夏天的快乐

暑假哗啦一声推开门，

书包挂在墙上放了假，

闹钟也睡到了太阳晒屁股，

阳光在窗台上写着：快来呀，快来玩吧。

我们光着脚丫跑向游泳池，

水举起白白的胳膊喊我们的名字，

扑通一声，跳水一声，水花一片，

我们都成了小鱼，游来游去。

游泳圈托着我，水珠滚过鼻尖，

教练的哨子变成了泡泡，

我在水底学会了吹泡泡，

还教池底的小青蛙唱了一首新歌。

中午的壁虎趴在墙上打盹，

冰棍车叮叮当当敲过小巷，

红豆的、绿豆的、青豆的，

舔上一口，整个夏天都凉快了。

上来吃西瓜，咔嚓一声响，

红红的瓤，黑黑的籽，沙又甜，

汁水顺着手腕流进池子里，

连小鱼都游过来想尝一尝。

一口两口三口，肚子圆得像小鼓，

吐出的籽在阳光下画出弧线，

谁的籽吐得远，谁就大声喊，

一池子的笑声哗啦哗啦地溅。

下午我们举起水枪开战，

吡出一道彩虹，白白的、亮亮的，

你躲到柱子后头，我藏进伞底下，

衣服全湿了，谁也不许回家告状。

树上的知了也跟着起哄，

知了、知了，叫个不停，

好像在替我们数谁的水枪装得快，

数着数着，它自己先笑哑了嗓子。

傍晚我们在院子里追蜻蜓，

蜻蜓飞得高，我们跳得高，

一只蜻蜓也没捉住，

可我们的笑声飞得比蜻蜓还高。

太阳落山了，云烧成红色，

奶奶的蒲扇在树下摇啊摇，

我们把一天的趣事讲了一遍又一遍，

讲着讲着，星星爬上了树梢。

雷阵雨说来就来，哗啦啦，

我们站在屋檐下看它洗院子，

雨点踩着小水洼跳舞，

一跳一跳，溅起一地的笑声。

雨停了，天边挂出半道彩虹，

我们跑出去数它的颜色，

数到红橙黄绿，忘了后面的，

就一起喊：反正都好看！

暑假是一碗大大的快乐，

游泳是冰，西瓜是甜，

笑声是搅一搅的小勺子，

搅一搅呀，每一天都好吃。

我不想让暑假去放假，

我想一直游泳、一直吃瓜、一直笑，

要是夏天非要走，我就摆摆手说：

明年一定回来呀，我在这儿把你等。

The Happiness of Summer

Summer vacation came running with a flash of bright white light, and everything changed in a single moment: my schoolbag hung quietly on the wall, the alarm clock finally took a long holiday, and the sun wrote big golden letters across the window pane, saying: come on, come on, hurry outside and play.

We ran toward the swimming pool with our bare feet slapping the warm ground, and the water waved its white arms and shouted out our names, because with one splash, one dive, and one big cannonball, every one of us turned into a little fish swimming happily to and fro.

The floatie held me up while little water beads rolled down my nose, and even the coach's whistle seemed to turn into floating bubbles, because that day I learned to blow bubbles under the water and I even taught the small frog at the bottom of the pool a brand new song.

At noon the little gecko clung to the warm wall taking its nap, and the ice pop cart clanged its bell all the way through our alley, with red bean, mung bean, and green bean pops shining in the box, and one single lick of it made the whole summer turn cool.

Then came the watermelon, cut open with one loud crack, showing its red sandy flesh and its shining black seeds, and the sweet juice ran all the way down my wrist and dripped into the pool, so that even the fish came swimming over hoping to join in the fun.

I ate one bite, two bites, three bites, until my belly was round like a little drum, and the seeds we spat out drew long arcs across the sunshine, and whoever spat his seed the farthest got to shout the loudest, while the whole pool rang with laughter splashing everywhere.

In the afternoon we raised our water guns and started a great battle, and our shots made a little rainbow in the air, white and shining, and you hid behind the pillar while I hid under the umbrella, and our clothes got completely soaked, and nobody was allowed to go home and tell on anybody.

The cicadas up in the trees joined in the cheering too, singing cicada, cicada, without stopping for a single second, as if they were counting how fast each of us could refill our water guns, and while they were counting, they laughed themselves hoarse and had to stop singing.

In the evening we chased the dragonflies around in our courtyard, and the dragonflies flew up high and we jumped up high, and although we did not catch a single dragonfly all by ourselves, our laughter flew even higher into the sky than any dragonfly ever could.

When the sun went down and the clouds turned red and gold, Grandma's old fan swayed slowly under the tree, and we told the story of the day's fun over and over again, telling and telling until the little stars quietly climbed up into the branches.

The summer thunderstorm arrived without any warning, pouring down in a great silver curtain, and we stood under the roof edge and watched it wash our whole courtyard clean, while the raindrops danced on the little puddles, hopping and splashing, and every hop sent up one more laugh from the ground.

