

October 2, 2019

Dear dad and mom,

If you are reading this letter, then it means that I have been arrested or have died.

I started penning this letter after the protests on the National Day of Republic of China. The aftermath of the events weighs heavily on my heart. 180 protesters have been arrested, some as young as 12 years old. Dozens of protesters are injured. October 1st also marked the first time that a police officer shot live rounds at a protester, which the Police Commissioner defended as “legal and reasonable” actions.

It has been a few weeks since I have joined the protests. When the news of the Extradition Bill was first released, we surrounded ourselves in front of the TV every night, watching as the situation unfolded. You both berated the protesters, saying that their efforts were wasting everyone’s time and disturbed the lives of Hong Kong citizens. I spoke up in support for the protesters who were on the frontlines. We argued back and forth for hours.

As the days went by, our arguments and fights became more and more heated. For the sake of the harmony in our family, we chose to eat our meals in silence. It was a stark contrast to the blaring police sirens, the smashing and shattering pieces of bricks and glass bottles being thrown on the ground, and uproarious chanting and cries of distress from the protesters. The silence was deafening. I felt helpless as I continued watching the protesters risk their lives from the sidelines. It felt like I had lost my voice.

I will never forget the night when you found out that I had become a protester on the frontlines. You demanded that I stop and threatened me. “If you continue to protest, you are no longer a member of this family.” At the time, I thought you were being thick skinned, refusing to understand what the protests stood for. I realize now that you said those harsh words because you did not want to see me get hurt.

That was the last time I saw you.

I have always tried my best to become a person that is worthy in your eyes. At the same time, I also want to become someone that my future family and my children can be proud of. For the city that I grew up in, that I love, and that I have a sense of belonging to, I felt that I must take action to protect not only my future, but our futures.

I imagined what would happen if I came back. Would you welcome me with open arms or refuse to acknowledge me as your only son? Since the events that occurred on October 1st, I am not sure if I will ever get an answer to my question...

Thank you for raising me for the past twenty years. You may think that I am unfilial for leaving you so early. I left before I could fulfill my obligations to you as your only son. While I am gone, please take care of yourselves. Spend the money you set aside for me and use it on yourselves. Get a new bed that does not hurt your back and replace the old floors. Do not forget to take your medicine on time. Eat well.

Until the day we meet again.

- Your son