

GRUMPY HUNGRY

I'm so hungry I could eat
more than I can chew.

My stomach sounds like distant thunder.
My tongue
is a salivating water slide.

I close my book and go into the kitchen,
ready for dinner but
instead of bowls steaming with rice,
I see Dad hunched over the chopping board.

He looks up and smiles.
"Dinner's nearly ready!"

Nearly?

He's slicing the onions!

I nod and sit at the dining table.
I don't know if I can wait. I'm so hungry.

Now my stomach is a thunderstorm,
and my mouth is a wave pool.

I can't focus.

I feel weak.

What's for dinner?

What's the time?

Dad's late for everything!

I should get him a watch for Christmas.

I'm about to faint, when he interrupts:
"Here you go! Thanks for being patient."

In front of me is a bowl of bibimbap –
white rice topped with sliced zucchini
grated carrot
soft bean sprouts
sautéed mushrooms
brown onion
and a big fried egg.

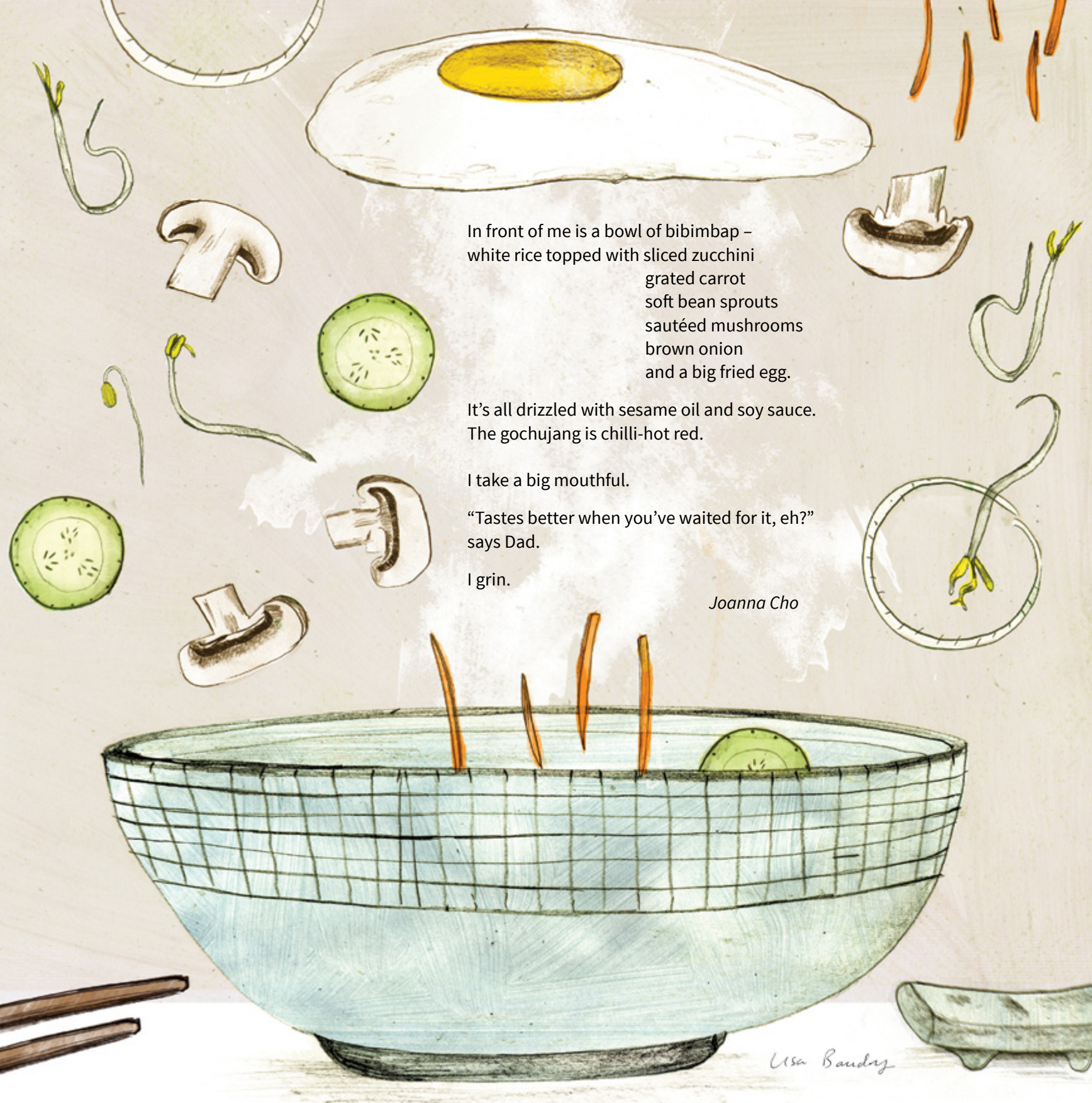
It's all drizzled with sesame oil and soy sauce.
The gochujang is chilli-hot red.

I take a big mouthful.

"Tastes better when you've waited for it, eh?"
says Dad.

I grin.

Joanna Cho



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by Joanna Cho

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