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29 Days and Counting

Emma Littau

• 11 April 2020

In this world, time keeps moving, even though it may not seem that way. Every day is the same, even though a new day begins every morning. It may seem as if time has stopped moving, but time is the only constant as each mechanical second passes. Time continues to move, people are born, and lots of people are dying. For many, time stands still. For those combatting death, time flies by.

There is a family. A wife. A husband. A daughter. Two sons. It has been exactly twenty-nine days since any of them have left the house. 0.079 years. 0.952 months. 4.143 weeks. 29 days. 696 hours. 41,760 minutes. 2,505,600 seconds. Time is quantifiable. A considerable amount of time has passed, and although it does not feel that way, the numbers do not lie.

Time is a circle. Currently the circle of time is one day. 0.003 years. 0.033 months. 0.143 weeks. 1 day. 24 hours. 1,440 minutes. 86,400 seconds. They have lived this circle, this cycle, 29 times, and there is no end in sight.

The cycle goes something like this: Roll out of bed at nine o'clock. Eat a quick meal. Get to work, get to school, get on that Zoom call. Although time seems stagnant, it still governs their lives. If they miss their Zoom call, they will get reprimanded by their bosses, their teachers. When one call ends, the next begins. At twelve o'clock a break for lunch. The break is not long because, although time has stopped, the work sure has not. Back to work. The work finally comes to an end in the evening. At seven o'clock they will gather around the table for dinner. After dinner, a time to rest and relax after the hard work of the day. They play games, looking around and seeing tired smiles instead of looking blankly into a computer screen. At eleven o'clock they retire to their beds, only to wake up and do it all over again. The sun has set. It will be a new day tomorrow, yet the same as the day before.

While they have not left the house in twenty nine days, others get up and head to the front lines. Time is not on these heroes' side. Time flies by as they rush to snatch people from the jaws of death. How they wish time would slow to a crawl, giving them the time they need to protect themselves, giving them a chance to develop and gather tools to save others.

For some, time moves painfully slow, but for others, time could not move slow enough. Regardless, time does pass. Time is the only constant, yet it is different than it has ever been before. The days of the week are irrelevant, there will be no going out to eat on Fridays, no church on Sundays, and no hump day on Wednesday. Everyone, whether they stay under the roof of their home or venture to buildings full of beeping monitors with refrigerated trucks parked in the back, will wonder what unfamiliar world they are living in.

Six months ago, this world could have only been a dream. They are all living in a dream.