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Lilting

By Hong Khaou

Mum, are you in?
Come in.
Were you dancing?
Dancing.
Just fooling around.
Sorry I'm late.
I took the bus here.
The flowers look pretty.
What are these flowers called?
Hydrangeas.
They're pretty.
Tell me,
why didn't you drive here?
I like taking the bus.
What's that look for?
You're too nice to him.
What do you mean?
I'm also important.
I'm your mother.
We are family.
Of course you are, Mum.
You're the most important.
Did you bring the CD?
I forgot, I'm sorry.
I've asked you four times.
Sorry.
What's wrong?
Would you like to come for
dinner tomorrow?
Yes, absolutely.
Could you cook?
Sure.
Will your friend be there?
No, he'll be out.
I'm so bored here.
It will take a while before
you make any friends.
Why did you put me in
such a place?
There's no room at my place
and you don't like Richard.
Why can't he stay
with his parents?
He's always asking about you.

Do you know how it feels
to be locked up by your own son?
You're not being locked up.
You have friends
who can visit you.
You can't just discard me whenever
it suits you.
You put me in here
and expect me to get along.
I'm not a pet.
I'm sorry.
It's only temporary.
You know that.
There are these crazy men in here
who keep shouting at me.
What did they say?
I don't understand them.
Idiots, can't tell the difference
between Japanese and Chinese.
What is the difference?
We have nicer eyes,
a lip on our eyelids.
Our eyes are more almond shaped.
I've seen Japanese people with a lip
on their eyelids too.
You're always arguing with me.
How do you know they think
you're Japanese?
See? You're doing it again.
I'm just asking.
I do understand some English.
Like what?
Fuck you very much.
Mum.
Who taught you that?
Taught you that?
I've met someone.
You've made a friend?
He's very handsome.
Who?
He's so charming.
He gives me flowers every day.
How old is he?
I can say anything and

he doesn't answer back.
I can talk rubbish and he still thinks
I'm an exotic beauty.
How did you meet?
Sometimes it feels like
we do understand each other.
How do you... Isn't it difficult?
Kai, I'm over sixty.
I'm not looking for a relationship,
it's just for fun.
Fun?
Nothing has happened.
How long have you known
each other?
Nearly two weeks.
What do you two do together?
We talk.
We kiss.
Oh, my God.
Kissing?
Who kissed who first?
You're so uptight.
Kissing is kissing.
Is he English?
You like pale skin.
Dad was half white.
Your father was Chinese.
Hey, Junn. You OK?
I'm just gonna change the light
bulb for you.
Here we are. See you.
Lilting
Are you alright? Can I help?
I'm looking for a Ms Junn Tan.
Do you know how I can find her?
Yeah, she's probably in her room.
Oh, no, she isn't.
I saw her outside earlier with Alan.
Every day around this time
they meet out there,
spend some time
holding hands and snogging.
- It kills me.
- That's sweet.

Yeah. How do you know Junn?
I'm a friend of her son's, Kai.
I'm sorry.
- I'll take you outside to see her.
- OK.
Alan.
Junn, I've got someone to see you.
Hello, Junn.
Hello.
How are you?
I'm OK. I'm... plodding along.
- Is this your friend?
- She's not deaf.
Sorry.
It's a nice place.
- How's she been?
- She spends her time in her room.
We take them on trips
every few months,
but she doesn't really participate.
There's Casanova here.
They snuggle up
pretty much every day.
- My name's Alan.
- I'm Richard.
How do you know her, then?
I'm a friend.
Does she have any other family?
I used to pull the birds
with this song.
It never failed to turn
their legs to jelly.
You see what I mean?
We came here to give our child
a better life.
My husband said
you'll love this country.
People are so nice,
everything is new and modern.
There will be so much freedom
and choices.
But we ended up shopping
in charity shops and jumble sales.
Even though I couldn't grasp

