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The Joyful and Excited Journey of Watching My Beautiful and Spectacular Epiphyllum Flowering

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The Joyful and excited journey of watching my beautiful and spectacular Epiphyllum flowering

Wenling Ma

Epiphyllum (“upon the leaf” in Greek) is a genus of 19 species of epiphytic plants in the cactus family, native to Central America. Its stems are broad and flat, usually with lobbed edges.

The broad-leaved epiphyllum oxypetalum is particularly well-known, famous for its large, white, strongly fragrant flowers that bloom for a single night only which is usually referred as “Queen of the night”.

I had the opportunity to watch epiphyllum oxypetalum bloom five years ago at a friend’s house. She knew I am a kneaded gardener so she gave me a six-inch stem. With the root growing out of the stem, I planted it in the pot.

Now my Epiphyllum starts four-year journey with me. I am told the new epiphyllum will grow flower after three years if it is well taken care of. Last spring (Spring 2014) I moved it out door in late spring. It grew to 4-feet tall before I moved it back inside the house in late September (September 2014). Since then it keeps growing taller and taller, with more leaves, more branches. By the time I moved it out in April this spring (Spring 2015), it is 9-feet tall already with two-tier leaves.



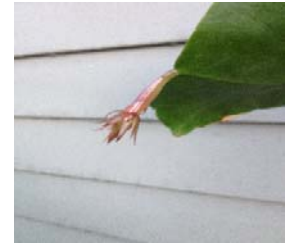
If our ceiling is higher, I expect it would grow even taller.

My hope of seeing it bloom grows as my epiphyllum oxypetalum becomes bigger, taller and stronger. In June, it grows the third tier of leaves on the top of the branch.



Day 1: my Epiphyllum on July 13, 2015

Then suddenly on July 13, 2015, for the first time in my life, I spot two flower buds at each of the edge of the leaves. I am so excited at the time that I think they are going to bloom that night.



Camera is set up and I am up a few times during the night to check if they are flowering. Will they bloom tonight? Neither do I know now it starts a 16-day journey of wondering, observing, hoping, waiting, and watching my Epiphyllum grow and flowering.

Day 2: my Epiphyllum on July 14, 2015

After a few get-delicate Epiphyllum After waking up at outside to see how my don't know at this routine for a bloom tonight? (This night time routine.)



up-to-check during the night, I know the flower buds are not ready to bloom yet. 5:30am in the morning, I directly run Epiphyllum flower buds have changed. (I moment this will become my early morning while.) Wow, they are growing. Will they also starts my get-up-to-check-my-flower

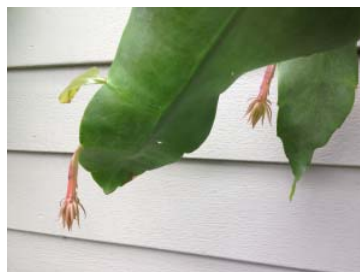
Day 3: my Epiphyllum on July 15, 2015

They are bigger. Will they bloom tonight?



Day 4: my Epiphyllum on July 16, 2015

They are growing longer and ready to bloom yet. How big will they



bigger. Maybe they are not grow?

Day 5: my Epiphyllum on July 17, 2015



They are growing a little bit more.

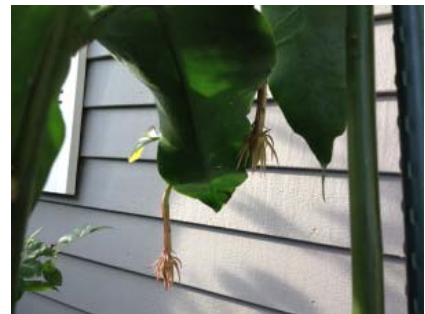
Day 6: my Epiphyllum on July 18, 2015

Now they are big. Will they bloom tonight?



Day 7: my Epiphyllum on July 19, 2015

They are growing more. It seems they keep growing, not ready for blooming yet.



Day 8: my Epiphyllum on July 20, 2015

The head and body of the flower buds keep growing. How long will they grow? Is it time to bloom tonight?



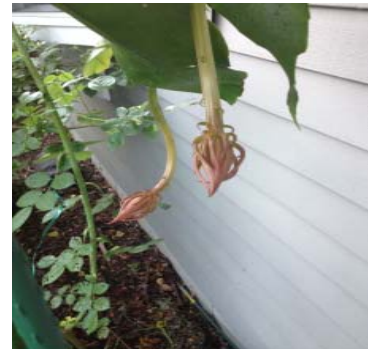
Day 9: my Epiphyllum on July 21, 2015

Look carefully. The body of the left flower bud is starting to curve.



