

April 16, 2014

My parents wedding anniversary.

On a day that was supposed to be filled with joy and happiness, how could such a tragedy occur?

Thousands of miles away 476 students were struggling to survive

As a ferry slowly sank into frigid waters.

They were headed for an island off the coast of Korea, looking forward to the overnight trip

With smiling faces,

Laughing with friends.

The students were ordered to stay on board for rescue

While the captain and crew swam to safety.



They texted their parents

Saying final farewells to loved ones

Waiting for help while water started filling up the ferry.

304 students died that day.

304 dreams. 304 hopes. 304 futures.

304 daughters and sons.

On my next visit to Korea,

I laid a white rose in front of a memorial

Filled with pictures framed with flowers of those who were gone,

I watched as others with yellow ribbons on their clothes quietly followed suit.

From that day on, April 16 was not only a day of celebration,

But also a day of mourning to remember the 304 students that died on that fateful day.

