

SAVORING SWEETNESS



BLACK AND BROWN GIRLS STORYTELLING FELLOWSHIP

A project of The Untold Narratives and MENTOR

WHAT SWEETNESS CAN WE SAVOR?

I am terrified of Indonesia dying within me. That I will have nothing to share with my children that my children will love nothing but whispers of their mother's motherland.

As an immigrant, I have become very familiar with the meaning/feelings/essence of temporary. I grew up in an apartment that my family rented and my father was always so concerned about the clutter that my mother and I made from the attempts to keep our memories alive. I was always super sentimental like my mother. I never wanted to get rid of anything, not even old school work (what if I needed to remember how to divide fractions or what if I wanted to look through how my handwriting has evolved over the years?). One of my favorite parts of that old apartment was the bookshelf that we kept photo albums on. I always loved flipping through old photos, especially the pictures of when I was a baby, in Indonesia. I don't remember life in Indonesia, I was only two when I emigrated, so these pictures meant a lot to me...

What are the moments that remind me that my parents were people before they were my parents and that their lives, our lives, are more than physical labor and lost time and exploitation? In the face of all that we have lost, was can we save? What can we celebrate?

I took comfort in photography as proof of existence. Documentation - keeping photographs, journals, mementos, trinkets - has been the only thing that grounds me in permanence. Let us push back against the idea of temporary and the loss of memories. Let us wrestle with the power to immortalize. Let us tell the stories that we fear losing. Let us capture and preserve what we have learned about finding small joys in life, about gratitude, about what/how to carry these lessons into future generations.

This collection of sweets was born out of a desperate feeling to remember.

Nabila
STORYTELLING FELLOW, 2023



JUS ALPUKAT

CREAMY AVOCADO SMOOTHIE

INGREDIENTS:
3 ripe avocados
2 trays ice cubes
1 can sweetened condensed milk
1.5 cup full cream milk
Hershey's chocolate syrup

Place avocado flesh in blender together with ice and milk. Blend until smooth. Pour avocado shake in a glass then drizzle with chocolate syrup and love on top.

*USUALLY SERVED WITH A SIDE OF FRUIT

an avocado smoothie with a drizzle of chocolate syrup in the shape of your initials sealed with a heart, with a side of cut up fruit, is more than just a sweet treat, it is sorry for making you sad, sorry that you had a bad day, sorry that you didn't do as well on your exam as you hoped, sorry you failed your road test, and sorry your instructor was mean, sorry your friend didn't come pick you up even though you made plans, an avocado smoothie with chocolate syrup and a side of fruit is the bandage that can hold your heart tenderly.



MEDICINE

INGREDIENTS:
1 cup hot water
1 lemon
1/2 tsp fresh grated ginger
Honey in a bear shaped bottle

MIX ALL INGREDIENTS TOGETHER IN YOUR FAVORITE MUG FOR SOME SWEET RELIEF

In the year and a half I have been living with my four dearest friends, there has only been one week this house experienced darkness and silence. Last winter, one person's sniffle spread to another's cough and before we knew it, we were all in bed either sweating or shivering, or both, and when we weren't in our own rooms, we were taking turns having LI's with the toilet.

The worst part about being sick for me isn't the stubborn itch in my throat that I can't seem to cough out, or the congestion that forces me to mouth breathe (or what drives me crazier: when the congestion is uneven and I can only breathe out of one nostril), or the pounding headache, or the ache that travels around my body.

THE WORST PART ABOUT BEING SICK IS THE LONELINESS

The worst part about being sick this particular time was hearing everyone else's mom come by to drop off food and medicine and tell them a cold wouldn't last forever. The worst part about being sick this particular time was, well, you can't really deliver soup overseas. I was taking all sorts of over-the-counter pain relief, trying all sorts of DIY home remedies, but the only medicine I truly wanted was my mommy! The healing of this drink isn't the special honey or the fresh ginger-- I actually strongly disagree with ginger.

THE SWEETNESS OF BEING TAKEN CARE OF OVERPOWERS MY DISTASTE FOR GINGER

When my aunt, not by blood but by the magic of chosen family, got word that I wasn't feeling well, she showed up at my doorstep with homemade soup, freshly baked bread, cut up fruits, and a hot water bottle. I was instantly reminded that not all medicine tastes awful. This medicine was the sweetest pill to swallow...

The healing comes from the sweetness of being cared for. Pure love is saturated into every stir of this concoction.



