

Meme Assignment – Covid Experience

Today I feel like the dad from Coraline



*“Today I feel like the dad from Coraline” – Coraline’s dad, a man with brown hair and with glasses hanging halfway down his nose. He wears a green Michigan State sweater and sits hunched over at his desk, typing on his computer. He has dark circles around both of his protruding eyes.*

The Covid-19 pandemic was a time of loss of life and emotional exhaustion. I was in my senior year of high school, about two months from graduation, when the pandemic started. School was moved to online delivery but because I was a senior, if I was passing my classes at the time of the nationwide

shutdown, then I was not required to attend online classes. Fast forward a couple of months to August, I found myself at my desk regularly as my freshman semester of college started. A lot of the classes were general education courses that required several papers and hours of studying. This turned into many late nights completing assignments. I was not used to long hours of doing schoolwork at the computer, which led me to feelings of exhaustion. However, the real exhaustion set in once I concluded my fall semester. In the spring, I was in module art classes that involved a lot of different little projects with extensive brainstorming for each one. I spent many nights making and looking over thumbnails for class the next day. Because the classes were online, they were scheduled back-to-back. So, when one three-

hour studio class concluded, ten minutes later, another one started. This cycle led me to feeling a level of exhaustion I had not experienced in high school and that's why I chose the above meme.

In the scene in the film, Coraline opens the door to her dad's office. As they have just moved in, the room is filled with boxes, some stacked to the ceiling. The dad has his back to the door and is hunched over, actively typing. Coraline tries to engage in conversation with him and he responds but, he just wants her to leave the room. He tells her to even go out and count all the windows and doors to "just let [him] work." It is the feeling of getting so tired to a point where any little distraction becomes very problematic and all you want to do is complete your work. The scene really shows the lack of attention to Coraline and the workaholicism of the dad that the meme divulges from. It is not a bad thing that the meme does not pull the meaning from the film but I think it is important to provide context to the meme.

The hunched posture found in the image is similar to how I pictured myself sitting at my desk late at night. The darkness of the circles around his eyes are how I felt my eyes looked when they would start twitching after staring at the screen for so long. His glasses – ironic that I wear them as well. They hang halfway down his nose which shows that he does not care. His overall demeanor and posture, screams exhaustion but he is still working. He may be so tired but in the movie scene he kept typing because he had a deadline. Similarly, I could have gone to bed at normal hours and taken penalties for late work, but I chose to work late in order to turn in assignments on time. I continued to push and work although I was tired.

Another observation of Carolines Dad is his expression, it does not scream or communicate enjoyment. Once it gets to a certain point at night, usually around ten o'clock, the enjoyment and motivated energy subsides. It becomes a battle of discipline and combating tiredness. When I look at this meme, I also see a person working hard and hustling to get their work done. The meaning of

determination is very much implied considering how tired he looks. The look of fatigue is why I mainly chose the meme but again, it's also the work ethic. When I look back at the pandemic, I think of my time spent working on schoolwork at my desk. It wasn't always fun and enjoyable, but I got it done. The two years of the pandemic wore a lot of people down and I think it is fair to say we all felt tired.