



My brother died on Monday, April 6.

He is one of the thousands in New York City who have died from coronavirus. He died at home. He never went to a hospital. He had initially fallen ill with a cold about a month ago. But nobody knew it was coronavirus. Not until after he died.

He was my adopted brother. We did not share biological parents. We chose each other, and our love was as strong as any.

My brother was totally scientific and logical in his approach to life. He went into isolation, in his Manhattan apartment as soon as he had a cold. He did not emerge until his body was taken to the morgue a month later. No one saw him during this time. He lived alone. Given the fears of coronavirus, no one went into his apartment. His meals were delivered by restaurants and he disinfected the packaging before bringing the food, which had been left outside the door by delivery people, into his home.

He was a scientist. Science and the precautions endorsed by government agencies are what he followed. Self quarantine. Cleaning the packaging of food brought into his apartment. Taking his temperature many times during the day to discover that he did not have a fever.

During the last week, he did describe issues that would cause one concern, regardless of the existence

of coronavirus. He began to feel weak. He had no appetite.

He communicated with us via phone and text. No one went into his apartment to know how he actually appeared.

On Thursday, April 2, a cousin who is a physician in Philadelphia became very concerned. They had been texting and talking throughout the ordeal and she was alarmed by the quality of his breathing on the phone. She spoke with a friend who lived in the apartment next to my brother and asked him to call 911.

Within minutes, the EMT's arrived. It is unclear what occurred next. One version is that the EMT's had refused to take him to hospital because he didn't display (enough?) symptoms. Another version is that he refused to go with the EMT's, for reasons that only he would know.

He had a couple of text messages with family and friends on Friday and Saturday.

Then, there were no more texts.

On Monday evening, the Philadelphia cousin's husband, who is also a physician, drove to New York, donned a HAZMAT suit, and entered the apartment. He found the body.

To interject, those who read my op-ed of April 2 could claim that I am trying to beat my own drum to make a case for why we should not be satisfied with the governmentally sanctioned protections from the virus. They would claim that I am sharing this very personal story to defend myself from my detractors. The timeline is wrong. I saw an obvious problem and I wrote about it. At the time that I wrote it, I did not realize that it would have such a personal angle.

I don't write this to call for sympathy. I write it to call for action. Not government actions. We can't pass the buck to government and wait for its solutions. There is not time for commission hearings and the partisan politics that have seeped into all parts of the government. The way that government works it will take far too long for it to respond. I call for each of us to take the actions in our own lives that will impede the spread of this killer.

To save each of our lives. And, given the contagion, to save the lives of others who we might infect without knowing.

To protect yourself, I implore you to trust your common sense. Don't rely on scientific evidence to tell you to cease what anyone recognizes as an obviously threatening behavior. Don't accept that government authorities know all and that if you follow their rules, you'll be fine. Don't accept the self-serving assurances that it is fine to do x, y or z, even if your common sense tells you that something is illogical.