

One of the biggest cities in China is Wuhan and a huge industrial and cultural center. However, much gloomy is the cause of why the city is on everyone's lips. At the end of 2019, Wuhan soon became the source of the dangerous coronavirus that swept the globe.

The first place the virus originated was the seafood market in downtown Wuhan. It was extremely contagious and fast brought the bustling city to its knees. On January 23, 2020, Wuhan was tightly locked to stop the spread of the virus. The lock was in effect for two and a half months.

Famous Chinese author Fang Fang, along with 11 million other Wuhanese, discovered herself clasped in her home. Her quarantine experience was described in a diary she published on the social media platform Sina Weibo.

This summary offers a candid explanation for the beginning of the pandemic, from the original panic of the human-beings to their anger at the government's belated reaction to the little pastimes in between.

## Chapter 1 - Although the crisis was originally mitigated by the state, the quarantine order was shocking.

By many individuals outside of China, the coronavirus outbreak was first heard in February 2020. However, it was known to individuals in Wuhan that something was "on the rise" long before.

One of the largest industrial centers in the country is Wuhan, which is the metropolis of China's Hubei Province. It is also the epicenter of the coronavirus epidemic.

The person who has lived in Wuhan for over 60 years is writer Fang Fang. It was in December 2019 when she heard whispers of a strange new virus - that is, weeks before the rest of the globe discovered it. The information was disseminated as the Chinese media was heavily censored. Especially, videos of the closed Huanan Seafood Market, where the virus first broke out, started to be shared by individuals. In an online post, it was claimed that this new pathogen was associated with previous SARS viruses. However, for a long time, the official line was that individuals have nothing to worry about.

As of January 10, intensive care beds in many hospitals started to be loaded with coronavirus patients. However, who was left in the dark was the people of Wuhan.

Two teams of experts were sent by the government to examine. Wuhan Central Hospital, which is closest to the seafood market, was inspected. Then one of the experts, a press release was made by Dr. Wang describing the virus in eight keywords. It is told that the virus is "not contagious among humans, it's controlled and prevented." This is a tragic mistake.

There has never been any extra research by the media. Alternatively, it followed the government's official assessment of the situation. It was the press that repeatedly repeated Dr. Wang's eight-word statement. Various mass events were recorded uncritically by journalists, such as the government banquet where 40,000 individuals celebrated the New Year in the city.

After this feast, it was revealed by infectious diseases specialist Dr. Zhong Nanshan that the virus could eventually be transferred between humans. Until then, the seriousness of the situation could no longer be concealed by the government. To prevent the spread of the virus, the city was ordered by the authorities to be closed from January 23. It was the quarantine order that came as evidence of their worst fears for many in Wuhan.

What is recalled by the writer is that the panic she felt in the initial few days of closing. She was trapped in her home like the other 11 million Wuhan residents. For weeks she felt a gap due to nothing to do by herself - except to write about his novel experience.

## Chapter 2 - Initially, where the place got in a panic and hopelessness was Wuhan.

It was Fang locked in his apartment on the campus of the Literature and Arts Federation in Wuhan. After 76 days of isolation, his 16-year-old dog was his only friend. And in the social world, Fang Fang's online followers kept her company.

Who is an active user of social media, is Fang. So, when she was suggested by one of her editors to begin recording her quarantine experience, she decided to make it public. She selected to document this on Sina Weibo, the Chinese equivalent of Twitter.

Fang published the diary with a two-day crash on January 25, the initial day of the Chinese New Year. When she finished the blog at the end of March, some of her posts had more than 10 million views.

The beginning days of the quarantine were chaotic and stressful. Usually, the beginning of the Chinese New Year is an intensive and enjoyable time. However, this time the streets of Wuhan were abandoned, and its citizens were horrified as the number of infections continued to increase.

Due to all traffic in Wuhan being closed, patients had to walk to hospitals. And when they came, they returned often; the medical system was full. Also, there was not adequate protection for the doctors. Face masks were drained away in the city. By a friend of Fang, who works at a hospital, Fang was told that many small clinics only received provisions for two or three days, and most were under-staffed.

Dozens of heartbreaking photos and videos surfaced in the first two weeks. While some showed the infected people collapsing on the streets of the city, in others there were statements by doctors and nurses who could not handle it.

However, it was not only the virus that harmed the people of Wuhan. The government's rash response to the epidemic also caused big pain. An online report revealed that a child with special needs starved to death at his home after it was demanded of his father to be quarantined elsewhere. As many peasant and migrant workers in Wuhan could no longer work, but they also could not leave the city. For many, this meant being without meals and a roof.

## Chapter 3 - By people, it began to assist each other fresh and unexpectedly.

The date when the outbreak in Wuhan reached its peak was in early February. The news of more cases and more deaths were heard each day.

