



THE CHANCE

Martha Fonseca

*“To my husband
and my son”*

©2020

By Martha Yanneth Fonseca Fonseca

Global Class · Lon Appleby

Durham College

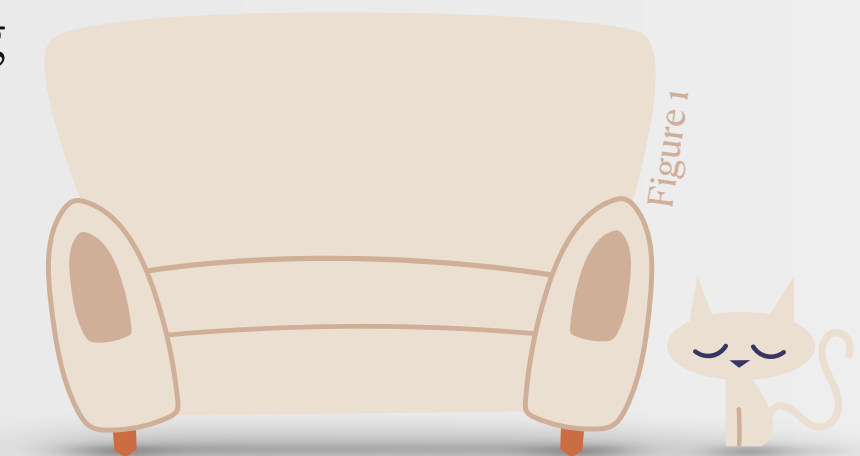
Word Count: 1578 words

THE CHANCE



hat day, as usual, Lauren’s grandchildren sat by the fireplace, to hear the stories she lovingly enjoyed sharing with them. Grandma arrived and said, well, my little kids, the story I have for you today went by in 2020.

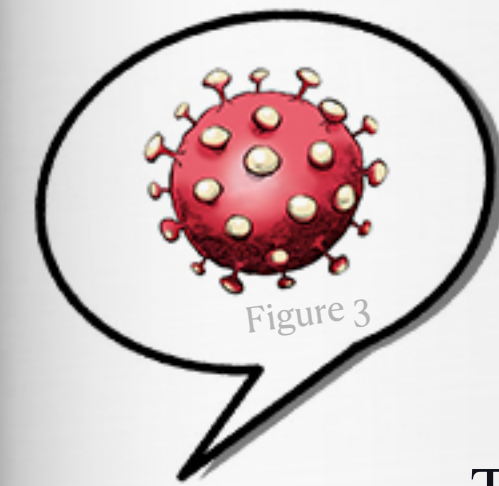
Once upon a time on the planet, when human beings believed they were able to handle whatever they face and considered themselves the owners of everything, suddenly something strange happened that would change their lives forever.



It was the ending of 2019 when the news started to change the course of everything in the world. In a city named Wuhan in China, a myriad of people got sick because of an unknown virus, and more people in Asia got infected. Asia? – interrupted Claire, the granddaughter— As the name of the tiny puppy Mr. Mathew has? – No dear, Asia is a continent located in the far east of the planet.



The fear began because cases of death appeared early in January of 2020, not only in China but around the world. In the beginning, it was not easy to determine whether the virus could be spread by humans or not. After people started flying away from China to the rest of the world, scientists began drawing conclusions that humans could actually spread the virus. None of these travellers had the proper



prevention to avoid spreading the virus, and none of the countries receiving these people were ready to react to it and its infectivity.

The nightmare started at the end of January when the government isolated Wuhan; everything froze, the public transportation had stopped, no one could get in or out the city, and businesses were closed; the dramatic decision was part of an attempt to control the virus outbreak.

Nonetheless, at that point, the virus had shown its power and the ease of its spread; the new evil had under its counts 17 deaths without weapons, softly but blunt, invisible but present, gained ground every day; and with more than 570 infected people, it had cases in Japan, Taiwan, Thailand, USA and Korea who were Pandora's box to declare this as a global health emergency. Grandma–Ryan exclaimed– How could the virus travel without anyone stopping him? Is it like a supervillain or something?– Dear, the virus was a