your way of life,
somehow it clings to my skin,
changing the simple things within,
and returning home feels frightening.
What other countries can
offer free medical care
and clean drinking water?
My husband thought he was in heaven
with so many bookies in one high street.
Five years pass and suddenly
we're English people,
but I'm not English.
Kai.
I hate this place.
How did I end up here?
You smell really nice.
Really?
I've taken care of everything.
We can leave now.
Really, move in with you?
What about your friend Richard?
He has gone.
Even though he's your friend,
I've never liked him.
Don't get angry.
Have you stopped being friends?
Yes.
I'll find new friends.
Why have you put me in
this awful place?
Look at the wallpaper.
Everything in here is suffocating.
I'm sorry, Mum, it's my fault.
I shouldn't have put you in here.
We are leaving now.
Richard has gone?
I can move in with you?
Yes, like you wanted, Mum.
- Are you...
- Richard?
- Yes. Are you Vann?
- Hi. Yeah.
- How you doing?
- Good. How are you?

- Good, thanks.
 - Do you want anything to drink?
- I'd love a coffee, actually.
- Hi. Can I get an Americano, please?
 - Sure.
 - I'll have the same, please.
 - Of course.

Thank so much for coming
at such short notice.

That's OK. I hope I can help.

I can't remember whether
I told you on the phone.
She's the mother of a very dear
friend of mine who died recently
and I felt that...

Well, anyway,
she has met a man, Alan,
and the problem is
they don't have any common language,
so I wanted you
to translate for them.

- I'm sorry.
 - No, don't be.
- I think it'll be lovely and...

- No, I meant...
 - I know. I know what you meant.
- She speaks the four main dialects,
she speaks Mandarin,
Cantonese, Hokkien?
And something else
that I can't remember.
And a bit of Cambodian
and Vietnamese.

- They're Cambodian Chinese.
- Right.

Yeah, she speaks
six languages altogether.

- Apart from English.
- Lazy bitch.
- So selfish.
- Sounds like my mum.

I'm not a professional translator.
I can speak the languages.
Fine.

I'm just grateful that you can help.
I'll try my best.
I wish there was a
shazam for smell.
Have you been sniffing
other people?
No.
Sometimes I come across a certain scent,
I'd like to know what it is.
We should have your mum
over for dim sum.
I can impress her
with my Chinese cooking.
She won't like your cooking.
- Come on, I'm good.
- I know, but she won't admit it.
She hates me.
She doesn't.
She's jealous.
I'm her only child. No one's
good enough for me in her eyes.
You're not good enough for me.
You have to try harder.
Why? Why am I not good enough?
You'll have to stay in the spare room.
We'll have to pretend we're friends.
I know.
I think I've put her in there too soon.
I don't think sheltered accommodation
is good for her.
You should come out to her.
So she can come here
and live with us instead.
Stop doing that.
It's like walking back in time.
That's the idea.
Junn.
Junn, this is Vann.
I was just explaining who I was.
I told her I was your friend.
She asked, how are you?
I'm good. Well, I'm OK.
How's she? How's her health?
She's fine.

She's... so-so.
Shall we sit down and
I can explain to her?
So this is Vann.
Sorry. You've already met.
And she is here
to translate for you and Alan,
so that you can
get to know each other better.
She's surprised you
want to help her.
How does she feel about it?
She doesn't mind.
Can you say to her that I'm sorry
I didn't come and visit her sooner,
but that there was a lot to do
after Kai's death,
a lot of reorganising and so forth.
And obviously I don't speak Mandarin
and she doesn't speak English.
Shall I say that again?
No. I got it.
There's still a lot to organise,
but if she would like to come round
one day when she's free,
she could look through his stuff
and take away what she likes.
Are you giving her the belongings
you no longer want to keep?
No, no, they're not his rejects.
They're his things.
I'm only keeping what...
No, they're Kai's belongings.
She's always free.
You just have to make a date.
OK.
She asked,
why have you come here?
Well...
Well, I wanted to see how you are.
I think Kai...
I was concerned and I...
I wanted to make sure that you're OK
living here without Kai.