Day 10: my Epiphyllum on July 22, 2015

The flower buds are still growing. The left flower bud curves even more.



Day 11: my Epiphyllum on July 23, 2015



Fantastic! Both the body curves like a hook. Time to bloom, right? Maybe tonight?

Day 12: my Epiphyllum on July 24, 2015

See how they curve! Wait, look carefully, they seem to start to glow. Tonight is the time to bloom, right? Each trip I make to outside at night, I see the curved buds. I have to wait another night. It is getting close.



Day 13: my Epiphyllum on July 25, 2015



The buds' color is changing. My inexperienced mind tells me the flower is growing to bloom tonight.



Day 14: my Epiphyllum on July 26, 2015

After an almost sleepless night, I see the outside petals are opening up in the morning. They are getting closer to bloom. Tonight?!

Day 15 morning: my Epiphyllum on July 27, 2015 morning

It looks like a moon is glowing inside. The petals are opening wider. Tonight is the night. I am sure now. IT IS GOING TO BE TONIGHT.



Day 15 afternoon: my Epiphyllum on July 27, 2015 afternoon

With expectation and excitement, I see my Epiphyllum



glowing, opening after coming home from work.

Do you believe in miracle?
You have to see them in order to believe. Light! camera! tonight!



Day 15 of my Epiphyllum on July 27, 2015 at 5pm



Hold my breath to see the pedals open up in front me.



Day 15 of my Epiphyllum on July 27, 2015 at 6pm

Day 15 of my Epiphyllum on July 27, 2015 at 7pm



Day 15 of my Epiphyllum on July 27, 2015 at 8:50pm

Hold your breath too.
Please do not disturb them.



Can you smell the light fragrant of the flowers?

Day 15 of my
Epiphyllum on July 27,
2015 at 9:20pm





Day 15 of my Epiphyllum on July 27, 2015 at 9:50pm

Amazing has another meaning tonight.



Day 15 of my Epiphyllum on July 27, 2015 at 10pm

Day 15 of my Epiphyllum on July 27, 2015 at 10pm. The left one

Do you notice the fragrant is getting stronger?



Day 15 of my Epiphyllum on July 27, 2015 at 10:20pm.(left)

Day 15 of my Epiphyllum on July 27, 2015 at 10:30pm.(right)

Do you want to dance under the light?





Day 15 of my Epiphyllum on July 27, 2015 at 10:40pm.



Day 15 of my Epiphyllum on July 27, 2015 at 11pm.



Day 15 of my Epiphyllum on July 27, 2015 at 11:30pm.

Into the midnight, entering day 16. I decide I will stay up the night with "the queen of the night".





Day 16 of my Epiphyllum on July 28, 2015 at 12:30am.

Day 16 of my Epiphyllum on July 28, 2015 at 12:30am. the left one



The fragrant of the flowers is so strong. It makes me feel like I am surrounded by fragrant mist.

Thank you, nature!



Day 16 of my Epiphyllum on July 28, 2015 at 1am. Day 16 of my Epiphyllum on July 28, 2015 at 1:30am.



Will they grow bigger? How big can they be?

Day 16 of my Epiphyllum on July 28, 2015 at 2am.(left)

Day 16 of my Epiphyllum on July 28, 2015 at 2:30am.(right)



Day 16 of my Epiphyllum on



July 28, 2015 at 3am.

“Queen of the night” moment: Day 16 of my Epiphyllum on July 28, 2015 at 3:27am
This is the biggest moment I have seen. Thank you, nature, world, and my epiphyllum. The joy and excitement are profound.



Day 16 of my Epiphyllum on July 28, 2015 at 3:27am. -The peak time



Look carefully. See the petals start to close.

Day 16 of my Epiphyllum on July 28, 2015 at 4am.



The petals in the back close in.

Day 16 of my Epiphyllum on July 28, 2015 at 4:30am.



Do they look like the way six, seven clock last night only the pedal is not as strong as before?

Day 16 of my Epiphyllum on July 28, 2015 at 5am.





Day 16 of my Epiphyllum on July 28, 2015 at 5:30am. (left)

Day 16 of my Epiphyllum on July 28, 2015 at 6am. (right)

Good bye, my Epiphyllum. Good morning, world.



Thank you, Epiphyllum for giving me the joy and hope to observe you grow over the 16 days. I will always remember your spectacular 12-hour beauty, energy and fragrance.

Thank you, nature, thank you world, for the profound experience.

I am blessed.

With love,

Wenling