书里那把旧水壶

《爷爷的菜园》里有一段，我读了三遍。书里的爷爷每天傍晚提着一把掉了漆的旧水壶去浇菜，从畦这头走到那头，一瓢一瓢，水只浇在苗根边的土上。孙子问他为什么不从头淋到脚，他说叶子上的水晒了太阳会烧坏叶子，根喝的水，要慢慢喂。爷爷浇完，裤脚全是泥，水壶空了，他就坐在畦边的石头上抽一袋烟。

读到这儿，我放下书，跑到阳台上。阳台上有两个泡沫箱，是我跟爷爷去年春天种的丝瓜。我拿起喷壶浇了一圈，水从叶子上淌下来。我忽然停住，学着书里爷爷的样子，把水对准箱子边的土，慢慢浇。水渗下去，土色变深。那一刻我觉得书里的爷爷就蹲在我旁边。

三年级在乡下，爷爷也这样教过我。他指着丝瓜架说，浇水浇根，做人浇心，嘴上说一百句，不如做一件事给你看。那时我似懂非懂，只顾着玩水管，水滋了爷爷一裤腿，他也不恼，把水管接过去，蹲下，一寸一寸浇。现在我在书里看见一模一样的动作，鼻子有点酸。原来爷爷早就把道理浇在土里了，只是他不说，等我自己长大去认。

书里还写，孙子长大进城，爷爷每次塞给他一袋菜，袋口折两折。我想起每次从爷爷家回来，妈妈后备箱里总有土鸡蛋和一捆小葱，葱根上还带着湿土。我以前嫌菜上有泥，现在明白了，那点泥是爷爷的手碰过的地方。这本书让我认出一件事：爱可以不说话。书里的爷爷没讲过一句想孙子，他的想念全在傍晚那把水壶里，一瓢一瓢，浇在根上。我想，等丝瓜结了瓜，我摘一根最长的，坐班车给爷爷送去。让他也尝尝，他浇大的东西，又回到了他手上。

That Old Watering Can in the Book

There is a passage in the book The Garden of Grandpa that I have read three times. The grandfather in the book carries an old watering can with its paint chipped off to water the vegetables every evening, walking from one end of the bed to the other, ladle after ladle, the water falling only on the soil at the base of the seedlings. His grandson asks why he does not drench them from head to foot, and he says water on the leaves will scorch them in the sun, while water given to the roots feeds them slowly. When he finishes, his trouser cuffs are caked with mud, the can is empty, and he sits on the stone at the edge of the bed for a pouch of tobacco.

Reading this far, I put the book down and ran out to the balcony. On the balcony sit two foam boxes, in which Grandpa and I planted luffa last spring. I picked up the spray bottle and watered all around, the water running off the leaves. Then I suddenly stopped and, copying the grandfather in the book, aimed the water at the soil by the edge of the boxes and poured it slowly. The water seeped down and the soil darkened. In that moment I felt the grandfather from the book squatting right beside me.

In third grade, staying in the village, Grandpa taught me the same way. Pointing at the luffa trellis he said: water the roots when you water, water the heart when

you treat people; a hundred words from the mouth are worth less than one thing done before your eyes. I half understood then, and only played with the hose, spraying water all over his trousers. He was not angry; he took the hose, squatted down, and watered inch by inch. Now I see the very same gesture in a book, and my nose stings a little. It turns out Grandpa had long ago watered his lesson into the soil; he simply never said it, waiting for me to grow up and recognize it.

The book also says that after the grandson grows up and moves to the city, the grandfather presses a bag of vegetables into his hands each visit, folding the mouth of the bag twice. I remember that every time we return from the home of Grandpa, the trunk of the car of my mother holds free-range eggs and a bundle of scallions, their roots still holding damp soil. I used to mind the dirt on the vegetables. Now I understand that a little dirt marks where the hands of Grandpa have been. This book taught me one thing: love can go without words. The grandfather in the book never once says he misses his grandson; all his longing is in that evening watering can, ladle after ladle, poured onto the roots. I think that when my luffa bears fruit, I will pick the longest one and take the bus to bring it to Grandpa, and let him taste too the thing he raised, come back at last into his own hands.