However, when the spring sun discovered out and the flowers and trees around the city began to bloom, what Fang felt was that people were starting to be optimistic. Help began raining in. By families and communities, it had been seeking fresh ways to stay connected to hold each other safe and healthy.

Like many other Wuhan citizens, the internet was used by Fang to keep in touch with his friends and family. She trusted online messaging and social media platforms like WeChat and Sina Weibo. What was a way to send news, jokes, and stories was these channels.

Wuhan people have also begun supporting each other in the real, offline globe. By young volunteers, food and provisions were distributed to the elderly residents of their neighborhood. In many societies, shopping groups have been organized to place wholesale grocery orders.

Fang also felt the support of her community as a high-risk old lady. At the initial times of the quarantine, several packs of masks were brought to her from a good friend, which she distributed among her friends and family. It abandoned conventional Chinese medicine because of its neighbors, illnesses, and freshly cooked food.

Fang was also trying to boost people's morale with an online diary. By her, the things of staying positive, gnashing their teeth, and doing military services reminded her readers. By her, also it was said that staying inside and taking care of themselves is the best thing they can do for their citizens.

Things were getting better. Several temporary hospitals have been presented throughout the city. By the government, it has started a novel system of quarantine measures that segregate patients based on their symptoms. Thanks to that, the burden of the paramedics was eased.

Other regions in China and the rest of the world were eventually realizing the position in Wuhan. What was now at their hand was the help. Twenty thousand health workers and countless other volunteers came from all over the country. Trucks of food and medicine were donated by Japan. More than 180,000 face masks were sent by Pittsburgh, Wuhan's sibling city in the US.

And eventually, paramedics could share some good news: Individuals with mild infections were found to recover fast. And for those who are seriously sick, the American medication Remdesivir was offered as a fresh hope. Made by Gilead Sciences that is a pharmaceutical company seemed effective against the virus.

## Chapter 4 - Moreover, after the lockdown, by individuals, asking was begun for answers.

In about three weeks of the lockdown, the whole of the Wuhanese efforts - and all the help outside - appeared to give a result. The infection rate was decreasing down. The death rate of the virus remained stable in about 2 percent of those infected. The number of individuals with acute symptoms was less than used to.

However, the government was determined to keep Wuhan in isolation until the situation was fully contained. On February 17, the governments issued a novel quarantine order; it was even stiffer. Only one person in every household was now permitted to go to the market and it was just once a week.

People started to feel restless now. Also, who had mood fluctuated between optimism, fatigue, depression, and in a raising way anger was Fang.

After the initial shock, Fang and his compatriots found a lot of time to reflect on how the authorities handled the situation. Why did it take so long for authorities to accept the virus was spreading? Who was in charge of the tardiness? The number of questions was too many. The SARS epidemic that occurred in March 2019 and how the government tried to hide this illness from the public was recalled by Fang.

Despite the firing of some low-ranking local officials in Wuhan, no one in the Chinese government has been willing to admit the blame for the mismanagement of the coronavirus and stand out.

Public discontent increased when one of the city's most popular doctors was defeated by the virus on February 6. One of eight paramedics who cautioned individuals about the virus early was Dr. Li Wenliang; he was then quieted by the Chinese government. On the social network site Sina Weibo, Dr. Li's profile page has turned into a crying wall for people's furious and disappointment.

And the virus itself stayed as a puzzle. Only between 30 and 50 percent of people infected with the coronavirus appeared to show any symptoms. However, when they did, the infection often caused perpetual damage or death. Although experts assert the virus is most dangerous for the elderly and individuals with chronic illnesses, many young and healthy people are killed because of it. Due to its erratic and changing nature, it was named a "rogue" virus by scientists.

## Chapter 5 - Fang became the aim of censors and trolls due to her online diary being more famous.

In her online diary, it was spoken freely and critically about the government's response to the pandemic Fang. As a writer, she thought it was not her job to go after officials. Rather, she desired to grapple with her experiences of the circumstance by telling the questions and concerns of the human beings around her.

For instance, when a politician recruited coronavirus patients while singing the Communist Party anthem for a publicity stunt, by Fang, it was questioned whether such party membership demonstrations would truly be a priority during a national crisis.

It was Fang who already knew that talking in China often comes at a price. The book, which was forbidden for criticizing the government's tactic of suppressing parts of Chinese history for political gain, was her novel *A Soft Burial*.

She was also used to having her online posts removed or having her social media accounts temporarily suspended by censors. By Fang, at the time of writing the diary, her Sina Weibo account was blocked for some days. However, rather than sharing posts in private groups on WeChat, the messaging service has overcome the blockade.