She wants to know
where Kai's ashes are.
They're at home.
- She wants to have his ashes.
- No.
- Why not?
- It's just...
You have a house filled with his things.
Why won't you let me have...
her have her son's ashes?
I want to scatter them somewhere,
and I think Kai would like that.
- He was my only child.
- He was my life. He was my hap...
Don't... Don't translate that.
She doesn't know.
She doesn't know
that we were together.
He said Kai was his best friend.
- Bad timing?
- No, no, no. Come and join us.
Alan, this is Vann.
And Vann speaks Mandarin
and Cantonese
and she's going to translate
for you and Junn.
You brought someone
to translate for us?
Yeah.
That's very good of you.
What shall we chat about?
Anything you want.
What's her name?
Oh, no. I know that already.
Actually, I don't, because
we haven't been formally introduced.
How old is she?
Oh, no. That's no good.
Tell her that she looks lovely.
She said thank you.
Did you enjoy Kew Gardens?
No, no, it was a bit boring.
I'm gonna go outside.
She said it's really sweet

that you give her flowers every day.
She appreciates that.
It's my pleasure.
- Do you like gambling?
- Gambling? No, I never gamble.
It's a waste of money.
I'd sooner spend it on wild sex instead.
No, I'm joking. Don't say that.
You didn't say that, did you?
No, I didn't.
No, it's just... I'm a bit nervous.
I feel as though I'm on my first date.
You know what I mean?
I understand.
Just take your time.
What do you do in your spare time?
So you don't mind
continuing with this, then?
Of course not.
- It's beautiful.
- Very romantic.
- What will you do?
- What do you mean?
Will you leave her in the home?
I'm thinking of asking her
to stay at mine for a trial period.
I mean...
Actually, I don't know what I mean.
Do you think it's a bad idea?
I don't know.
Would you come over and translate
for us one weekend?
- Obviously I'd pay you.
- Of course I can.
You're really thinking of living with her?
Do you think I'm mad?
It would drive me mad,
living with my mum.
Fucking suicidal even.
Sui-fucking-cidal.
What can I do?
Leave her in the home.
It's not so bad for her to be in there.
I could learn Mandarin.

She could learn English.

That's not gonna happen.

- Sorry.

- It's all right.

Thank you.

I've been thinking about putting
my mum in a sheltered home.

I've been reading about this place
that's really interesting.

The decor is made to look like
the '50s and '60s
so the elderly can feel younger.

It takes them back
to like a younger, happier time.

I doubt they'll have mid-century
furniture from Cambodia.

Stop being so clever.

Always have to have the last say.

- That's not true.

- It's not just the decor.

They actively encourage them
to help themselves.

I thought it was because
she needed looking after.

See? You're doing it again.

Slight memory loss is not serious.

Her memory loss is not slight.

It's not just the memory loss.

It's not even about her memory.

You know this.

- Are you gunning for a fight?

- No, of course I'm not.

You look so conflicted.

Relax your forehead.

Here.

Relax it there.

Bring her over to stay with us, then.

Are you mad?

That'd be sui-fucking-cidal.

What choice do you have?

How long can you keep this up?

She has to know.

You can't lock her up forever.

I'm not locking her up.

For fuck's sake.
Sorry. I didn't...
I didn't mean that.
I just... I don't know what to say
to you about this any more.
You have my absolute support.
And you know you have to tell her.
If you think about it,
we're constantly coming out to people.
So really you should be good at it.
If only she liked you.
It'd make this a lot easier.
But for some reason
she thinks you're a dick.
You love this dick.
I can't stay too long today, Alan.
OK, we'll just do the best we can.
You have a few hours with me
and then it's back to the flirting
and kissing, I'm afraid.
Goody, goody.
She'd like you to leave.
She feels awkward
with so many people watching her.
OK.
Have fun.
This is just in case I forget.
You know, they're not that important,
but when you leave, I start wondering
whether I'd asked them,
and then I forget to ask them.
Can I ask them?
Ask away.
What's her favourite ice cream flavour?
Chocolate.
That's my favourite too.
We've loads in common.
What does she prefer,
cats or dogs?
- Cats.
- Me too. I love cats.
How long has she been here,
I mean in this country?
Nearly 29 years.

