

Jeremy Jacobs and the Outbreak

By: Joe Heer

It was the Wednesday before March Break, Jeremy Jacobs couldn't stop dreaming of his upcoming trip to his favourite place, the **WATERPARK!!!!!!**

To start the day, Jeremy was excited when his bell work was to write about their plans for March Break. He quickly grabbed his pencil, explaining how he planned to float gingerly through the lazy river moving his head in and around the water flowing through fountains. Jeremy detailed his plan to shoot hoops with his family, dialing shots from long range.

In the middle of solving a Math problem, Jeremy became lost in thought. He pictured himself yelling and screaming as he meandered down his favourite water slides the "DARK" slides on a tube. Jeremy could feel his tube rock back and forth, as he squeezes the handle harder and leans back. Just then his teacher asks "Jeremy, what's the answer?" Jeremy gave a quick random answer and then was lost in his thoughts again.

At lunch time, Jeremy practiced rolling snowballs across the field, hoping this would be the time he would beat his Dad in the arcade ski ball, winning him the most tickets.

Jeremy continued to dream about his favourite place, these thoughts didn't stop at school but continued when he was at home too. Jeremy's parents were anxiously listening to news stories about a virus pandemic, but Jeremy was unaware of his surroundings. Jeremy made lists of what he was planning to bring. He planned when he was going to do each of his favourite activities and how he

was going to convince his family to do what he wanted. Jeremy made countdown chains and drew pictures of himself at the waterpark.

All of a sudden Jeremy heard, "People are to avoid travelling to other areas and avoid large crowds" expressed by the news broadcaster. Jeremy thought he had heard wrong. He quickly chimed to his Dad, "Dad, what's that they just said?" "Jeremy they are saying we shouldn't travel away from home or be around lots of people" replied his Dad. "Moookmmmmmm!!!! Dad is teasing me again," Jeremy shouted. Jeremy's Mom had to reluctantly explain "Jeremy, your Dad, ummm... He's actually telling the truth! Since this virus is spreading so quickly, they don't want us to travel or be around other people."

Jeremy was lost for words. He ran right to his room and began relieving his frustrations. Stuffedies were thrown across the room. His waterpark pictures were torn into small pieces and chucked all around like it was snowing. Jeremy thought it was the end of the world.

Jeremy's state didn't end quickly. He had been dreaming of the waterpark for so long. He was just ANGRY! Overtime, his anger turned into fear as he was beginning to contemplate the impacts the virus might have. "What if I get it?" "What if school is closed?" "Do we have enough food?" "What if we can't leave the house?"

Jeremy convinced his parents to take him to the grocery store to stock up on supplies. They saw people fighting over toilet people. Jeremy couldn't believe the lines to checkout went from one end to the store to the other. Every where he looked, Jeremy noticed people rushing, jumping in front of other people, grabbing random supplies, taking cover when they heard people cough or sneeze. Jeremy was beginning to think he was in a nightmare.

Although, Jeremy began to become fearful again he also was filled with some hope. He turned to talk to his Mom and saw a young person grabbing heavy

supplies for an elderly woman. When Jeremy turned the other direction, he saw a person picking up the sanitary wipes people had thrown all over the floor. As he continued to shop, Jeremy began to notice more and more. He saw some people angry in line, wearing gloves, while others were talking and laughing in the lane down from them. Jeremy noticed employees entering work with a smile on their faces, pretending they were not afraid to touch everything others have already touched. He heard a woman singing along to music as she shopped. Right then and there Jeremy realized he had a decision to make. He could live in fear of the virus and his unanswered questions or he could be aware of his surroundings, have hope and continue to live his life in the way he knew he should.

Jeremy knows that although he is unable to attend the waterpark this March Break, his time to be at his favourite place will come. When it does, all of the suspense and waiting will make it even more enjoyable.