

“The Dandelion Shall Never Return to the Sea of Flowers”

30.06.2036

Islington

Dear Elio,

Are you doing well, my son? I wonder what you must be feeling right now, as you read this diary I left you. By the time you find these entries, I hope you'll be old enough to read them.

Between 2019-2029, 6 million Hong Kongers seized the opportunity to emigrate to Britain. We were promised open hearts. I was one of those people, fleeing with you from a home I no longer recognised; we were like dandelions riding on the wind, away from our homeland to new fields unknown.

Then the inevitable happened.

A Hong Konger was arrested for the murder of his White British spouse. Almost immediately the media erupted in fury; public outrage followed soon afterwards. In 2034, the Movement for Purity was elected to Government in a shock landslide. Their programme? “The Purification of Britain”.

The prospect of what that entails already frightens me, but now your future is under threat as well. I'm praying to whatever God is out there that fate will at least spare you from harm.

-Dad

31.09.2036

Islington

Dear Elio,

The Movement for Purity has revealed their true colours.

“The grand destiny of our pure Britain, which we all so earnestly seek, will not be realised unless we purge the impure filth that has percolated into our nation's flesh and sinew. I swear in God's name that the Government will segregate the White Man from the Yellow Man, so that the purity of Britons will be spared from contamination.”

These were the words of the Prime Minister. And soon, they will be law.

We Hong Kongers were never welcome here, were we?

-Dad

11.11.2036

Islington

Dear Elio,

My husband left me.

I thought we were meant to be. I thought that love could transcend everything. I thought he was ready to overcome this together with me.

I was wrong.

This morning we were woken up in our Islington flat to the sound of police sirens. Minutes later the Met Police had burst in. It was our turn to submit to Purification. He, being a White man, was to go live in a whites-only enclave in Kensington; I, a migrant from Hong Kong, to a "decontamination facility" in Hounslow.

He made no attempt to resist, despite my pleas. "What about our child?" I begged. "Think about Elio!" No response. He didn't even say goodbye. One glance at me, and he was gone.

They say beauty is only skin deep. I guess xenophobia goes clean to the bone.

I'm sorry, my dear. It's my fault for choosing him. It's my fault that you will have to grow up with only one parent.

-Dad

01.01.2037

Hounslow Facility for the Impure

Dear Elio,

It's been over a month since we moved into the "Hounslow Facility for the Impure". Yes, that's what they call us now. Outside 10 Downing Street, the Prime Minister tells the nation that purity will soon return to Britain. We Impures are to be deported.

What a wonderful way to ring in the New Year.

I met Irene, a mother of five living in the cell next door. She's gone through something similar. Her white husband was sent to a whites-only enclave in Richmond, and wanted to

bring their children with him. They were “contaminated”, the Met Police said, and had to come here to Hounslow with her. The eldest is 7; the youngest 5 weeks old. The idea of them growing up in a colourless cell pains me.

And it hurts even more to know that you are going to grow up that way too.

-Dad

29.02.2037

Hounslow Facility for the Impure

Dear Elio,

I’m writing this as I hold you in my arms, now thin and frail. I honestly can’t remember the last time we’ve been given hot food to eat. The grub they distribute at the facility canteen is a pale imitation of Chinese cooking - it’s tasteless, bland and with the consistency of glue. What cruel mockery.

I’ve heard rumours from others. We don’t have television and don’t get newspapers, so our only sources of information are the few sympathetic guards who smuggle news in. Apparently the Commons have passed legislation allowing the Home Secretary to begin “decontamination”. It’s almost certainly going to become law. Irene asked, “What about the King? Can’t he deny royal assent?”

Foolish question. When push comes to shove, self-preservation will always trump altruism. And in the face of a general public who wants to see us gone by whatever means necessary, the royals can only cave, lest they suffer a similar fate.

I’m just waiting for the facility administrators to tell us the truth now. I’d like it if they did it sooner, actually. That way I won’t have to live in fear any longer.

-Dad

04.03.2037

Hounslow Facility for the Impure

Dear Elio,

They’ve told us the truth. Starting tomorrow, we will be decontaminated in batches. Any outrage was swiftly suppressed by the guards. My fate is sealed now.

But not yours. I know a guard, Eleanor, who pities you. She has agreed to smuggle you out and send you on a plane to America. You’ll be raised by a foster family.

I suppose this is goodbye for now, then.

Tomorrow, Irene and I will lead some other Hong Kongers in rebellion against the administrators. We're hoping that our strength in numbers will overwhelm them. In reality it's a suicidal struggle, but I promised you I'd fight for a better world, didn't I? At least I'm keeping that promise. It's the least I could do.

But don't let me hold you back, my child.

Fly, fly, far away, like a dandelion. That's what we Hong Kongers have always been, and that's why I named you "Elio". We will never return to the sea of flowers that we first blossomed in, but - if God is willing - I hope we meet again on the updraft of a lovelier wind.

-Dad