

Moo Sye Hong

Dear Minh Yung and Fung,

You are good kids, very active children, smart but sometimes a little naughty.

There are a few things I want to tell you:

First, I think you are really smart children. I predict that you will grow up to be professors or doctors.

Second, you really know good food! As we Cantonese say it, “Hou Sek Sek!” (very knowledgeable about eating) So young and already gourmets. I love bringing you out to restaurants. We go on most weekends. I remember Minh’s favourite is Lei Garden’s at CHIJMES, which is also your mom’s school when she was a little girl.

Yung, you are very active, and it is important to remember to keep safe. Once you break your legs, or injure any part of your body, they are never quite the same again.

When I was a little girl, I was active too. Quite a tomboy. Since I was six, I started climbing the fruits trees in my home. I lived in Penang, Kampong Bahru, and we had a large garden - 20 acres. There were hundreds of fruit trees - coconuts, starfruits, mangoes, rambutans... I spent one to two hours up on trees every day. Sometimes alone,

sometimes with friends. There were no adults. I was very lucky that I never met a snake - there were many snakes but somehow they stayed clear of me. I was born in the year of the snake, you know. No one took care of the trees, but they were very healthy - they just seemed to take care of themselves. I stopped climbing trees when I was 13, that was when I came to Singapore.

We don't have a large garden anymore. But I grew a family. And now you are my garden. I hope you grow up to be strong trees too.

MOO SYE HONG, 65

Proud grandmother to Soon Minh, 5, Soon Yung 3 and Soon Fung, nine months.