

# 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*

