我是一根被等待的黄瓜

我是菜园里的第一根黄瓜。五月初，爷爷把我栽进畦里，绑上架竿，跟奶奶说：这根留着，给暑假来的孙子。

六月，孙子真来了。他每天早起蹲到架下看我，我能觉出他的眼睛，从我头顶看到尾巴。他问爷爷：什么时候能摘我？爷爷说：等我头上的花干了、掉了。他点点头，伸出手指比了比我的长短，跟爷爷汇报：今天又长了一指。爷爷说：你天天量它，它天天长给你看。

我头上的花一天比一天干，我自己也急，想快点熟。孙子来得一天比一天早。有一天下雨，他也来了，穿着雨靴站在畦沟边看我，叶子上的水滴到他鼻尖，他不擦。他嘴里念叨着：快干吧，快干吧。我听了想笑，我头上的花，哪能被他念叨干。

花掉的那天早上，他喊：爷爷，花掉了！爷爷过来，说：摘。他伸手拧我，拧不动，爷爷托住他的手，一起咔的一声，我离了藤，断口嫩得出水。

他举着我往院里跑，一路喊：奶奶，黄瓜熟啦！奶奶接过去说拌凉菜。他说：不行，要先分。他把我切成片，端着盘子挨个送：先送爷爷，再送奶奶，再送爸爸妈妈，最后送隔壁王奶奶。

我被人挨个传着，一口一口吃完了。我听见孙子说：我看了它七天呢。爷爷说：园子里长的东西，跟嘴里的东西一样，等一等，都好吃。王奶奶说：这黄瓜脆，明年我还来摘。他们说话的时候，太阳已经照到架竿上，我的藤在地上投下一小片影子。

我是一根黄瓜，可我觉得自己比多数黄瓜活得值：有人天天看我，有人等了我七天，有人把我第一片放到爷爷碗里。架竿上还缠着我的藤，藤上正结第二根。它还不知道，会有个小男孩，明早又来蹲着看它。

I Am a Cucumber That Was Waited For

I am the first cucumber in the garden. In early May Grandpa planted me in the bed and tied me to the frame, saying to Grandma: keep this one for the grandchild who is coming for summer vacation.

In June the grandchild came. Every morning he squatted under the frame to look at me; I could feel his eyes, from my head down to my tail. He asked Grandpa: when can he pick me? Grandpa said: wait until the flower on my head dries and falls. He nodded, held up his fingers against my length, and reported to Grandpa: one finger longer today. Grandpa said: you measure me every day, and I grow for you to see every day.

The flower on my head dried day by day, and I was in a hurry too, wanting to ripen fast. The grandchild came earlier and earlier each day. One rainy day he came as well, in rain boots, standing at the edge of the furrow to look at me; water dripped from a leaf onto his nose, and he did not wipe it. He muttered: dry soon, dry

soon. I wanted to laugh at that: a flower on my head cannot be dried by muttering.

On the morning the flower fell, he shouted: Grandpa, the flower fell! Grandpa came over and said: pick it. He reached out and could not twist me off; Grandpa held his hand, and together we twisted with a snap, and I left the vine, my cut so tender it gave out water.

He held me up and ran into the yard, shouting: Grandma, the cucumber is ripe! Grandma took me and said she would make a cold salad. He said: no, we must share first. He cut me into slices and carried the plate around: first to Grandpa, then to Grandma, then to Mom and Dad, and last to Grandma Wang next door.

I was passed from hand to hand and eaten bite by bite. I heard the grandchild say: I watched it for seven days. Grandpa said: what grows in a garden, like what goes into a mouth, always tastes better after waiting.

I am only a cucumber, yet I think I lived worthier than most: someone looked at me every day, someone waited for me seven days, someone put my first slice into Grandpa bowl. My vine still clings to the frame, and it is bearing a second one. That one does not know yet that a small boy will squat under it again tomorrow morning.