When the rain stopped, half a rainbow hung up in the sky, and we ran outside and started counting its colors, and we counted red, orange, yellow, green, and then forgot all the rest, so we just shouted together: it does not matter, every color looks beautiful anyway!

Summer vacation is one big deep bowl of happiness, and swimming is the cool ice inside it, and the watermelon is the sweet syrup inside it, and laughter is the little spoon that stirs everything around, and once you stir it well, every single day tastes delicious.

I do not want summer vacation to go away on its own holiday, I want to keep swimming, keep eating melon, and keep laughing all the way to the end, and if summer really has to leave, I will wave my hand and say: please come back next year, I will be right here waiting for you.

游泳池的笑声

早上太阳刚刚爬上来，

妈妈就装好了游泳圈和泳镜，

我们出发去游泳池，脚步轻快，

好像整个夏天的快乐都在前面等着。

游泳池平平的、蓝蓝的，像一面大镜子，

它朝我摆摆手，哗啦，哗啦，

救生员的哨声、教练的数拍声，

混成一片哗啦啦的水声。

我扶着池边学打腿，

一下、两下、十下、二十下，

游泳圈悄悄松开了我的背，

忽然间，我自己游起来啦！

我像小青蛙一样往前游，妈妈在岸边拍手，

腿有点酸，心却轻得像羽毛，

我潜下去摸一枚亮亮的硬币，

浮上来，把它贴在脑门上当勋章。

朋友小乌龟和我比了一次赛，

他游得像鱼雷，我游得像小鸭子，

他赢了比赛，我赢了水花，

我们俩都笑了，水也跟着笑。

浅水区传来扑腾扑腾的声音，

小小孩们套着浮袖学狗刨，

一个哭鼻子，一个吐泡泡，

哭的那个很快也咧开嘴笑。

跳水台高高的，像一座小雪山，

我在上头站了三回都没敢跳，

第四回闭着眼一蹦，水花砸下来，

原来害怕的声音，比西瓜还脆。

教练教我们踩水，像踩看不见的楼梯，

一踩一踩，头一直露在水面上，

我踩着踩着喊：我会站着游泳啦！

半个池子的人都转过头来鼓掌。

游完泳，我们坐在树荫底下，

爸爸抱来冰过的西瓜，咔嚓切开，

红红的瓤，黑黑的籽，又沙又甜，

咬一口，暑气全都跑光了。

我的脸上还滴着泳池的水，

西瓜的汁又顺着下巴流下来，

西瓜加游泳，等于夏天，

笑声就是夏天发出的声音。

更衣室的柜子里，

藏着一整套湿哒哒的夏天：泳帽、泳镜、拖鞋，

它们滴滴答答地滴水，

像替我们把今天又讲了一遍。

离开的时候，游泳池安静下来，

水面托着天空和白云，

它好像在跟我说：明天见，

把你的笑声带来，把累留下。

回家的路上，我的头发还在滴水，

风一吹，我满身泳池的味道，

公交车上的陌生人对我笑，

好像他也想跳进夏天里游一场。

晚上我梦见自己又在游泳，

梦里的西瓜漂在水面上，

我游过去咬了一口，

在梦里笑醒了。

The Laughter of the Swimming Pool

In the morning the sun had barely climbed up over the roof, and Mom had already packed my floatie, my goggles and my little towel, and we set off for the swimming pool with light and quick footsteps, as if a whole summer full of happiness were waiting for us right there ahead.

The swimming pool lay flat and blue under the sky, like one big shining mirror, and it waved its arms at me, splash, splash, while the lifeguard's whistle and the coach's counting mixed together into one happy splashing sound of water.

I held onto the edge of the pool and learned to kick my legs, one kick, two kicks, ten kicks, twenty kicks, and the floatie let go of my back without my even noticing, and suddenly I was swimming all by myself across the whole pool.

I swam along like a little green frog while Mom clapped for me on the shore, and my legs felt tired but my heart felt light as a feather, and I dove all the way down to pick up a shiny coin and came back up wearing it on my forehead like a little crown.

My friend Little Turtle and I had one swimming race, and he swam fast like a torpedo while I swam steady like a little duckling, and he won the race but I won the biggest splash, so we both laughed out loud and the water laughed along with us.

From the shallow end came a paddling and splashing sound, where the littlest kids wore their arm floats and learned the doggy paddle, and one of them was crying while another one was blowing bubbles, and the crying one broke into a big grin before the minute was over.

The diving board stood up high like a little snowy mountain, and I stood on it three whole times without daring to jump, and on the fourth try I shut my eyes and leaped, and the splash crashed down around me, and it turned out that fear sounds as crisp as a watermelon cracking open.

The coach taught us to tread water, like climbing an invisible staircase, one step, one more step, with our heads staying above the surface, and while I was treading I shouted: I can swim while standing up! and half the people in the pool turned around to clap for me.

