

# COVID 19: HOPE IN THE DARK



Lemon Ruan

This zine is dedicated to my beloved parents and my grandparents whom I miss the most.

As an international student who is studying in New York City, I decided not to return to my home country while many other international students quickly bought their flight tickets and left the U.S while they still could during the outbreak of the Novel Coronavirus.

As the cases escalate and New York City becomes the epicenter for Coronavirus, all schools have started closing down for the rest of the semester. Since then, I have received many messages from my family insisting that I should go home.

I knew that I should. But I also knew that I shouldn't. For many reasons, selfish reasons.

For one, I don't know when I will be able to come back to New York City as the U.S starts to close borders to non essential travels.

For another, although it is a risk to stay in New York City because of the highly transmissive virus, a documentation of such a time in one of the most popular cities in the world will be memorable for life.

I'm hoping that my family can see this and feel the strange love from a stubborn and disobedient child.

**Janurary 22nd: FIRST case of Coronavirus identified in the U.S**

**Feburary 29th: FIRST death in Washinton State**

**March 16th: FIRST official day of school closure in NYC**

**March 23rd: FIRST day when the "Stay-at-Home" order goes into effect for at least two weeks in NYC**

**April 17: FIRST day that it is mandatory for New Yorkers to wear face masks whenever they get out of the house**



photo taken: Chinatown

### **Deaths in the U.S:**

**Feburary 29th: 5**

**March 14th: 49**

**March 21th:478**

**March 28th: 2569**

**April 11th: 9958**

**April 18th: 4092**

# Closure

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**More than anything, it's kept me away from my family, whom I usually spend a lot of time with**  
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HazelsALTernate  
unemployed



I was walking around union square on March 13th and sensed something strange. The streets felt emptier and stores were closing early. It was a Friday that seemed to be foreshadowing something.

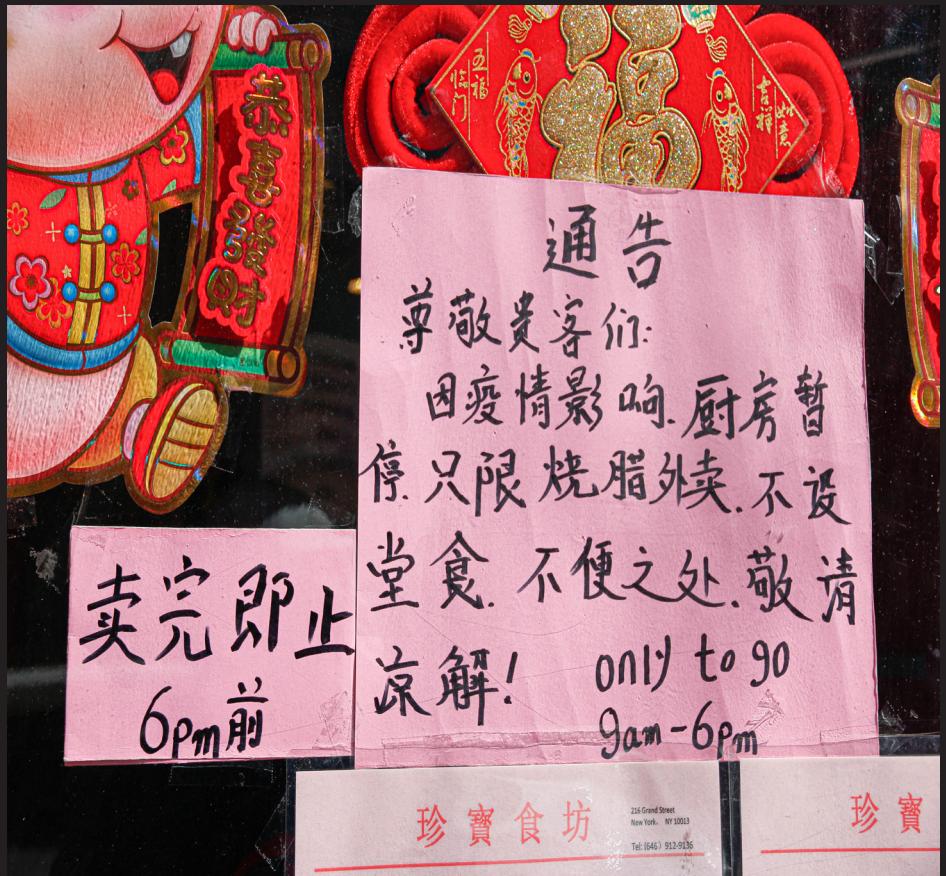




I was taking a walk in my neighborhood, Bushwick in Brooklyn and noticing how the coronavirus has had an impact on restaurants. These photos were taken in late March. Since the rising cases of coronavirus, Governor Andrew Cuomo has claimed that only essential businesses should stay open.

Most restaurants in my neighborhood are either completely closed or are only open to take out and delivery services as the photos suggest. I have also noticed my increased tendency to order deliveries, mostly from uber eats. Although people cannot gather in restaurants, internet provides a great help as restaurants move online.





The city that never sleeps finally takes a break. This is a sign found on a restaurant in Chinatown. The sign is written in Chinese to inform customers that no indoor seating is allowed and deliveries only. Chinatown has been hit hard since the very beginning of the outbreak yet they still work tirelessly in restaurants.



This bear in a store named Line Friends located at Times Square sends out a message to customers that they are closed. "Sorry we're closed" is written on the chest of this sad looking bear who is missing his ears.



At the beginning of quarantine, I took a trip to Chinatown, which was at the center of attention. I walked by this man who was sitting on a wheelchair and napping inside of a vestibule that belongs to a bakery. The bakery was closed due to coronavirus. I was not sure whether the man was homeless or just taking a break. He seemed to be comfortable and the vestibule perhaps contained heat to keep him from the cold air in winter. I didn't want to get too close to disturb him but this image always keeps me wondering how older people cope with being alone during Coronavirus.



Remember a time when the news told us that we do not have to wear a mask because it doesn't prevent people from getting sick? Remember a time when you are walking on the street and judging somebody for wearing a mask? Many Asian Americans wore them regardless of what was claimed as "ineffectiveness" about masks.





Despite the closing of many, this restaurant is still working hard on making food and delivering to its customers. The worker is wearing a mask while cooking.



The shutdown of the city has affected many lives. A lot of the times, people lose their jobs and are not able to receive help financially. This is even more extremely difficult for those who are already in a bad situation, such as the ones who are homeless. Their option is to take refuge in public area.



I had seen the man every single day from the morning when I got on the train to evening when I got off the train at the same platform. He was always there in the same position with his head down on his arms. Occasionally I saw him get up and walk around but very quickly he would sit back down. No body ever went near him. He seemed to have the whole space to himself. Then one day, he was gone along with the bags. I have never seen him ever since. I did not know how he survived and I do not know what has happened to him since the last time I saw him.



These photos were taken on my phone although I wish I had my camera to make them clearer. The raw quality of my phone camera somehow adds a few barenness to the photo. Life hasn't been treating them well.



