

It's a Thursday night in March and our President Mary Beth Cooper is about to address the entire school on the decisions regarding how to deal with the virus. I'm sitting in my dorm room in International Hall with all my closest friends and the kids who live on our floor. Right next to me on my couch is my friend Tyler, who lives in Seattle Washington. He's in a situation where if they decide to cancel school he's going to have to make some fast decisions regarding how to get home. Few hours earlier the NBA cancelled the rest of its season, so we knew it wasn't looking great for us at school. As we tuned into the online stream of Mary Beth's address everyone in the Zoom was freaking out. People are frantically asking questions, and yelling, and doing who knows what, and there are thousands of people watching the stream. It was very chaotic at the start until Mrs. Cooper started to talk. Then almost immediately an eerie silence took over everyone in the chat and everyone in my room. Nobody was talking and everybody was listening.

She was telling us about how uncertain everything was and what plan of action the school is going to take. The only thing I could think of was this is getting scary. It was like something out of a movie. Mary Beth was speaking very monotone, just talking about how we are now entering a time of major uncertainty. I can only describe it by saying it sounded like all the plans were guesses. Like they had no idea what to do and were just sending all of us home because that's what everyone else is doing. As soon as she said we were going home for an extended break we all knew there was a low chance of coming back at all. And now Tyler had to act. Everyone else in the room was from Massachusetts, or at least some of the surrounding states. But Tyler being from Seattle he had to have his entire room emptied and shipped back to Seattle by the next day. Panic settled in for him and everyone that helped. He was running around asking to borrow people's cars so he could drive to Walmart and get boxes for his things. Or drive to a storage unit that he had to buy to hold all of his stuff because he couldn't fly it all home. Plus he had to try to find a flight home for the next day. Tensions were high. People were screaming at each other, frantically running around to get things done.

I get that only a handful of people had to act like Tyler did but it made everything way more real for all of us. It was like we were being ripped from our normal life just like that. We went from living our normal lives at school, to having to be gone and moved out by the next day. It was a shock. I was scared, I had no idea what was gonna happen and neither did anyone else. Right before Tyler left the next day he asked me and my roommate Ben to keep all the food he had in his room because he couldn't put it in the storage unit and he couldn't take it on the plane. Obviously we said yes and during the whole interaction I couldn't stop thinking about if this was the last time I would see Tyler or even the rest of my friends again.