第一次吃芒果的日记

十月十二日 星期六 晴

今天妈妈买菜，带回两个芒果。它们躺在塑料袋里，一个胖一个瘦，皮是青里泛黄的，肚子上有一块块淡青色的小斑点。妈妈把它们放在果盘边上，说放两天再吃，硬的芒果咬不动，还涩。

我围着果盘看它们。芒果的形状像一个大逗号，一头圆一头尖，弯着腰，皮上有细细的纹路，像老人手背上的筋。奶奶说这叫腰芒，我们老家屋后就有一棵芒果树，果子比这两个小，可是更香。我把胖芒果拿在手里掂了掂，比一个鸡蛋重得多，比一个苹果轻一点。它躺在手心，扁扁的一面贴着掌纹，我觉得它像一只睡着的小船。

下午我忍不住捏了一个。表皮滑滑的，摸上去凉，指头按下去有点软，不像苹果那样硬邦邦。我把芒果举到鼻子底下闻，一股又甜又香的气味从蒂头那里钻出来，像蜂蜜混着花。我对妈妈说，这个肯定能吃了。妈妈说，蒂头香了才算熟透，你再按按两边。

晚饭后爸爸决定切芒果。他先把芒果竖着立稳，刀贴着核下去，把两边的大肉片下来，中间剩一个扁扁的核。然后他拿起一半，刀尖在果肉上横竖划格子，划到皮就停，不划破。划完他把皮往外一顶，果肉一块块翻出来，黄澄澄的，像一只张开花瓣的花，又像刺猬背上的刺。我拍手，管这叫切花刀。

我捧着那一半芒果，对着翻出来的果肉咬。果肉是软的，进到嘴里不用怎么嚼就化了，甜，甜里有一点点酸。就是纤维多，吃完满嘴的丝，牙缝里也藏了丝，我用舌头清理了半天。汁水顺着手腕淌，我舔了一口手腕，还是甜的。

妈妈把另一半切成小块，装在玻璃碗里，让我们用牙签扎着吃。弟弟抢第一块，扎歪了，果肉滑到桌上，他捡起来吹吹又吃，逗得全家笑。我慢慢扎，把每一块都转着看一遍再送进嘴里。碗底剩着汁，妈妈兑了点凉开水递给我，说芒果汁最好喝。我仰头喝完，碗底一圈淡黄的印子，像一小片云留在碗底。

瘦的那个芒果我留到明天。我在日记本上写：芒果要按一按，软了才甜；切花刀的芒果好看，也好吃。写完我想了想，又补一句：核上的肉最难啃，可是最甜，爸爸让我啃了。

Diary of My First Mango

October 12, Saturday, sunny

Mom brought home two mangoes with her groceries today. They lay in a plastic bag, one plump and one skinny, their skins green touched with yellow, patches of pale green freckles on their bellies. Mom set them at the edge of the fruit plate and said to wait two days, that a hard mango cannot be bitten and tastes bitter besides.

I circled the fruit plate and studied them. A mango is shaped like a big comma, round at one end, pointed at the other, bending at the waist, with fine lines on its skin like the tendons on an old person's hand. Grandma said this kind is called waist

mango, and behind her old house stood a mango tree whose fruit was smaller than these two but more fragrant. I weighed the plump mango in my hand: much heavier than an egg, a little lighter than an apple. It lay in my palm, its flat side pressed against my palm lines, and I thought it looked like a little boat asleep.

In the afternoon I could not resist and squeezed one. The skin was smooth and cool, and my finger sank in a little, not hard like an apple. I lifted the mango to my nose, and a sweet rich scent came out of the stem end, like honey mixed with flowers. I told Mom this one was surely ready. She said a mango is truly ripe only when its stem end smells sweet, and told me to press both sides as well.

After dinner Dad decided to cut the mango. He stood it upright first, then ran the knife down along the flat stone to take off the two big cheeks of flesh, leaving the flat stone in the middle. Then he took one half and scored the flesh with the knife tip in a grid of crosswise and lengthwise cuts, stopping at the skin so it stayed whole. When he finished he pushed the skin outward, and the flesh flipped up piece by piece, bright yellow, like a flower opening its petals, or like the spines on a hedgehog's back. I clapped and called it the flower cut.

I held that half mango up and bit into the flipped flesh. It was soft, melting in my mouth almost without chewing, sweet with a thread of sour. Only the fibers were many; after eating, my whole mouth was full of strings, and strings hid between my teeth, and my tongue spent a long while cleaning them out. Juice ran down my wrist, and I licked my wrist, and it was still sweet.

Mom cut the other half into small cubes and served them in a glass bowl for us to spear with toothpicks. My little brother grabbed for the first piece, missed, and the flesh slid onto the table; he picked it up, blew on it, and ate it anyway, making the whole family laugh. I speared mine slowly, turning each cube around to look at it before sending it into my mouth. Juice pooled at the bottom of the bowl; Mom topped it with a little cooled boiled water and handed it to me, saying mango juice is the best drink. I tilted my head back and drank it all, and the ring of pale yellow left at the bottom of the bowl looked like a small cloud stranded there.

I saved the skinny mango for tomorrow. In my diary I wrote: press a mango, and only the soft one is sweet; a mango cut with the flower knife looks good and tastes good. Then I thought a moment and added one more line: the meat on the stone is the hardest to gnaw, but it is the sweetest, and Dad let me gnaw it.