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My Story with Coronavirus

Eight months ago, during my senior year of high school, when I went home for March break, I never expected that I would not be returning to finish high school in person. At first, my break was fun. I was looking forward to seeing some of my old friends I had not seen in months and having time to relax and forget about classes, assignments, and tests. I had already committed to a college and was ready to finish high school. I had heard about COVID-19 in the news but was not worrying about it at all. I thought it would quickly be fixed and the upcoming months would be normal, but I was not correct at all. I remember wanting to go to a friend's house, but my mom did not want me to go because my friend had recently been on a plane. One day, I heard that a prep school in the area was switching to online classes for a few weeks after their break ended and then resuming in-person after that. That information was quickly shared between my friends, and at first, we never expected our school to do the same, until more schools decided to go online for those weeks.

When my school decided to go online after March break for a couple weeks, we were not too disappointed. I was interested to see how things would be, as I thought it would only be a short time until things went back to normal. I was very wrong. Soon, schools began cancelling in-person classes for the rest of the school year, and we knew it was only a matter of time before it would happen to our school. When we first heard the news that we would finish high school online, we were heartbroken. Some of us had attended the school since middle school

and we could not believe that we would not get any sort of graduation. We wanted to celebrate completing high school after the countless hours of hard work we put into our classes, the meaningful connections we had made with our teachers, and the place we had called our home for many years. We understood why these actions occurred and knew that it was the only chance to stop the pandemic. We all spent the next few weeks quarantining at our own houses, sometimes playing online games or watching some Netflix show online together, but I rarely left my house. My dad works as an oncologist and had to continue working throughout the quarantine. He would go to work while risking being exposed to the virus in order to try and help people fight cancer. I worried every day that he would be exposed and get sick.

After a few weeks, I started to go out infrequently either to get a coffee from a nearby Dunkin' or some fast food. A few days before mother's day, I went out to a local CVS to purchase a card for my mom. I did not tell her where I was going because I wanted it to be a surprise, and I was worried I would get in trouble, but it was for a good reason and I was very safe when I went out. As I arrived at CVS, I did not waste any time and went straight to the card section. What I saw there would change my perception of the pandemic forever. As I looked for a mother's day card, I noticed there was an empty area. All the sympathy cards were sold out. At this time, I did not know of anyone who either had the virus, or died by the virus, and while I was very safe and aware of the situations I was in, I had not been personally affected by it. My perception of the virus changed when I saw the lack of sympathy cards. Many people had reached out to their loved ones who had been severely affected by the virus. They wanted to check in with the people who mean everything to them and show that they care about them. There were not enough cards for everyone to do this. I realized that so many people were

struggling in this time, and there were not enough ways for them to reach out to the ones who need them the most. I purchased a card for my mom quickly, left the store, and went home. While I may not be infected with COVID-19, or have someone close to me who has the virus, I know that millions of people now are struggling for many different reasons in this unpredictable time. Seeing the sympathy cards sold out at CVS, only showed me how much the virus has affected the population, and how much people care about the safety of others.