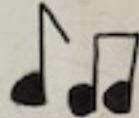


Where I'm From

I'm from passed down stuffed animals, a tall shelf of board games, and walls covered with art from the second grade. I'm from a chaotic, slightly messy, but comfortable home.

I'm from the sound of gentle piano music from the living room, filling the house with the melody of church hymns. I'm from the smell of Vietnamese chicken noodle soup and fried rice floating through the air. It tasted like a burst of savory spice from my dad's homemade curry, and the fresh bite of a vegetable and shrimp spring roll. It looked like a home where people would stay up to ten laughing and talking at the dinner table.

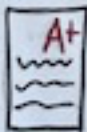


I'm from a small little town named Millbrae, where there are so many hills, its name means "rolling hills". I'm from racing down huge hills on bikes with my siblings, and wearing out the brakes. I'm from a garden full of little trees that grow pomelo, guava, persimmons, lemons, and the avocado tree that has been growing for 6 years without any fruit.

I'm from biking across the Golden Gate Bridge, up mountain trails, and along beaches with my family. I'm from watching movies in my grandparents' living room during Christmas, then eating hot pot stew for dinner. I'm from saying "happy new year" in heavily english-accented Chinese to each of my family members, then receiving a red envelope as a reward.



I'm from the Sunday tradition of driving to Chinatown after church to play at the beach, then eating chinese food for dinner. I'm from birthdays with a homemade box mix cake and a cake from the local Ranch 99 in Skyline Plaza.



I'm from trips during spring break to Italy and Vietnam, and lazy summer days with my cousins in New York. I'm from respecting people around me, putting family first and working hard in school. I'm from helping around the house whenever I can with chores, or helping my little sister with homework.

I'm from San Jose, San Mateo, and Millbrae. I'm from frozen dumplings, frozen pizza, and pasta, dad's noodle soup, and stir fried vegetables.

