easter is coming up this weekend, and it kinda stinks that even though people should be staying at home I know that people are still going to be getting together with their families which will probably make the virus spread even more. I know people are still going to be having big celebrations because I see all the groceries people are buying at Winn Dixie. It's like people only take the virus seriously when it is convenient for them. But it is also supposed to storm really bad so that might keep people from getting in too big of groups.

I've also realized how little people care about the environment while working during all of this. Every time I walk outside into the parking lot and see all the gloves and masks and wipes laying all over the ground. They are all over the floor inside the store too. And people don't get how to use them either, I see people all the time with gloves on and they still touch their face and their phone and wallet.

April 13th, 2020

Yesterday was Easter Sunday, and a tornado went through my town. We haven't had power since 5:00 pm yesterday and they still have not given a time when it will come back on. My family lives in a trailer, so we went to the church we go to and got in the basement. We could see the tornado outside the basement door, and the wind was so strong that when my brother opened the door it almost pulled him outside. We watched the roof come off my neighbors shed and we could hear the trees falling around the church. When it finally stopped it took us 30 minutes to get back to our house because there were trees everywhere (I live close enough to the church we can walk to it). There are trees everywhere, and one fell two feet from my grandmother's house.

I still don't have power, and since I have to do all my work from home I need WiFi to get it done. This is such a busy week for me so I am really stressed as to how i'm going to get my school work done on time. My cousin has a generator so we might stay over so we have power, but it is hard living in a world that relies on the internet when you don't have internet.

April 15th, 2020

Today is Wednesday, and the storms hit on Sunday, and I still don't have power. It should come on tonight, but once I get off work and finally be able to take a shower I know I won't have time to get any work done before I need to go to bed. The storm closed so many roads due to power lines and trees being down. I live in a very small town, so when the highway is blocked and almost all the backroads are blocked it's almost impossible to go anywhere.

At work we have run out of bagged ice because so many people are trying to save their food. Almost all of our food has gone bad, which right now it is really hard to afford all new groceries due to the pandemic. Prices on meat have gone up so much it almost isn't worth buying. But on the bright side, since I haven't been able to go anywhere and everything is so expensive I have been able to save a lot of money. I hope to be able to pay off the rest of my tuition out of pocket next semester so I don't have to apply for student loans.

April 17th, 2020

I got power back at my house last night so I got a good bit of homework done. It is really hard to want to do school work when you are at home and there is no one to do school work with. I used to do homework with my roommate or with friends at the library. I'm also working more now that I did when I was still at college, so I had more down time on my hands.

I've still managed to have mostly A's or high B's though. I have always been really good at school, and never had a problem with not being motivated to get my work done, but these past weeks at home have been a struggle that I'm not used to. It is nice to be home though, because once I go back to Jacksonville I'll be moving into an apartment, so I won't be coming home as much,

April 19th, 2020

I found out today I might have been exposed to the Coronavirus. I went fishing with one of my friends last weekend, and today he told me that his girlfriend and his girlfriend's mom just tested positive. He hasn't shown any symptoms yet. But he could have had it when I was with him and us not know it. I think I would be showing symptoms by now if I had it because that was over a week ago, but I called into work and told them just in case.

I am not too worried about catching the virus myself, I am just worried about giving it to my aunt and grandmother because they are at high risk. My grandmother has been stuck inside her house for over a month, so I sat outside with her today so she could get some fresh air and could feed the cats and dogs treats.

April 21st, 2020

My friend doesn't have the Coronavirus, it's been two weeks since I last saw him and he still doesn't have symptoms and I don't either. I forgot about my brother's asthma, so it would be really bad if he had gotten it. The Shelter In Place Order is suppose to be other on May 1st, but I don't think it's time yet. The amount of cases in Alabama are still climbing fast, and if they open the state backup then it will grow even faster.

Apparently China is having a 2nd wave of the virus. I don't know how true that is, I just saw it on a facebook post so it may not be real. If it is true, I think that is just proof that the state of Alabama and even the other states are not ready to be opened up at all. I saw that the beaches were just opened back up, and the amount of people who swarmed the beach were startling. People don't realize that just because you can go outside doesn't mean you should.

April 23rd, 2020

Today at work the managers made it required that we wear a mask and they recommend gloves. I have been wearing a mask but being a cashier it is hard to count money correctly with gloves on, so I just make sure not to touch my face. I also keep sanitizer in my pocket. It's funny how people don't understand how germs are spread. Me wearing gloves only protects me, not the customer. I can still spread germs from surface to surface if I wear gloves or not but customers still complain that I'm "compromising their health."

Another thing I realized is that people don't realize who is in charge of prices. I, being a cashier, am not responsible for the prices of meat being more expensive that usual, or that the

price of toilet paper is up. Customers are extremely ignorant coming into grocery stores right now. No, we do not have toilet paper in the backroom, and no, I will not go look and double check.

April 25th, 2020

I had a doomsday prepper come through my line today at work. He bought \$170 worth of just canned goods and water jugs. He also made sure to inform me of how corrupt the government is and how they created this virus. He also told me that the "curfews" are instated so that the government can pump 5G radiation into the cell towers and that THAT is what is making everyone sick.

People really do not have any idea how the world works sometimes. Sometimes I feel like if so many people didn't think the government was corrupt and tried to trust the government then things would run a lot more smoothly in our country. I have had customers who really believe that the government created this virus in order to limit our constitutional rights.

April 27th, 2020

Finals week is almost over, which means my first year of college is almost over. I thought it would feel more special or something, but I actually just can't wait for this semester to be over and that makes me kind of sad. I have two more exams and then I will be a college sophomore. This whole school year went by way too fast. I feel like I just moved into my dorm and met my roommate for the first time, and it got taken away from us too early. I know that other people are in a worse situation than me, like high school and college seniors who may not be able to walk across a field or stage at graduation.

When I came home early from college I was excited to have an extended break, and I took for granted the end of my college freshmen year. I still talk to all my friends, though, and as soon as we can we are meeting up so we can shop for our apartment for next semester.

In this journal entry, I discussed what it is like to live during the Coronavirus as a teenager. I also talked about what it is like being considered an "essential worker" and working in a grocery store. I talk about what is like being around people who are high risk and also the different people I talk to about the coronavirus. I am covering the end of March through the end of April 2020, and I have been at home for the entirety of writing these. I am a 1st year college student and my major is Criminal Justice: Forensic Investigation.