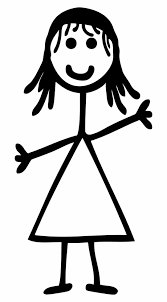
**TRUDY**

**JONES**

*BRANNAGH CULLEN*

Illustration 1: ME TRUDY JONES

29/02/20 SATURDAY

I made my confirmation today! I'm starting this diary that my godmother gave to me. My name's Trudy Jones. I'm 12 years old. My family have been very unlucky when it comes to health. Diabetes, asthma, heart disease-everyone has something wrong. Everyone that is, except for me. I've heard talk about this Coronavirus. I do hope that it won't come to Ireland. If someone in my family got it it would mean almost certain death. I already worry myself sick about the flu. We definitely don't need a second illness that could kill one of us.

01/3/20 SUNDAY

The Coronavirus is in Ireland! I'm terrified. Suppose Mum and Dad got it? I'd be an orphan. Or if any of my siblings. caught it? I couldn't bear to lose one of them.

02/3/20 MONDAY

I'm in disgrace. In school I saw someone picking their nose. What a way to spread the Coronavirus! I don't know what came over me. I don't do this when it's flu season but I... might... have... well... punched him. Hard. On the nose. Mid-pick. I told Mum that he won't go round picking his nose now but she has grounded me anyway. I almost got expelled but Mum explained to the teacher about our... predicament. I didn't even get the slightest punishment at school! Let's just say... my Mum has a way with words!

03/3/20 TUESDAY

More and more cases. There was one only a few streets away from us. I'm petrified. Mum's going shopping. I do hope she's taking it seriously.

04/3/20 WEDNESDAY

Today I heard about more and more cases. When will this end?

05/3/20 THURSDAY

The government are saying that the schools won't shut down. I don't believe them. The schools should have shut down the moment a case was found. The government are too afraid to do *anything*!

06/3/20 FRIDAY

Friday today. I got home from school. I just found out something that's really scary! There are 3 cases of Coronavirus near us. I'm seriously worried about my family.

07/3/20 SATURDAY

WEEKEND!!

08/3/20 SUNDAY

Awful news. The person I was sitting beside in school, Amanda... has gone down with Coronavirus. I don't have any symptoms, but I almost certainly have it. I'm so... scared, horrified,petrified, none of them can describe my terror. I was being so careful NOT to bring this dangerous virus home... but I didn't know that there could be a two week incubation period with NO symptoms! Our school has shutdown. We'll be sent all our books over the course of the week.

09/3/20 MONDAY

Our books haven't arrived yet so we didn't have any work to do today. I've made up my mind. I can't put my family in danger. I'm leaving my home tonight.

10/3/20 TUESDAY

I did it. I couldn't pack supplies because I might have touched something and inadvertently passed the virus to my family. I did write a note, however, and stuck it on the door. During the last few days I've been in my room to avoid making anyone in my family sick but my siblings keep coming in to see me. I have had to climb out the window so I don't leave the virus hanging around the house.

11/3/20 WEDNESDAY

I'm so hungry and lonely. I've just heard a rumour that

Coronavirus has claimed its first life! I long to ask Mum if it's true but I can't. I do miss my family.

12/3/20 THURSDAY

The schools have officially shut down today but of course I haven't been in school for the past week!!!!!!

13/3/20 FRIDAY

Today I had the shock of my life. I saw Amanda (the girl who I was *sitting with* in class) walking down the road with a couple of friends. Are you shocked that she is out when everyone is supposed to stay at home? Well flash back to 8/3/20 SUNDAY. She allegedly has Coronavirus! See what I mean? I went over to her, well two metres away from her, and we started talking. She said that she'd *pretended* to have it. When the results arrived by post to her house (saying that she was perfectly fine she), stole the document and made another one, saying that she had tested positive. A total fabrication Amanda hated school. When the shutdown didn't happen quickly enough, she took it into her own hands to force her school to close. I couldn't believe it! I wanted to slap her. Her actions may have ruined my entire life!! I didn't say as much but I hate, hate, hate her!!

14/3/20 SATURDAY

People aren't taking this seriously. They're queuing outside shops and in big crowds. What was the point of the shutdown? I want to go home but the chances are that I've actually caught it now because I can't wash my hands before I eat. I'm so cold. I thought running away would be an adventure but all there is is hunger, cold and longing.

15/3/20 SUNDAY

Today a woman passed by me and asked me why I wasn't at home. The moment she said the words “home,” I burst into tears. The woman scurried past glancing over her shoulder to stare at the strange kid bawling her eyes out.

16/3/20 MONDAY

It turns out that that the woman from yesterday is married to a Garda. She told him about the little girl living on the street without a single adult to look after her. As he's a Garda, he still had to work so he came and told me to get in his car. I told him the whole story. I started sobbing while I was telling it so I gave him this to read. He called my family to tell them that he'd found me. Then he took me to see the doctor to check if I had it with no symptoms. Apparently many children don't feel sick at all when they have it. The doctor was able to tell me that I was fine immediately after examining me. What a relief!

17/3/20 TUESDAY

I'm reunited with my family!!!!!!! I'm so happy! Mum and Dad were angry at first but they understand why I did it and forgave me. Amanda's parents were notified about their daughter's trickery. They are going to move away after the epidemic. Good riddance!

\* \* \* \* \*

01/9/20 MONDAY

First day back at school. I'd forgotten about this diary but I'm about to finish it. We're back at school months later than planned. They decided to keep everyone in the same class as we were in when we left. What was the point in doing work at home if we're going to do all the work again at school!?!?!