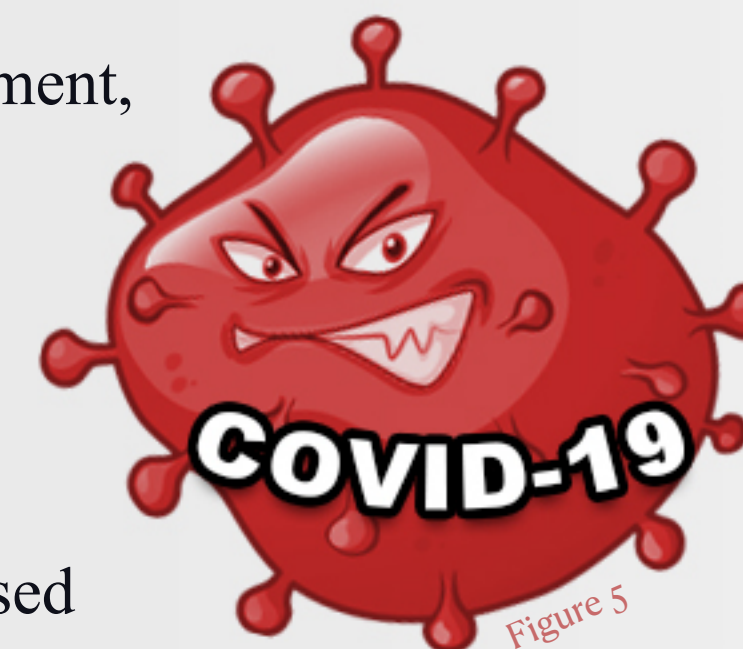
tiny invisible molecule, impossible to observe with human eyes, no one saw it until the symptoms occurred, and by then, an infected person could have spread the virus over all other humans who had crossed his path. It seemed uncontrollable!

Time continued passing slowly but at the same time as fast as no one would have wanted because the number of people dying increased even more every day. USA's president, Donald Trump, closed the country's borders from travellers coming from China, exactly when the world had just hit 10.000 infected and 213 deaths.

I would have never imagined that an apparently insignificant flu, would take thousands of lives on its way. The month of February was by far the start of one of the scariest times ever lived on the planet; the world started to be aware of how brutal the disease was.



On one side, the Chinese doctor who tried to warn the world about the virus had died, and the world began to notice that the Chinese authorities did not handle the situation correctly, hid the virus's risk and underestimated it. On the other side, a cruise named The Princess, trying to ship in Japan with more than 3.600 people on board was declared to be in quarantine; every passenger was screened, and the number of positives was 218, being, at the moment, the place with the highest amount of infected people outside of China.



The virus had a name, the WHO (World Health Organization) proposed the name COVID-19 composed by Coronavirus as the name of the virus and 19 of 2019 when the virus started. At that moment, 24 countries had 393 confirmed cases, France announced its first death, and China had 1.113 deaths, with around 45.000 confirmed cases. South Korea shut down kindergartens, nursing homes

and stopped public rallies; Iran reported four deaths, and Europe faced the most significant number of outbreaks. Italy was the one with the most significant amount of people infected; as a result, schools and public spaces closed.

The number of cases continued to rise in Europe, there were 14 countries with confirmed cases; Germany 60, France 57, and England, Switzerland, Belarus, Estonia, and Lithuania reported their first cases. Iran was the new focus of contagion because its borders crossed millions of pilgrims, workers, and others. At that point, Africa and Latin America had just reported their first cases, and the USA reported its first official death; as a response, Trump closed its borders to travellers coming from Europe.

The world changed a lot more on March, the USA recommended no meetings with more than 50 people, many other countries adopted that decision along the globe, and it was the beginning of many to stop the outbreak.



Figure 6

But what were the consequences of a situation like COVID-19? No one was ever prepared for big changes happening suddenly. It is as simple as thinking that a person who smokes won't be able to change overnight. Those days, everyone was living through a change of lifestyle that was forced into us due to COVID-19. That was not a common virus, it created a large amount of panic, and because of people's ignorance, it got to spread all around the world. Despite whose fault it was, we were all in that together, regardless of the social status or how much each one made a month, the Coronavirus attacked without discriminating race, ethnicity, religion. Many people said that it was the worst thing ever lived and panicked because they were afraid to die, which was completely normal, although not smart. Poor humans, the fear was not their best friend at the time.