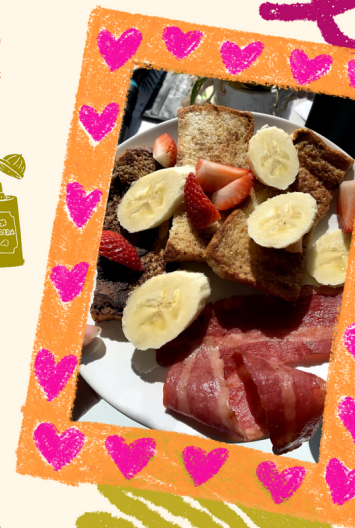
PANCAKE'S INDONESIAN COUSIN

INGREDIENTS:
1 cup all purpose flour
2 eggs
1/2 cup milk
2 tsp melted butter
1/4 tsp salt
1 tsp vanilla extract

I was shocked to find out that crepes are not Indonesian. I learned the recipe from an Indonesian family, and it was the first recipe I ever memorized, so it was a staple in my family. Thus, I deemed crepes Indonesian.

I never learned how to cook because every time I tried to help my mother prepare a meal, she never had the patience to teach me and I never had the patience to learn.

Crepes are more than eggs, flour, milk, and vanilla extract. Crepes are mornings when no one has anywhere else to be. Crepes are the joy of nourishing each other. Crepes are the intimacy of knowing who prefers what toppings. Crepes are the generosity of letting little brother have the last of the whipped cream, even though it's your favorite part. Crepes are patience. Crepes are the decadent yet simple pleasure of being together.



NABILA ANANDIRA

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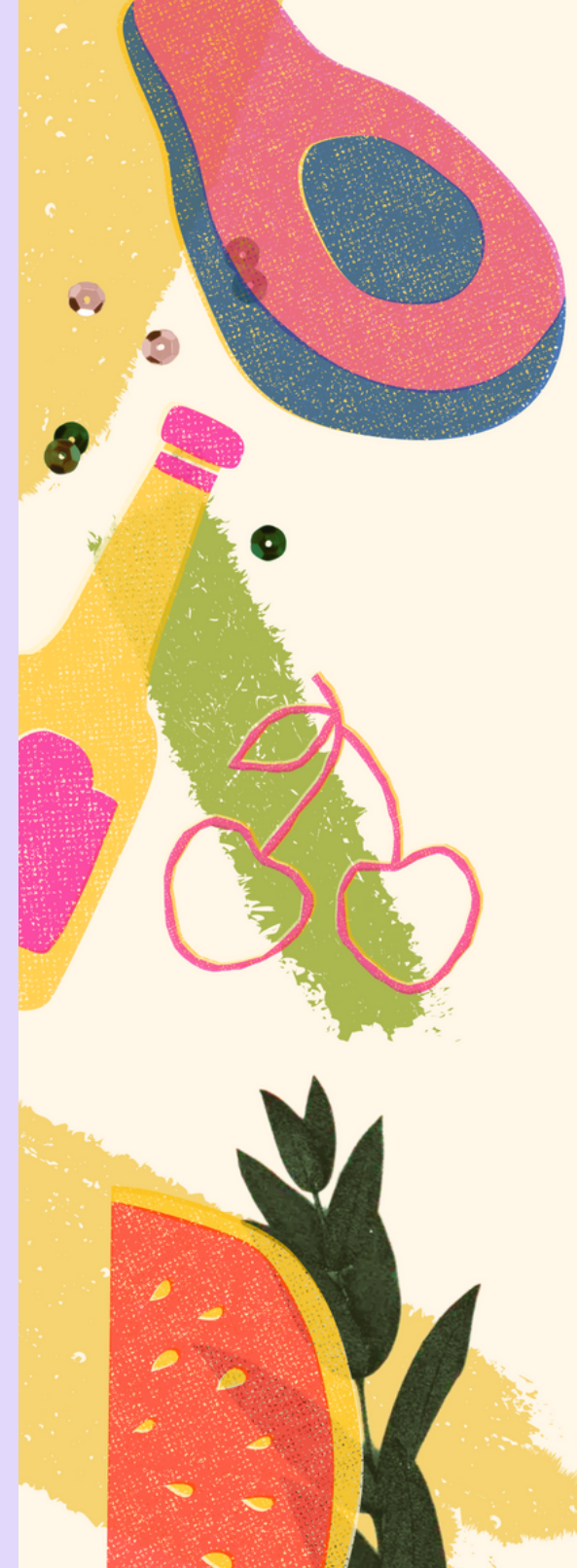
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