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“Dinner’s Ready”: Changing the Narrative

How eating Chinese food became an act of self-love and familial communication.



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As a parody off of The New Yorker magazine covers, I created “The Asian-Americaner” magazine with a cover titled “Dinner’s Ready.” Styling the first page as a magazine cover and this text explanation as a news article represents my transition into expressing the Chinese narrative in *my own way*, not according to the perspective of my white peers or the white-dominated media I consume.

The table filled with food is a reference to all the Chinese foods I used to avoid growing up but have now learned to love, like buns and radish cake. I chose to create the dim-sum meal style because “dim-sum” not only translates to “so close to the heart,” but also is based around community because it is served family-style with huge portions and different dishes to share.

As a restaurant kid, food is the love language my family and I use to connect. The blue and yellow art I created for this parody news article is based on my passage that a bowl of pho, on the left, means to say “I have some good news!” and a bowl of congee, on the right, says “Feel better.” Although I used food as a vehicle to disconnect from my heritage and my family, it later became one of the ways I regained my sense of cultural appreciation and identity. Rather than viewing Chinese food as foreign and odd, as pushed through the white experience, Chinese food represents community, love, and home.