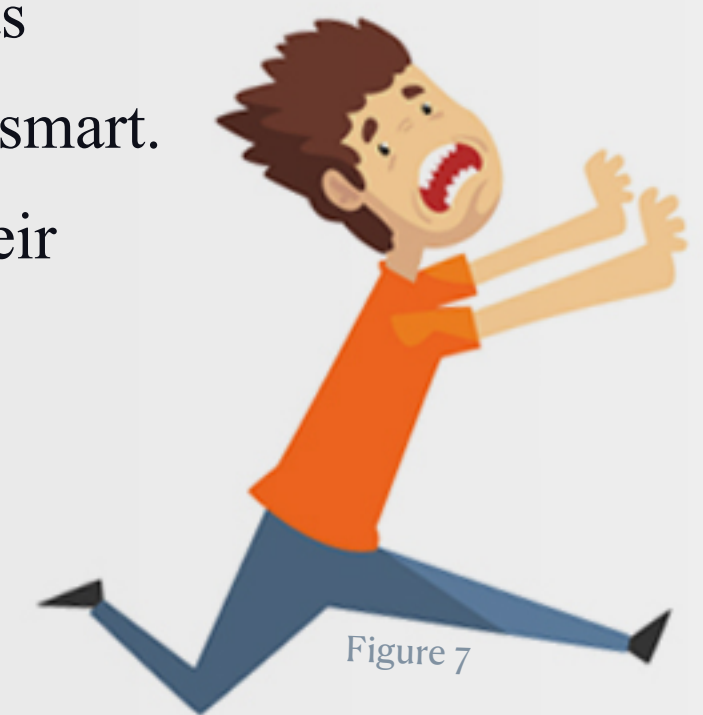


Figure 7



Figure 8

The way I saw it, people either stayed on the negative side of things and make their life a lot worse than it should be, or you focused on the bright side of that and looked at the amount of spare time we had. At that time, we had meetings with our families a lot more than we did before the quarantine, which brought all the families together. –But that is the same thing everyone knows granny– Exclaimed Claire with energy– the essential thing in life is to spend time with the family. –Yes, darling, we know that now, but at that time, humanity had set aside the value of family, people cared more about material things than about nourishing the spirit and everything you and I know today.

Since that started, every Saturday, grandpa, your father and me went out to take a walk and leave the house for a while, where we saw two things. First, it was sad to notice how all that had to happen for us to start doing that, we had to wait until pandemic forced us to stay home to actually realize how much we liked being outside and second that we could finally have these kind of times together, which without the lockdown wouldn't be possible.

It was fascinating to go outside and look at the sky and get a feeling of relief since we saw how the pollution decreased, and the sky was clearer to the point that we could see the CN Tower from Markham the city where we lived at that moment. On the other hand, it was also disappointing once you get to the realization that all this happened not because we started being conscious as a community but because we were made to stay home to slow down the spread of the virus. It was sad thinking about that because many people weren't aware of the effect human beings were having on

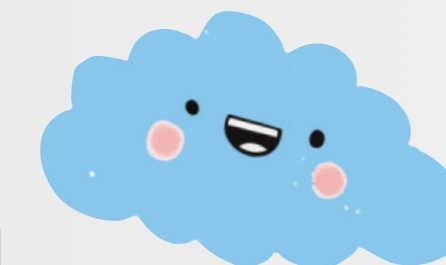


Figure 9

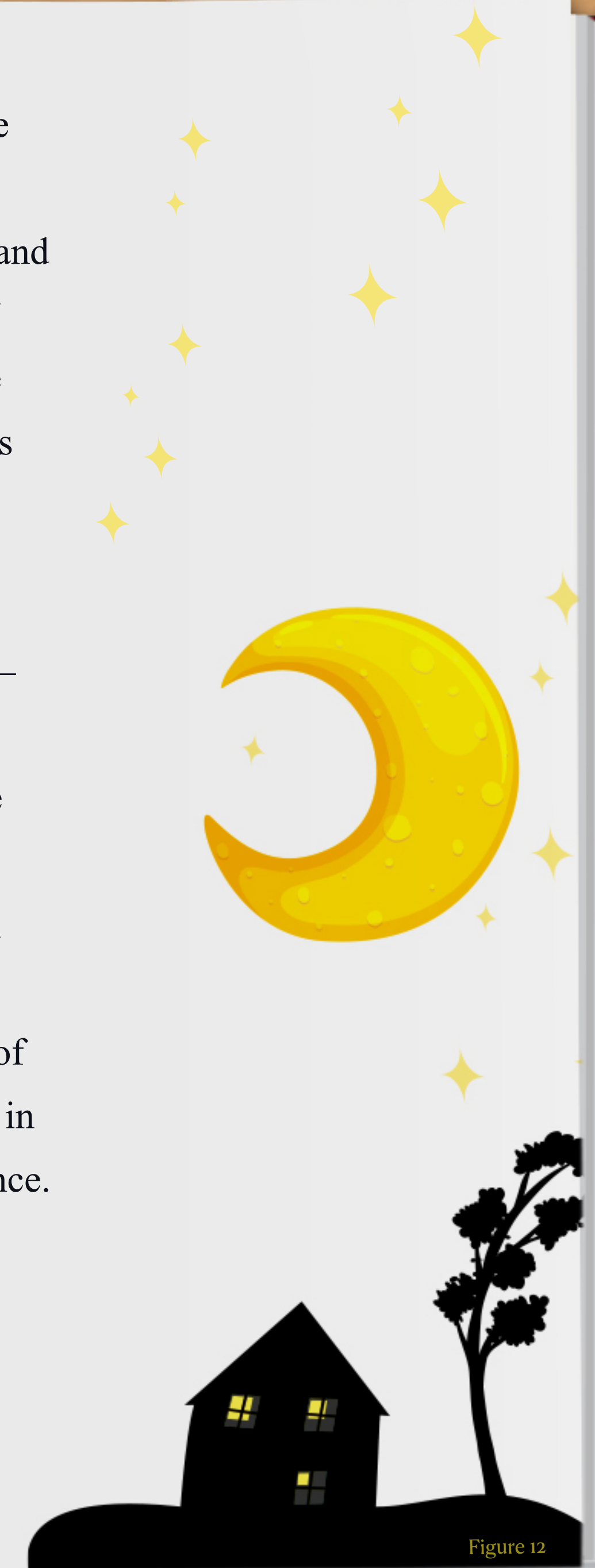
the environment, and the impact this was going to have on the future. Many wild animals reappeared in cities, fields greened, and oceans cleared. Unfortunately, many of these animals no longer exist today, but for us, it was a triumph in 2020 to have rescued them from extinction for a few more years.