Fang's critical diary not only caught the attention of censors but also attracted another group of foes: online trolls. Their attack began when a Weibo user accused Fang of spreading what he said was a "fake" photo: a pile of cell phone images in a crematorium. The phones were taken from individuals who died of the virus and whose bodies were hastily buried. However, the troll persisted that he manipulated the photo to make Fang's circumstance worse than it was. Fang threatened to file suit for libel and the post was deleted by the troll. However, he soon returned - this time with a huge army of trolls.

Posts and articles were published blaming Fang for spreading lies and rumors. By trolls, it complained that she never used full names during writing about her friends. They said it was suspicious. They also blamed Fang for making up tales.

As the quarantine continued, online attacks increased. However, there is no back down for Fang. From a book she once read, she adopted the slogan: "Don't quit the globe in the hands of bastards."

## Chapter 6 - Although the tight lockdown, things took a long time to make better.

The infection rate of the virus started to slow down in early February. However, the real turning point came much later than experts had forecast.

Outside of Hubei, the state where Wuhan is located, only a handful of coronavirus cases were seen, and by February, the infection rate began to decline. However, despite the harsh rape in Hubei and its capital Wuhan, the cases kept going to increase. Sure, the rate of infection had slowed but had not yet been turned.

The delay of the reaction was one reason for the slow pace in Wuhan. Many human-beings who become infected did not receive treatment until it was too late.

Hundreds or even thousands of doctors, nurses, police officers, municipal staff, and volunteers working day and night were at risk. In Wuhan Central Hospital alone, the number of paramedics who had been infected was 200 by mid-February.

During the quarantine, it was heard by Fang from friends and familiars who lost a loved one almost daily. Many elderly professors from Wuhan University, where she graduated,

succumbed to the disease. Occasionally, the whole household was destroyed by the virus-like family of young nurse Liu Fan, her brother, and both her parents.

At times, Fang felt, in her words, that humans "did not have adequate tears to mourn all these deaths."

As the lockdown period got longer, individuals started to worry about the "secondary disasters" the coronavirus could build for the city. For instance, there were economic concerns; severe quarantine meant that many human-beings lost their revenue. The travel ban applied in the region hit peasants and migrant workers the most. Because they had no homes to go to, some of them retreated to closed underground stations.

In her posts, by Fang, both officials and volunteers were called to assist the weakest members of the community. When she discovered that other governments are offering financial aid to citizens, she proposed that the Chinese authorities do something alike. She also called for an "army of therapists" to come to Wuhan after lockdown to alleviate the psychological stress and trauma of the pandemic.

## Chapter 7 - When the lockdown eventually ended, the people of Wuhan were delighted.

By March - about 45-day closing - the situation in Wuhan has developed significantly. Less than 100 new coronavirus cases were seen for the first time on March 7. About 17,000 people stayed in the hospitals; 5,000 of them showed harsh symptoms. However, now all experts admitted that the virus was eventually under control.

Life began to slowly return to the city. First, mobile hospitals were distributed. Then that was disinfected on all the streets. And eventually, public transport began to move again. Even the airport was preparing to open again.

The individuals of Wuhan were delighted at the end of what felt like eternal life in uncertainty. One by one they began returning to work. Fang's co-workers at the Hubei Writers Association also started to return to their projects. Some of the former workplaces have turned into the streets of the city.

However, even when normal life turned back, the government's opinion stayed the same: Practice social distance. Washing hands. Put on a face mask.

There was no novel infection for the initial time in Wuhan on March 19. And that wasn't the only good news that week; The Chinese government eventually accepted to provide financial assistance to low-revenue households.

A few days later, on March 24, Fang's diary ended exactly after 60 entries. The place where the Wuhan people were praised for their courage and persistence during their isolation was in her latest posts. She left the readers with their ultimate opinions.

The crisis was seen as a lesson for China by Fang. The joint fight against the coronavirus has revealed humanity's requirement to work together. The help Wuhan received from the rest of China and abroad deeply affected Fang. But she also felt that the Chinese

government's "hiding" habit and Western governments' arrogance had caused countless casualties.

On April 8, Wuhan officially opened again. When the isolation was lifted, Fang said there were "barely dry eyes in the whole city."

After being trapped at home for 76 days, they were finally able to be resurrected by the people of Wuhan, who were confused with a stressful and violent epidemic.

## Wuhan Diary: Dispatches from the Original Epicenter by Fang Fang Book Review

After the coronavirus outbreak was initially hidden by the Wuhan government, the tight closure of the city shocked residents. It was veteran writer Fang Fang who documented her experience of quarantine in a public online diary in which human-beings shared their panic, hopelessness, and rage during their long and difficult battle with the virus. However, at the same time, the disease finally receded, and it also wrote about the hope and delight of the city dwellers when Wuhan came back to life.

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