

Kaitie Dong
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Dear Chinatown-International District,

I am sorry
I didn't appreciate you when I was younger.

I was embarrassed of the tacky
White
table cloths at dim sum, and
White
Rice nestled in white China tea cups.

I was embarrassed of
The white round table surrounded by loud chatter,
A special combination of Mandarin, Cantonese, and English,
And the white table cloth
stained with the trail of
Shiu Mais, Chow Mein, and laughter vibrating throughout the room.

All I wanted was
To blend in with the
White
Background.

After years spent in an ivory tower,
I now see my Lau Lau
Sitting at the white tabled clothed round table
Flanked by her family and friends.

The easy way she holds herself,
And the way she greets the servers as old friends,
As she orchestrates ordering for the table.
A community organizer in her own right.

Char Siu Bao and Po Tat
Taste like generations of resilience and hope.
The dance of different languages
It's own language of strength and joy.

Green tea leaves at dim sum
Split by several individuals
Reflects my childhood, my family, my ancestors.
A small understanding of
Our community, our resilience, and
Hope for our future.