

Memorable Birthday

The sun is shining especially early today. I pulled up the blinds and I can feel the gentle heat of the sun greeting me on this new day. I have a familiar feeling about today. The same feeling I have always had on my birthday: the anxiety of the gathering of everyone whom I love, at dinner. I can almost hear the laughter around the table and feel the excitement in the atmosphere.

The adults will prepare the dinner in the kitchen while conversing with each other. Their faint voices are like the chatters of the birds in the morning. The aroma of the food will escape from the kitchen and tease our noses while us kids are around, playing. I sometimes sneak a peek at what is being cooked, let the mist of steam slowly swallow my face. When no one is looking, I'd steal a taste of whatever smells so good. Finally, the dishes are being served. The colorful dishes make the table look like a mosaic. Among the hot, steamy plates of food, there sits the longevity noodles.

The longevity noodles are a must- have on birthdays in my family. Birthdays without the noodles would be like life without oxygen. It is one of the main courses of the meal, along with pot stickers, wontons, and a couple of other traditional dishes. The ritual of having the noodles was around during my grandparent's generation and even their parents' generation. The longevity noodle is symbolic to the long life that we'll have, since noodles are long and skinny. Everyone in my family says that eating it would give you a long life. I never believed that. I always thought of it as good luck to have the noodles there. It's always good to think that you'll live forever on your birthday.

Birthday greetings are always given when we start picking at the noodles with our chopsticks, and we will clink our glasses together for a toast. At that moment, it seems

that the crisp, refreshing sound of the glasses will stay there forever. When we officially start the dinner, we will always thank the chefs for their hard work. Since aunty was the main chef, we will all pay her the best of compliments. The best feeling in the world is having your family members together for dinner. We will laugh and talk till its dawn.

When the guests leave, I will help clean up. We'd throw away the wrapping papers and clean the dishes. I will look over my presents again and admire them some more. Birthdays always leave me wanting for more, but all I can do is wait till the next year.