Tell her that she's lovely
and she looks really beautiful
and that she smells
really nice today.
What was that grin there?
She said thank you
and that you have a nice dimple.
I thought so.
She can't keep her hands off it.
Do you have any children?
Two boys, Brian and John.
When was the last time
they visited you?
Not for a while, a long time.
We were never that close.
They were closer to their mother.
Why were you not close to them?
Did you not love them?
Of course I loved them.
I wasn't a very good father.
They couldn't wait to put me in here.
- Do your children not love you?
- I didn't say that. They...
Well, I'm old and clumsy.
It seemed to be
the best solution for everyone.
Less guilt for them to deal with.
Everybody's happy.
I'm happy, they're happy.
Don't you wanna
see your grandchildren?
No.
This isn't going so smoothly.
It's fine.
It's part of the process.
Thank you, Mum.
Tell her I'd like to take her to dinner
a week on Saturday.
I'm... I'm a good cook.
It'll be lasagne.
What are you smiling about now?
Nothing. I told her you'd be cooking
Chinese food for her
and that you're a really good cook.

I said lasagne. I only do lasagne.
She hasn't had Chinese food
in a long time.
- It'll make her feel at home.
- She cooks Chinese food every day.
I'm trying to help you.
Junn doesn't like lasagne.
But I don't do Chinese.
You can order from a takeaway.
- She's thinking of coming, then?
- Yeah.
What do I order?
Sweet and sour thingumabobs,
Shanghai duck, springtime rolls?
No, don't order those.
I'll get the food for you.
You can have the dinner at mine.
Were you dancing?
Just fooling around.
Sorry I'm late.
I took the bus here.
The flowers look pretty.
What are these flowers called?
Hydrangeas.
They're pretty.
Tell me, why didn't you drive here?
I like taking the bus.
What's that look for?
You're too nice to him.
What do you mean?
I'm also important. I'm your mother.
We are family.
Of course you are.
Mum, you're the most important.
Did you bring the CD?
I forgot, I'm sorry.
I've asked you four times.
Sorry.
What's wrong?
Would you like to come for
dinner tomorrow?
Yes, absolutely.
- You alright?
- Yeah.

I just bought you some fruit.
She said thank you.
She asked what you're thinking.
I'm just looking at her room.
Kai described the room to me.
I was just remembering what he said.
Is that Kai?
He was four or five years old.
She thinks he looks really sweet.
This is for you.
It's Kai's ashes.
You should have his ashes.
I'm sorry
that I fought over them with you.
He was my best friend.
She knows. He talks about you.
Did he tell you about me?
Don't say that.
He loved you very much.
He was always trying to find ways
to make your life better.
Why did he put me in here?
It was only meant to be temporary.
Really he wanted you to live with him.
I know.
Then you got in the way.
What does she mean?
Is that what Kai told her?
He wanted us to live together,
but there was no space in your flat.
One of the options, actually,
was to move to another flat
and have you live with us.
Don't say that.
Do you like living here?
That's a silly question.
What's happening?
What did you.. What did you say?
I suggested you could look after her,
that you're practically family
and you care a great deal
for her wellbeing.
She got angry because
I said that you were a good man

and she didn't know what that meant.
She said she doesn't think you two
living together is the answer.
What the fuck?
Why did you do that?
It was going very well.
I'm sorry. I was trying to help.
Good work.
You said you wanted to give it a trial.
Don't you think I should be
part of the conversation?
Of course. It just happened.
It got out of control.
I'm sorry.
Junn?
Is that your husband?
Ask her.
Yeah. Is her husband white?
He's half French.
Cambodian-Chinese French.
When was it taken?
Phnom Penh, 1962.
Have you never been back?
No.
We should go.
This isn't gonna work.
Can you please say to her
that I'm sorry?
I didn't mean to upset her.
You're doing it...
You're doing it again.
Stop hounding me.
She thinks we're together.
Did you tell her that we're not?
- I told her you're gay.
- Vann...
I'm kidding. I'm kidding.
This is what I brought.
- I have those.
- Well, I didn't know, did I?
It's actually really hard to, you know,
cook in someone else's kitchen.
Check you out.
Listen, when you learn to cook as

good as me, then you'll understand.

