

Dear Son or Daughter of a Front Line Covid-19 Worker,

I am writing to you to let you know that you are not alone. As the daughter of a firefighter, I have lived for many years with the worry of saying goodbye to my father every time he goes to work – not knowing if I would see him again. I know that I share these concerns with the rest of my family, who also wait anxiously when he is late home – not quite knowing the horror he is dealing with at that time.

I have a vivid imagination and often imagine him making his way into burning buildings, cutting open HGVs on busy motorways, with vehicles speeding by on the unaffected carriageway, or zooming up the hard shoulder because they have somewhere they want to be. I imagine him carrying out the tragic task of recovering bodies from wreckages, or trying to get him and his crew safely out of violent communities. Yes, this last one actually happens – there are people who throw rocks at firefighters while they are trying to carry out their duties!

But now, we have Covid-19 to deal with too. My father is still doing his job, but he has the added risk of not getting too close to comfort the victim for fear of breathing in the air of their screams, not getting too close to look them in the eye to reassure them, or quickly squeeze their bare hand as attempts are made to cut them out. He has to fend off the hugs and hand shake of the rescued victim – all of the things that would have before, helped him keep going.

What he does have though, like your parent, is a team. A crew. A force - with which to carry on. Our parents on the Front Line, are part of a unified squad of well-trained individuals. They know what they are doing, each and every one of them has an important role and each one, supports the others. If one of the squad is in trouble, the rest of the crew step up to help. This is why I know we will be ok, because your parent is ok – they are not just Front Line workers, they are members of a team.

My dad and everyone else working through Covid-19 has a common goal – to get themselves and those they work with, back home safely. Keep this in mind whenever you are worried and know that what you are feeling is shared by others, we understand and we can get through this together.

Yours sincerely,

*AJ*

Leading Cadet Apple-Jane (aged 17)

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