

Vacation-19

March 11. During my first class of the school day, one of my professors was talking about how we might move to remote learning for the rest of the semester. I didn't think much of it and thought that no way was going to happen. My classes continued for the day and I didn't think about that subject of remote learning once. Once my classes finished for the day, I ran to the bus stop to catch the bus to go home. I was eager to go home because my grandmother was coming from the Dominican Republic that day. I hadn't seen my grandmother in more than ten years. While on my way home, I was on Twitter, there I saw that CUNY was trending and I clicked to see what was happening. I found out that school was going to be canceled. I couldn't believe it and thought it was fake. However, a few minutes after that, I received an email from one of my professors saying the same. At first, I was a bit shocked but didn't think much of it. When I got home, my grandmother was there, and I was extremely happy to see her. We hugged and started talking and laughing. It was great to see her after so many years. Throughout the day, family members from all across New York City started coming to my house to see my grandmother. Cousins, aunts and uncles, family friends all gathered. A small family gathering turned into a party. Bachata blasting and food being cooked, it was a great time. As the day came to an end, many people started leaving and some stayed over. My grandmother stayed in my room and I slept in the living room.

The next few days afterward, my grandmother went to visit family in Manhattan and the Bronx. During this time, cases were rising in New York City, and my mother was starting to get worried because of all the traveling my grandmother was doing. We live in Queens, and Queens had the most cases out of all boroughs, so we were all really worried. We were planning on going site seeing across New York City, but that was cut short because of the COVID-19. Even

though my grandmother was healthy, my mother didn't want her to take many risks. About a week after, my mother gets a call from my aunt. The call was to tell my mom that my cousin had COVID-19. My cousin was asymptomatic. My cousin had recently come to my house to visit my grandmother and my grandmother went over to his house to visit my aunt. This news scared my mom. Things were getting worse and worse in the city and she didn't want to take any chances. My mother, me, and my grandmother took tests. We didn't have any of the symptoms, but we wanted to be sure. While we waited for the results, we quarantined in separate rooms in the apartment. We finally got the results and they all came back negative, however, the fear of my grandmother contracting it was all we thought about. We remained at home the most we could and only went out when it was mandatory to get food. My grandmother was supposed to stay for over a month, but as cases grew all across the city and the city was going into lockdown, my mother didn't know whether to let my grandmother continue to stay here or change her flight so she can go back to the Dominican Republic early. My mother had to make the decision quickly because many countries were issuing travel restrictions, the Dominican Republic is one of them. The decision was made easier when one of my elderly neighbors from my building had gotten COVID-19. The risk was just too high for my grandmother to continue here. She didn't want to leave, but she understood she had to for her safety. Due to COVID-19, my grandmother's vacation was cut short and she ended up flying back to the Dominican Republic a few days later. Her stay here was bittersweet; everyone was happy to see her but also worried about her health. During her stay with us, COVID-19 made it very difficult for my family and me to spend quality time with her. Even though she was in the same apartment as me, it felt like she was so far away. Her time here was supposed to be full of fun, laughter, and joy, but was filled with more instances of fear, anxiousness, and stress. Although my grandmothers visit didn't go as planned,

I still got to see her and she went home healthy and safe and at the end of the day, that's all that really matters.