So what's for dinner tonight?

I thought we could start off

with coriander king prawns

scented with Longjing tea.

Fancy. Followed by?

Ginger pork stir-fry with

a sesame dressing, Richard style.

Nice. And dessert?

- Crème brûlée.

- From a tub?

Organic, fair trade, free range.

Wow. Can't wait.

- They had their first row yesterday.

- What happened?

The usual. Stubbornness. Men.

What did Junn do?

Alan pointed out a contradiction in something Junn had said

and then she got all defensive

and started to criticise him,

finding inconsistencies in him.

So petty.

I would never do something like that.

I'm not sure

how it escalated so quickly.

She said he touches her too much.

It's not funny.

Alan was really embarrassed.

And my presence

just made it worse for him.

Come on,

you're doing such a great job.

That was really tasty.

To us.

- What are we having for mains?

- Pork. Stir-fried pork.

Thank you.

It's so romantic. Nice food.

Thank you.

It doesn't feel very romantic

at the moment. I feel watched.

- Do you mind leaving us?

- But you need me to translate.

No, we can do without.
Can you leave?
Having you watch me eat
feels uncomfortable.
How are they gonna
understand each other now?
They need me.
What are they saying?
I think Alan's saying,
'Petal, I've got a raging hard-on
and only you, pumpkin,
can sort it out.'
Oh, Alan, can I see it?
If you behave yourself, darling,
you can have it for dessert.
You've made a lot of effort tonight.
Thank you.
You know...
...if I were younger,
I'd have ripped your clothes off
and taken you here
right on this table.
You look very handsome.
Gawd knows how many slipped discs
I'm gonna get.
- Shall I clear the table?
- Did you hear all of that?
You shouldn't creep up on people.
It's rude.
I didn't hear anything, Alan.
Yes, you may clear the table.
- Did you have a nice meal?
- Yeah, until you arrived.
- Easy, now.
- Have you got it?
- Got what?
- You know.
What?
I can't pass it to you.
She'll see.
Oh, look.
What is it?
My mistake. I thought I saw a bat.
- Did you just translate that?

- Yes.

Well, clearly there isn't a bat.

- You shouldn't really take that.

- Shush.

Stop whispering.

She can't understand us.

Here, there's only half a tablet in here.

You shouldn't be taking any of it.

It could kill you at your age.

Well, it's only in case,

you know, I...

In case what?

You can't get a Mount Fuji?

She's Cambodian-Chinese.

Now go and get us some coffee.

I'm dead serious. Maybe you should
only take a quarter of it.

What are you two saying?

Do you two need a taxi?

Yes, is it time for us to leave?

It's getting late.

You should be going home.

Thank Richard.

His cooking was very good.

OK, time to go.

I need to sleep. I'm shattered.

Junn said your cooking was fantastic.

I'm glad she enjoyed it.

Maybe she'd like to come over to mine
for supper one night.

Your date's here.

Hi, Junn.

- Hi.

- Hello.

She said dinner the other night
was really lovely.

You helped too, and Richard.

She thinks you should both
get to know each other's bad habits.

Really? OK.

She'd like you

to stop pinching her bum.

What? I don't pinch her bum.

- She says you do it all the time.

