给爷爷的菜园浇了一夏水，我懂了一个理

暑假第一天，爷爷跟我打了个商量：整个假期的菜园归我浇，他只管翻地和施肥。我拍着胸脯答应了，心想浇水有什么难。没想到这个夏天，菜园给我上了一整学期的课。

头三天我劲头十足，天不亮就爬起来，一瓢一瓢浇得欢。第四天起就懒了：太阳还没出来，被窝暖和，我学着把水往地皮上胡乱泼两下，省下半个钟头回去睡回笼觉。半个月过去，爷爷蹲在地边摸了摸土，什么也没说，只是把歪倒的苗一棵棵扶起来。我心里咯噔一下，知道自己在菜园里糊弄的事被看见了。

爷爷没有骂我，只让我跟他各浇半块地，比一比。他浇得慢，水一瓢一瓢贴着根渗；我图快，水泼在地面，太阳一晒就没了。一个星期后两块地的差别明明白白：他那半块菜叶子厚实发绿，我这半块蔫头耷脑，土硬得锄头下去蹦起土块。爷爷指着地：水骗不了土，土骗不了菜。你糊弄它一天，它记你一天。

从那以后我改了。每天清早浇，浇根，浇透，浇完顺手拔几根草。浇水这件事从苦差变成了习惯，哪天起晚了没浇，心里空落落的，像忘了交作业。傍晚我去地里看，水洇过的土是深色的，菜叶上挂着晚风，一垄一垄站得整齐，我忽然觉得那块地像我的作业本，一笔一笔都不能潦草。

开学前，爷爷的地分给我种的那两垄辣椒结了十几个，红绿相间，爷爷摘下来给我装了一袋带回去。我妈在厨房炒辣椒，我坐在门槛上数袋子里的辣椒，一个一个数得清清楚楚，那是我亲手浇出来的。

更没想到的是，这个习惯不知怎么爬到了我的学习上。以前我写作业也是三天打鱼两天晒网，难的搁一边。那个学期我学着每天清早起来背二十分钟书，像清晨浇水一样雷打不动。期末我的成绩前进了九名。老师找我谈话，问我假期是不是有什么收获，我想起菜园，说：我种了一夏天地，明白了一个理——不管浇菜还是念书，一天一天老老实实的功夫才作数，糊弄它一天，它就记你一天。这个理是爷爷的菜园教的，不要学费，管一辈子。

After a Summer of Watering the Garden I Understood One Truth

On the first day of summer vacation grandpa made a deal with me: the whole garden is yours to water for the vacation, he would only handle digging and fertilizer. I thumped my chest and agreed. How hard can watering be? I did not expect that this summer the garden would give me a full semester of lessons.

For the first three days my energy was tremendous; I got up before dawn and watered scoop by scoop with glee. From the fourth day I grew lazy: the sun was not up, the quilt was warm, so I learned to splash water on the surface carelessly and go back to sleep for half an hour more. Half a month later, grandpa crouched at the edge of the plot, felt the soil, and said nothing, only straightening the leaning seedlings one by one. My heart dropped. I knew my fudging in the garden had been

seen.

Grandpa did not scold me. He simply had each of us water half a plot and compare. He watered slowly, scoop by scoop at the roots where the water sank in. I rushed, splashing water on the surface where the sun took it away. A week later the difference between the two halves was plain: on his side the leaves were thick and green; on mine the plants hung their heads, and the soil was so hard the hoe bounced clods back. Grandpa pointed at the ground: water cannot cheat the soil, and the soil cannot cheat the vegetables. Fake it for one day, and it remembers you for one day.

After that I changed. Every early morning I watered the roots, deep and thorough, then pulled a few weeds on the way back. Watering turned from a chore into a habit; on a day I overslept and missed it, my heart felt empty, like forgetting to hand in homework. In the evening I visited the plot: the soaked soil was dark, evening wind hung on the leaves, and the rows stood straight and tidy. Suddenly the plot felt like my homework notebook, and no stroke in it should be careless.

Before school started, the two rows of chili peppers grandpa let me grow bore over a dozen fruits, red and green mixed. Grandpa picked them and filled a bag for me to take home. While my mother stir-fried the peppers in the kitchen, I sat on the doorstep counting the peppers in the bag, one by one, every one clear in my mind, every one watered by my hands.

What I did not expect was that the habit crept into my schoolwork. Before, I also did homework in bursts, setting hard problems aside. That term I got up each early morning to recite lessons for twenty minutes, as unshakable as morning watering. By finals my rank rose nine places. The teacher asked me whether the vacation had brought me anything. I thought of the garden and said: I farmed a whole summer and learned one truth, whether watering vegetables or studying, only honest day-by-day effort counts; fake it for one day, and it remembers you for one day. This lesson came from grandpa garden, charges no tuition, and lasts a lifetime.