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School: Furness Horace HS

Dear mom,

I thought a lot about the past we've had with each other, it was pretty harsh right? I don't think you've ever taken the time to understand me, or I've never even thought about sharing my feelings with you. From a child to teenager, there's always been a gap between us, for some reason I just can't get past that gap to get to you. Maybe it's because of my Dad, maybe that might be the reason I don't feel any love from you. I still remember from last year, when we had that huge fight. You said something that hurt me so deep inside, I don't think I will ever forget it. I know the divorce between you and my Dad was harsh, but I'm always here for you. I tried to keep everything to myself so I wouldn't be a burden to you. I try not to pressure you in any way possible. Sometimes it just feels like maybe without me, you'll be happier. From the ages of 7-10, I was bullied in school because I was the new Asian kid. Everytime I went to school, I wished the day would be over already. I talked with teachers to try to fix the problem, but they could only do so much. A few times I wanted to tell you about it. I didn't, because after work you always seemed tired. So I didn't want to bother you. Like that one time, I said "Mom, can we talk for a little bit, I miss having conversations with you." You just looked at me, said nothing and went upstairs. I stood there thinking to myself. "Am I really that annoying to you that you won't even say at least a hi to me." You always tell me the older I get the more I'm a headache to

you. But did you ever think about why I've turned out the way I am? It's gotten worse and worse ever since we moved to Philadelphia. We barely talk anymore, and when we do, we always fight. You're always busy working, and I'm focused on school. There's nothing to talk about between us. Your English is not good, so you can not barely help me with homework. Compared to before, I don't know anything about you personally anymore. One memory that deeply affected me was when I just got home and you were there too. I was so happy to see you and wanted to tell you everything that happened at school. I started the conversation by saying a simple "Hi." You didn't respond. I thought you might have not heard me, but as I moved closer to you. I saw your phone screen. Apparently you were on facetime with your future husband and his kids. If I remember correctly that might have been the happiest smile I've seen on your face. It seemed like you guys were a perfect family and I was just an outsider. I bet you never thought I would be writing to you about this. There came many times when I wanted to confront my feelings to you, but never thought it would be this way. When you asked me: what would I do if you found a soulmate? The truth is, even though I replied, "As long as you're happy," I still feel a little sour on the inside. I really do wish the best for you, but I knew it would turn out like this. I asked you if you were gonna leave me for your "new" family. You said your love for me will never change. Thinking back on it, I still wonder where that love is. You did show a little love before (but not to me). Like the time when we went out for a birthday shopping trip. I thought you remembered about my birthday, but in the end it was just me thinking too much. The moment you asked me which dress to get my step-sisters, I knew exactly that you forgot it was my birthday. Then you wondered why I was feeling depressed the whole day. The only thing you've ever cared about was my grades and education. Well, at least you cared about something, right? I should just be happy with what I have, as long as I know I have a spot in your heart. Enough about me now,

what about you? I mean I've heard some stories from you, but I don't think I've ever truly gotten to know you. What were your childhood dreams? Was your life better before or now? Are you happy with me? Did you ever regret giving birth to me? Okay that was a little TOO deep, but if there's ever a time in the future, I definitely would love getting to know you more. Or before you go back to China. By that time we won't be able to see each other anymore (maybe once every few years). I'll try not to bother you, and let you be happy with your new family. Mom, I know things haven't been as great as we thought they would be. I want you to know, deep inside I love you very much. I thank you so much for helping me become the person I am today, because of you, I learned independence. I learned how to solve things myself. Aren't you proud of me? I'm not that annoying, crying little girl anymore. I learned to keep negative thoughts to myself, and try to be happy everyday like you! We didn't have that many good memories with each other, but there was this one time I truly enjoyed. It's when we went to the water park together. Just the two of us, peace and quiet, sitting in the water, feeling the waves swishing through our bodies, listening to the children cry in cheer! Then I looked over at you (I don't think you noticed), and I thought to myself, I want to capture this moment forever because I knew after that day everything will go back to before. Alright Mom, I know reading this whole letter to you is time consuming because you're probably using a translator right now. Or asking me what this whole thing is about. If I can go back in time, I wish I could change everything, become a better kid for you, and not be as annoying. If I ever did something that made you hate me, tell me. I want to work things out. I don't want us to have a misunderstanding. That's something I would regret for the rest of my life. Now enough about all these cheesy words, I want to talk about my future with you. I feel like it's something you should at least know about me. You know how much I care about my education, and I would do anything to get into a good college. This is my plan,

graduate in 2024, then apply for a college. I'm thinking about going to other states besides here in Pennsylvania. If you aren't gonna be here, there's no point in me staying either. Personally, if you wanted to stay with me in Philly, I would be more than happy to welcome you. But, I know you have another family to look forward to in the future. At least you can accompany them throughout their childhood. I bet they're gonna be very happy. Right now, I'm getting a bit teary but it's okay. We all know I'm an emotional person, so don't worry too much about me! Mom, I love you, and I'm not just saying that. We've had fights, we've cried together, we've been through so much. I hope the best for you in the future. If you ever miss me, just call me, I'm always here. I'll always be your strongest shield, if you ever feel lonely or just want to come back to the U.S. My home is always yours. Again, if we ever have a chance to talk things out, I just wanna say sorry for the things I've done, and the things I've said to you. That I know I shouldn't have said, thank you for giving me a life, and hopefully we can help each other and actually be able to communicate without getting into fights.

From- Your beloved daughter, Eileen Jiang