- Only gentle squeezes.
Anyway, she started it.
I only do it
because I thought she liked it.
She doesn't like it any more.
Her bum isn't some fruit
you can squeeze whenever you want.
- Now it's your turn.
- What?
Are there any habits
you don't like about Junn?
Yes, her breath smells.
It stinks of garlic.
How come
it never bothered you before?
It did,
but I had no way of telling her.
It's good for the heart.
Well, it may be good for the heart,
but it definitely ain't good
for kissing.
It tastes of rotten cheese.
Actually, it's worse
than rotten cheese.
Your whole body smells of urine.
What?
Why didn't she mention it before?
She tells you every day.
You just don't listen.
What's going on now?
She doesn't want to do this anymore.
She's gonna go wash her mouth
and you should go take a bath.
That was supposed to encourage
more hair to grow.
You'd have one hairy nipple.
That'd look very weird.
I wanna take my mum out the home.
How did it go yesterday?
I tried telling her.
But I couldn't. I bottled out.
My heart was pounding so fast.
But you were gonna tell her.
She blamed you

for making me take the bus.
It's not like she needs
another excuse, is it?
I wanna... I'm gonna
bring her back here and tell her.
If she gets mad, she can't storm off.
She'll be stuck with me.
It'll force us to deal with it.
Really?
You're really gonna do that?
I've done it already.
She's coming round tomorrow tonight.
Can... Can you go out for a walk?
I'll give you a call
when it's finished.
You want me to walk
laps around the block
while you come out to your mum?
- Is that what you're saying?
- Yeah.
It'll be romantic.
I am fucking romantic.
What if she's not OK?
Then you stay in a hotel.
- Fucking hell.
- She has nowhere else to stay.
It'll be OK, won't it?
Of course.
You two are so alike.
Feel this.
I'm shaking.
I might self-combust.
Just do it.
- Don't think any more about it.
- Yeah, yeah, I know, absolutely.
Smell my armpit again.
I miss it when you do that.
Sorry. Hello. Come in, come in.
Hi, Junn.
Come through.
I'd completely forgotten about today.
Right, who wants tea?
Yeah, she'd love a tea.
Can you come to the kitchen with me?

Sure.

Tell her to make herself comfortable.

We'll be back in a moment.

There's some stuff

I need to clear up upstairs.

I'm gonna go and do it now.

Can you tidy the kitchen?

- You want me to clean your kitchen?

- Yeah. Can you?

- Are you serious?

- I'm deadly serious. I'm sorry.

I'll make it up to you.

Please, help me.

- You owe me so much.

- Thank you.

Ah, you have tea.

- Would you like some?

- I'd love some.

What do you think of the place?

It's nice. She's been here before.

Of course you have. I forgot.

- She'd like to see Kai's room.

- Sure.

This is Kai's room.

I just moved in here recently.

This room's bigger

and I needed a bit more space.

She said you moved in here quick.

She'd like some time alone.

Absolutely.

There's this song

that Junn really adores.

Kai said she never gets tired

of listening to it.

He was supposed to take it to her,

but he kept forgetting.

Actually, he had it on him

when he went to see her.

Anyway, I want to...

I want to find that CD.

What's the song called?

And who's the singer?

And why are you whispering?

I have no idea why I'm whispering.

It's a really famous song.
It's a cover.
OK, well, hum it. I might recognise it.
- I don't hum.
- Go on, there's no one listening.
- No.
- I'll ask Junn about it, then.
Don't ask Junn about it.
I want it to be a surprise.
We'll go to one of those music shops
in Chinatown.
I'll recognise it
when I see the cover.
We can ask
for one of her greatest hits album.
- I'm sure the song will be on there.
- I can't remember her name.
Whistle it, then.
- I told you.
- Oh, my God, can't even whistle.
Hey, Junn.
I'm just making a bacon sandwich.
Would you like one?
No, thanks.
She noticed you're frying the bacon
with chopsticks.
She thinks it's lovely.
Yeah. How else do you fry bacon?
I mean,
impossible without chopsticks.
How'd you do it before?
I can't remember.
These... These seem perfect for it.
She said you have a nice home.
Thank you.
Half, well, most of it was Kai...
Most of it was Kai's idea.
She said...
She said she can still smell Kai
in your room.
Me too.
I smell him too.
I think this is the song
that you asked Kai to bring you.

