



Love in the time of Covid

30 APR 2020

With travel bans in place due to the global pandemic, it pains us to know that people are separated from their families and friends. However, amidst these challenging times, here are some love letters from our overseas community to their loved ones in Singapore. Love truly knows no distance, and we all hope that the world will be reunited soon. Till then, stay strong everyone!

By SGN

With love from Japan

From: Rachel Leng in Tokyo, Japan

To: Rachel's Mother, Christine Leng, in Singapore

Rachel is a Singaporean who has lived in Tokyo, Japan for the past 3 years where she co-founded an international business consultancy, film, and media production company and leads business development at a Japanese private equity

investment firm. Rachel's parents are both retirees living in Singapore. Her mother's birthday is on the 5th of May.



Rachel and her mother on the day of her birthday in May 2019

Dear Mom,

Last year around this time, I was on a plane traveling to celebrate your birthday and Mother's Day with you. That evening, you were beautiful in your best outfit! You told me that the only gift you wanted was to have the family together on your special day.

How quickly the world has changed. This year, we are unable to travel, and I know you must worry about me being in a foreign country during these difficult times. I'm sorry that I cannot be by your side.

Although we are uncertain where the future may lead, please know that no matter how far apart we are, you will always be in my heart.

I may not say it too often, but through this letter, I just want to tell you how much I love and miss you. Thank you for being the

glue that keeps our family together and for being my guardian angel!

In this ever-changing world, your love is perhaps the only constant.

I can't wait for the next time I can go home and see your eyes light up with joy. Until then, as I'm sitting a country and a sea away from you, may this letter bring a smile to your face. I pray to God to keep you safe and healthy.

Happy Birthday, Mom.

I hope to see you soon.

Your daughter,

Rachel Leng

With love from Indonesia

From: Milton Ng in Jakarta, Indonesia

To: Milton's wife, in Singapore

Milton Ng is a Singapore PR who has been working in Jakarta for the past 24 years with a major Indonesian palm oil company. He shuttles between Singapore and Jakarta every weekend to spend time with his wife and three growing up children. His mother-in-law is currently hospitalized in intensive care, not due to Covid-19.





Milton together with his wife Yin Loo, his 2 daughters, Clarie and Cherie (both based in Europe) and youngest son, Marvin.

Dear Yin Loo,

In this trying time, our usual weekend get-togethers as a family has been disrupted since this pandemic started.

Unfortunately, I can no longer help you with your weekly marketing or send Marvin to his tuition class. I miss all the usual mundane (but fun-to-me) activities that we do together, like our morning walks, and catching up with Clarie and Cherie via FaceTime.

These days in Jakarta, I work from home. There are times I feel lonely yet thankful that all of us are safe. This time also gives me discipline to take care of myself and use this unfortunate circumstance to make sure I come out of it fitter through exercises, improve my basic Mandarin and my cooking skills. Don't worry about me!

We appreciate your effort to ensure mom is so well taken care of in hospital these few weeks. It has taken so much of your time and energy in caring for our mom, but please remember to take care of yourself too. We are all praying for her speedy recovery.

I hope things will go back to normal again. I wished I was there to celebrate my birthday with you in May, but it might be a while till we meet again. Until then, I miss you and the family.

Love,

Milton

With love from the US

From: Wu Jiezhen and Jared Kong, in Boston and Los Angeles respectively

To: Our #WuKongFam family back home in Singapore, especially our mothers!

Jiezhen and her husband Jared are currently living in the US as Jiezhen finishes her Masters Degree at Harvard. Jared is based in Los Angeles and heads up Legal and Business Affairs for Gushcloud International USA.



When the #WuKongFam became official at Jiezhen and Jared's wedding in 2017!

Dear WuKongFam,

While it hasn't been easy being away from family during this time, we are so grateful for the ability to remain connected through regular video calls and daily WhatsApp messages.

The guidance, love and support (along with the memes, jokes and laughter) that we can still exchange with each other, especially in this time, has kept us grounded and connected. Know that we are only a phone call away.

Happy Mother's Day Mom and Mama! We miss you and love you so much.

Love,

JiezhengJared

With love from UK

From: Rebecca Yeo, in London, UK

To: Rebecca's friend, Denise Tan, in Singapore

Rebecca is a London based actress and voice over artist originally from Singapore. Her film credits include Stan and Ollie (Fable Pictures) White Dragon (ITV) and most recently the voice of CHANG in ALIENS III (Audible) among other unannounced video games. Denise Tan is a Singaporean radio DJ, actress, singer and friend whom Rebecca shared the stage with in Dick Lee's 2010 SRT production of Fried Rice Paradise the musical.





Rebecca and Denise at Gardens by the Bay, August 2017

Hello Denise, Nothing beats a buttery, melt in the mouth pineapple tart when you're miles away from Singapore. But when it's injected with *bak kwa*, boxed up with a handwritten note and lands on your doorstep in London, my inner *makan* beast is unleashed. You know.

Flicking through social media and seeing your posts on hawker food '*ta pao*' options, song challenges supporting the local arts scene and Gold 905 shows you're still serving up, I love how even in cyberspace, you bring so much joy to me and those around you. Me here in lockdown, and you there with circuit breaker; our current and surreal state of 'living with low level anxiety and a perpetual state of limbo' so deftly summed up by you. I'm trying to imagine what faces our creative industries moving forward, and that this is currently our new norm. I still have the thermal lunch-bag you gave during our Fried Rice Paradise days, and it waits to be used again once all this is over. When this is over, when I'm back in the motherland, let's celebrate with some *sedap Hokkien Mee* and raise a *kopi* cup to friendship in the time of corona.

Love,

Rebecca

With love from Australia

From: Sarah Tan, in Tasmania, Australia

To: Sarah's family & pet dog Maxy, in Singapore

Sarah is currently studying at the University of Tasmania, Australia. She is doing a medical degree and is in her 5th and final year of university! Her parents and sister are in Singapore, together with her 5 year old doggo, Maxy.



Sarah and Maxy back in Singapore

Dear Dad, Mom, Hannah & Maxy,

I miss all of you and hope you are taking good care of yourselves at home! I miss going on morning walks with mom and Maxy and running errands and having meals together with the rest of the family. It's always great to come home to a home-cooked meal and unwinding over television with all of you.

I'm doing fine in Tassie (even though I definitely miss Singapore's food) so you don't have to worry about me! Please also remember to give Maxy extra hugs and kisses for me 😊

See you all in November!

Love,

Sarah