

*Saturday, 3-28-2020*

*I Woke up as a Raccoon*

*It is 9:15 PM. I, a high schooler, have woken up as a raccoon. My eyes are dark and I am ready to scavenge all night. The only time I am awake at a normal hour is to eat or drink. I woke up with a mask, and I will wash my hands plenty of times, but I still have to worry about spreading disease.*

It is now November of 2020. In order for you to understand what it was like to live during the pandemic, as well as why I felt like a raccoon, it is necessary that I explain my journal entries to you.

*Monday, 3-30-2020*

*I have never looked like this before*

*Again, it is 9:15 in the evening, and my alarm woke me up after 12 hours of sleep. When I look in the mirror, my eyes are as dark as can be. The wide circles around my eyes are literally black. I look like an animal.*



Just like a raccoon, I had circles around my eyes that were dark and wide. These circles were darker and wider than I have seen on any person before. This was the first time in my life that my eyes were in such bad condition. The pandemic had just started, and it was already wearing me out.

*Tuesday, 3-31-2020*

*The Exact Reason Why I Look Like This*

*Again, it is just past 9:00PM. While most kids are beginning to lay low for the night, I slept all day. For the 4th night in a row I am ready to go to work. Kwik Trip, here I come.*

Just like a raccoon, for the 4th night that week I had just slept all day. Just like a raccoon, I was then fully awake and ready to fend for myself all night. Before the pandemic, I had woken up past noon once in my life.

*Wednesday, 4-1-2020*

*A Pleasant Surprise*

*For once, I am awake at 1:00 in the afternoon. The sun is shining, and my mom is awake. I walk up the stairs as my mom says, "Oh, hi Aaron! You are up very early today, what a great surprise! How was work?" I talk to her for a bit, but it is not long before I grab a quick snack and go back to bed.*

Just like seeing a raccoon, my mom was surprised to see me in the middle hours of the day. However, just like a raccoon, I had only woken up so that I could eat and drink. This out of the ordinary interaction made me think of the time that I saw a raccoon at the disc golf course by my house. I was surprised, but I only saw it for a short moment before it disappeared again. Before the pandemic, I would have been eating lunch instead of a "midnight snack."

Monday, 4-13-2020

### *Proper Protection and Worries*

*Again it is 9:15PM and I have woken up with my mask right next to me. I have now become so used to wearing my mask that it seems as if I was born with it. As I wear my mask, I feel good knowing that I am doing my part to stop the spread of the virus. However, many of Kwik Trip's customers that visit during the middle of the night do not care about wearing their mask. To avoid confrontation, I can not tell them to put a mask on. Even though I am wearing my mask, I know that it is still very possible for disease to spread when others do not wear theirs.*



As I wrote, I was beginning to feel as if I had been wearing a mask my entire life. When a raccoon is born, they are born with their own facemask. The dark, oval area around their mouth clearly resembles the same type of face mask that we wear. Just as we need to be careful about our close contact with the coronavirus, we need to be careful when having close contact with raccoons. Raccoons can spread viruses such as rabies, baylisascaris procyonis, giardiasis, and leptospirosis.

*Monday, 4-20-2020*

*Safety First*

*Today at work, as a lady handed me \$18 dollars of her filthy bills, she graciously reminded me that I should be using a lot of hand sanitizer and be washing my hands as much as possible. I have been in a good routine of washing them with soap and water every 15 minutes and using hand sanitizer after every customer.*

In the wild, raccoons spend a significant amount of time around water. They are tremendous swimmers, and they are able to find a lot of their food in and around water. I would like to think that both raccoons and I spent an equal amount of time in the water when you consider how often I was washing my hands.

*Tuesday, 4-21-2020*

*Why Am I Here?*

*It has now been over a month of working full time overnight at my Kwik Trip. Typically, I would be spending these hours at school during the middle of the daytime. Tonight would have been a school night, but the pandemic decided to say otherwise.*

Before the pandemic, working the overnight shift at a gas station as a high school student was unheard of. However, clearly demonstrated, **this is the nonsense that the pandemic created.**