She's been waiting for this CD
for so long.

Kai kept promising that he'd
bring it and he kept on forgetting.
Thank you.

She's decided
she no longer wants to see Alan.

You're joking?

I thought
you were getting along fine.

She said
they're very different people.

Well, that's no surprise.

The differences they've encountered
are too rooted.

Rooted in what?

Ask her, please, to speak to Alan
again and give him a second chance.

He's simply who he is,

I am who I am.

What does that mean?

She can't see herself spending
the rest of her life with him.

She's doing this to punish me.

That's what this is, isn't it?

- Richard.

- Say it.

Why are you doing this?

I'm here to help you.

Do you want to live
the rest of your life here?

You don't need to feel sorry for me,
for her.

- She doesn't need your help.

- You are so damn stubborn.

I'm trying to help you. You're making
me feel like it's my fault.

- What are your true intentions?

- To help you.

- Why are you doing this?

- Stop asking that dumb question.

Doing what?

You've taken away my only,
her only...

Me, her, my? Which is it?
Come on, Vann.
You can't even separate between you
and her now. Whose side are you on?
You've taken away her only family
and now she's stuck
in this awful place.
If you hadn't been
so dependent on Kai,
he would never
have had to put you in here.
What were you doing?
You were piling on pressure.
What fucking differences
can't you work out with Alan?
This is your guilt.
She doesn't wanna be your therapist.
I'm trying to help you. I'm trying to
help you get out of this awful place.
Alan is an old man.
You will break his heart.
If you had adapted to this culture,
then Kai wouldn't have had to
look after every facet of your life.
Honestly, your medication,
your bank details, everything.
You choked him with guilt.
And who's looking after you now? Kai?
No, it's me. I wonder why that is?
That's it, run away.
That's the solution, isn't it?
I'm sorry.
I just fucked it up.
Her one chance of happiness
and I fucking screwed that up.
Fuck.
I just fucking
screwed everything up again.
These are all of Kai's things.
I've probably forgotten something,
but if I come across anything,
I'll send it on to you.
How are things between her and Alan?
She hasn't seen him.

It never bothered me
that she couldn't assimilate
into this culture.
It bothered Kai.
Kai was gay.
I'm his boyfriend.
We've been together for over four years.
And he was going to tell you the last time
that you saw him.
But he got so panicked,
he couldn't do it.
He was afraid that you'd love him less.
Stupid.
So he invited you over for dinner
the next day
and he told me to walk round the block
while he came out to you.
And on his way to get the bus,
he got hit
by that fucking cunt of a driver.
It's pathetic for a mother
to fight for her own son's attention.
I felt so jealous of you.
I can't help but wonder
what would have happened
if I had driven him.
'Cause he... I offered,
but he liked to take the bus.
I know you miss him.
I don't know what to do.
I miss him tremendously.
I didn't strangle Kai with guilt.
It was always there.
You will feel it as your parents age
and so will your children when you age.
These memories are all I have,
I need to keep them vivid
or they'll fade,
like the face of my husband.
Like any mother,
I wanted Kai to be with me.
I want to dwell on these memories
and cry over them because they
comfort me.

Let me tell you something.
Through plenty of crying,
I've learnt to be content
that I won't always be happy,
secure in my loneliness,
hopeful that I will be able to cope.
Every year on Christmas Day
I get very lonely.
An incredible feeling of solitude.
On this day, everything has stood still,
even the trees have stopped rustling,
but I'm still moving, I want to move,
but I have nothing to move to,
and nowhere to go.
The scars beneath my skin
suddenly surface and I get scared.
Scared of being alone.
But you know
tomorrow is another day.
I will carry on with my life.
What's wrong?
Would you like to come for
dinner tomorrow?
Yes, absolutely.
Could you cook?
Sure.