

我渐渐看懂了秦大奶奶

读《草房子》前半部分的时候，我和书里的孩子们一样，讨厌秦大奶奶。

她住在油麻地校园角落的一间小破屋里，头发乱蓬蓬的，背驼得像一张弓。学校一有鸡鸭跑到草地上啄食，她就叉着腰冲出来，嘴里骂骂咧咧，挥着竹竿把鸡鸭撵得满天飞。孩子们靠近她的屋子，她会捡起土块吓唬人。桑桑他们觉得她不可理喻，给她起外号，绕着她的屋子走。我也觉得这是个脾气古怪、专跟人作对的老太太。

可是读着读着，我心里那点讨厌开始松动。乔乔掉进水里那天，谁都没反应过来，是秦大奶奶第一个扑通跳进河中。她水性并不好，在水里扑腾得厉害，却还是死死托住乔乔，把人推向了岸边。孩子们得救了，她自己呛了一肚子水，趴在岸上咳得直不起腰。那一刻她不再是那个凶巴巴的老太太，她只是一个拼了命救孩子的老人。

再后来，就是那个南瓜。学校地里的南瓜熟了一个，滚到了水边，秦大奶奶想去把它捞回来。她那么宝贝学校的庄稼——要知道，她从前可是最恨这块地的主人啊。她伸手去够南瓜，脚下一滑，落进了水里。这一次，她再也没有上来。一个南瓜，在别人眼里什么都不是，在她眼里却是学校的收成，是她守了一辈子的东西。

油麻地的人后来把她的坟迁到了校园边，桑桑他们每次路过都会放轻脚步。我合上书，脸上火辣辣的。我曾经那么轻易地讨厌她，只因为她凶、她怪、她不好看，却没人先去看看她骂声底下藏着什么。她把学校的鸡鸭当庄稼护，把别人的孩子当自家孩子救，把学校的南瓜当命根子守——她骂了一辈子，其实爱了一辈子。

秦大奶奶让我记住一件事：看人不能只看那张凶巴巴的脸。有些人把善良藏得很深，要等到水花溅起来的那一刻，你才看得见。以后再遇到不好相处的人，我不急着讨厌了，我想先等一等，看看水花溅起来的时候，他会做什么。

I Came to Understand Grandma Qin

During the first half of *The Straw House*, I disliked Grandma Qin just as much as the children in the book did.

She lived in a tiny shabby hut in a corner of the Youmadi schoolyard. Her hair was tangled, her back bent like a bow. Whenever chickens or ducks strayed onto the school grass, she would storm out with hands on her hips, cursing, waving a bamboo pole and sending the birds flapping in every direction. If children came near her hut, she would pick up clods of earth to scare them off. Sangsang and the others thought she was unreasonable; they gave her nicknames and detoured around her hut. I too thought she was a foul-tempered old woman who made enemies of everyone.

But as I kept reading, my dislike began to loosen. The day Qiaoqiao fell into the water, nobody knew what to do, and Grandma Qin was the first to plunge into the river with a splash. She was not a strong swimmer; she thrashed badly in the water, yet she

held Qiaoqiao firmly up and pushed the child toward the bank. The child was saved; she herself swallowed a bellyful of water and lay on the bank coughing, unable to straighten her back. In that moment she was no longer the fierce old woman. She was only an old person who risked her life to save a child.

Then came the pumpkin. One ripe pumpkin from the school field rolled to the water's edge, and Grandma Qin went to fish it back. She treasured the school's crops so much—remember, she had once hated the owners of this land more than anyone. She reached for the pumpkin, her foot slipped, and she fell into the water. This time, she never came back up. To others a pumpkin was nothing; to her it was the school's harvest, the thing she had guarded all her life.

Later the people of Youmadi moved her grave to the edge of the schoolyard, and Sangsang and the others slowed their footsteps whenever they passed it. I closed the book with my face burning. I had disliked her so easily, only because she was fierce, strange, and plain-looking, and nobody thought to look beneath her scolding for what it hid. She guarded the school's chickens and ducks as if they were crops, saved other people's children as if they were her own, and treasured the school's pumpkin as her dearest possession—she scolded her whole life, but in fact she loved her whole life.

Grandma Qin taught me one thing: you cannot judge a person by a fierce face alone. Some people hide their kindness very deep, and you only see it when the water splashes up. Next time I meet someone hard to get along with, I will not rush to dislike them. I will wait, and see what they do when the water splashes up.