爷爷的草帽飞走了

那年暑假，风说来就来。午后还又热又静，桑叶一动不动，一转眼，一阵风从巷子口冲进来，把晾衣绳上的衣服抽得啪啪响。爷爷坐在门口补鱼篓，头上的草帽就是这么飞起来的，打着旋往前飘，像谁扔出去的大圆盘。

爷爷先站起来，我第二个。草帽贴着田埂滚，被风托起来飘两段，又落地接着滚。我在后面追，手快够着了，风一挑，它又往前滚出半丈。爷爷在我身后喊：别顶着风抓，绕到前头接。我没听懂，绕到上风口，草帽却一头栽进了稻田。

爷爷没等我，已经光脚下了田。他七十岁的人，走了一辈子田埂，还是在泥里打了个趔趄，一只手稳住了身子，另一只手在空中摆了个架势，像在唱戏。我站在田埂上喊爷爷小心，他头也不回，眼睛盯着那顶帽子。

草帽挂在一丛稻秧上，帽檐歪着，像一只掉进绿色里的小窝。爷爷一步一步蹚过去，伸手，又缩回来，招手叫我过去看：帽顶上蹲着一只绿青蛙，鼓着肚皮，一动不动。风把帽子吹进田里，青蛙把它当成了家。

爷爷没有先捡帽子。他两只手拢成碗，把青蛙捧起来，走到田边水口，手一放，青蛙扑通滑进水里，水面铺开一圈圈波纹。他这才捡起帽子，磕掉泥，重新扣回头上，像什么都没发生。

回到家，奶奶看见帽檐上的坑，笑他：帽子遭了大罪了。爷爷拿手里的竹帽敲了敲那个坑，说帽子没坏，就是帽顶沾了泥。当天傍晚，他还戴着这顶有坑的帽子出去看水。

后来整个暑假，风一突然来，我就先抬头看天。我不是看风，我是在找一顶打旋的草帽。草帽没再飞走过，可爷爷在田里摆手的样子、帽顶上鼓肚皮的青蛙，在我心里放了一整个夏天，想起来就拿出来看一眼。

Grandpas Straw Hat Flew Away

That summer, the wind came whenever it liked. In the afternoon the air had been hot and still, mulberry leaves hanging without moving; in the blink of an eye a gust rushed in from the mouth of the alley, making the clothes on the line clap like firecrackers. Grandpa was sitting at the doorway mending a fish basket, and his straw hat flew off his head just like that, spinning as it floated forward, no different from a big disc thrown by someone.

Grandpa was the first to stand up, I was the second. The hat rolled along the field ridge, lifted by the wind for two stretches, then dropped and rolled on. I chased behind it, and when my fingers were about to close on it, another gust sent it rolling half a zhang ahead. Grandpa shouted behind me: do not grab against the wind, go around and meet it. I did not understand, and when I ran around to the windward side, the hat blew straight into the rice paddy.

Grandpa did not wait for me. He was already down in the paddy barefoot. He was seventy that year and had walked field ridges all his life, yet he slipped in the mud, steadied himself with one hand, the other arm striking a pose in the air like an actor on a stage. I stood on the ridge calling for him to be careful, and he did not turn his head once, his eyes fixed on that hat.

The hat was caught by a clump of rice seedlings, its brim tilted, like a small nest fallen into the green. Grandpa waded over step by step, reached out, then drew his hand back, and waved me over to look: on the crown of the hat sat a green frog, puffed up, not moving. The wind had blown the hat into the paddy, and the frog had mistaken it for home.

Grandpa did not lift the hat first. He cupped his hands around the frog, walked to the water edge at the side of the paddy, let go, and the frog slid into the water with a plop while rings spread over the surface. Only then did he pick up the hat, knock off the mud, and set it back on his head as if nothing had happened.

Back home, grandma saw the dent on the brim and laughed, saying the hat had survived a great tribulation. Grandpa tapped the dent with the bamboo hat in his hand, saying the hat was fine, only the crown had a little mud on it. That evening he wore the dented hat out to check the water.

For the rest of that summer, whenever the wind came suddenly, I looked up at the sky first. I was not looking for the wind; I was looking for a straw hat spinning through the air. The hat never flew away again, but the sight of grandpa waving his arms in the paddy and the frog sitting puffed up on the hat stayed with me the whole summer, and I took it out to look whenever I thought of it.