It was ironic to see the behaviour everyone had since quarantine started. Before that, no one was ever serious about washing their hands, because until that we weren't aware of how important this is to avoid the spread of diseases and hygiene. It was funny how people were overreacting because of that, to the point that you could see people with hazmat suits riding the subway or even an Uber. People panicked about that, they started panic shopping and being selfish. That should had been a time of union where we should have worked as a team, and it was sad seeing people acting that way.



The virus changed the way we see the world forever, not just as individuals but as a community, and it affected the way we behave. If you think about that, you can see the difference in people's routines and think that was just the beginning of the quarantine.

–What a great story grandma–
Claire said, too bad, my brother missed more than half. Could we repeat it some other time? –Of course, my little girl, we can talk about this again at another time, and I will also tell you the story of how that virus changed our lives in a better way and it was The Chance.



REFERENCES



Bryson Taylor, D. (2020, April 14). The New York Times. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/article/coronavirus-timeline.html>

Schumaker, E. (2020, April 09). abcNews. Retrieved from <https://abcnews.go.com/Health/timeline-coronavirus-started/story?id=69435165>: (Bryson Taylor, 2020)

Cover image references:

Yopriceville, (2008). Wood Texture Background. Retrieved from https://gallery.yopriceville.com/Backgrounds/Wood_Texture_Background#.XpzHEy-z2L4

Kazyavka, (2010). Blank of open book with cover on white background vector image. Retrieved from <https://www.vectorstock.com/royalty-free-vector/blank-book-cover-template-on-white-background-vector-14872727>

Flaticon Free ©, (2017). History free icon. Retrieved from https://www.flaticon.com/free-icon/history_1183858?term=feather%20pen&page=1&position=5

Photo HDX, (2015). Red leather texture background. Retrieved from <https://www.photohdx.com/pic-291/red-leather-texture-background>

Figures:

Figure 1. Freepik.com, (2019). Children playing doing activities. Retrieved from <https://bit.ly/2VKEGZQ>

Figure 2. Freepik.com, (2017). People watching TV. Retrieved from <https://bit.ly/3eFISLJ>

Figure 3. Lisa, (2020). Wash post writers group. Covid-19. Retrieved from <https://bit.ly/3alhOha>

Figure 4. Freepik.com, (2019). Children sickness. Retrieved from <https://bit.ly/3czyxiy>

Figure 5. Freepik.com, (2019). Girl and many virus. Retrieved from <https://bit.ly/2VKIVOH>

Figure 6. Ominaesi, Dreamstime (2019). Heat Thermometer Ice Bag Ecology Sick Cold Sad Suffer Emotion Nature Earth Globe. Dre Retried from <https://bit.ly/2KeyWL4>

Figure 7. Topvectors, (2018). Scared and panicked young man. Retrieved from <https://bit.ly/2KjfcWM>

Figure 8. Keshet, A, (2020). Little girl having a video chat with her grandmother online from distance Retrieved from <https://adobe.ly/2XQhIRp>

Figure 9. Freepik.com, (2019). Cute weather set. Retrieved from <https://bit.ly/34MtZCu>

Figure 10-11. Dualororua, (2018). Cartoon kudu antelope. Retrieved from <https://bit.ly/2VKZiti>

Figure 12. Freepik.com, (2019). Scene with house trees. Retrieved from <https://bit.ly/2VFsvWF>



THE CHANCE

Martha Fonseca