After swimming we sat down together under the big shade tree, and Dad brought over a chilled watermelon and cut it open with a loud crack, and the red sandy flesh with its black seeds was so sweet that one single bite made all the summer heat run far away.

My face was still dripping with pool water, and the watermelon juice was running

down my chin, and I decided that watermelon plus swimming equals summer, and laughter is simply the sound that summer makes when it is having the happiest time of the year.

Inside the changing room locker there was a whole wet set of summer hiding away: my swim cap, my goggles, and my slippers, and they dripped drop by drop onto the floor, as if they were telling everybody about our day all over again.

When it was time to leave, the swimming pool became quiet again, and its water held up the sky and the clouds, and it seemed to whisper to me: come back and see me tomorrow, and please bring your laughter back with you, but leave your tiredness here in the water.

On the way home my hair was still dripping drop by drop, and the wind blew past and I smelled like pool water, and even a stranger on the bus smiled at me, as if he too suddenly wanted to jump into the middle of summer and swim around.

That night I dreamed that I was swimming again, and in the dream a big watermelon was floating on the water, and I swam over quietly and took one bite of it, and I laughed so hard in the dream that I laughed myself awake in my bed.

一块西瓜，一阵笑

卖瓜的吆喝从巷子口飘来，

长长的，比冰棍还凉快，

我攥着硬币跑出去，

瓜堆成了小小的绿色的山。

爷爷蹲下来挑瓜，

敲一个，再敲一个，侧着耳朵听，

咚咚像敲鼓的才是熟的，

他挑了一个，抱回家。

奶奶下刀，咔嚓一声，

瓜没等切完就自己裂开，

红红的瓤，沙的，籽黑亮黑亮的，

满屋子都是甜甜的青气。

我们排排坐，一人抱一块，

谁也不说话，只有吃瓜的声音，

汁水顺着手腕流，滴到下巴上，

肚子吃得圆圆，像小绿瓜。

吐出的籽数一数，比一比，

我赢了，笑得最大声，

奶奶把最大的一块让给爷爷，

爷爷又偷偷塞回给我，我们都笑了。

下午游完泳回来，鼻子晒得通红，

冰箱里的冰西瓜救了场，

一口下去，凉从嘴巴一直走到肚子，

整个夏天变成红色的笑。

妈妈把瓜汁冻成小冰棍，

红红的冰棒棒藏在冰箱里，

外面舔一口，里面舔一口，

凉快在嘴巴里住了好久。

瓜皮也别扔，白白的瓤留一层，

奶奶拿刀切成小方块，

拌上糖和醋，脆脆的、酸酸的，

一盘凉拌瓜皮，又是一阵笑。

隔壁的小孩过来一起吃瓜，

一个瓜变成了四个盘子，

我们边吃边玩词语接龙，

笑声跳过墙头，跑到隔壁院子。

爸爸用瓜皮雕了只小螃蟹，

绿壳红嘴，摆在窗台上，

它不会动，也不会吃，

可我们看它一次，就笑一次。

夜里凉下来了，我们把瓜端到院子里，

一边吃一边数星星，

星星在瓜上掉了一粒，

我们叫它星星籽，抢着分。

爷爷说瓜秧春天才栽下，

浇了一个多月的水，才换来这一口甜，

所以我们吃瓜的时候要想着：

每一口红瓤里，都藏着一场春雨。

笑声是夏天最容易找到的东西，

它藏在瓜的咔嚓声里，藏在水花里，

藏在飞起来的瓜籽和树下的蒲扇里，

等我们一个一个把它捡起来。

如果有人问我暑假是什么味道，

我就举起西瓜片，大声回答：

是甜的，是凉的，是笑的，

咬一口，整个夏天都在嘴巴里。

A Slice of Melon, A Burst of Laughter

The watermelon seller's call came floating in from the entrance of the alley, long and drawn out and somehow cooler than an ice pop, and I ran outside with my coins already tight in my hand, because his pile of watermelons was stacked up into one little green hill.

Grandpa squatted down beside the melons to choose one carefully, and he knocked on one melon, then another, listening hard with his head tilted, and he said the one that sounds dong, dong, like a drum, is the ripe one, and he lifted a big one and hugged it all the way home.

Grandma set the knife down on the melon and it answered with a loud crack, splitting open all by itself before the knife had even finished cutting, and the sandy red flesh with its shining black seeds filled the whole house with a fresh sweet green smell.

We each hugged one big slice and sat in a row to eat, and nobody said a single word, there was only the sound of everybody eating melon, and the juice ran down our wrists and dripped onto our chins, and our bellies grew round like little green melons.

We counted and compared all the seeds we had spat out, and I won the seed-spitting contest and laughed the loudest of everyone, and Grandma handed the biggest slice to Grandpa, but Grandpa quietly gave it back to me, and we all laughed again.

In the afternoon, after we came back from swimming with sunburned noses, the ice-cold watermelon from the fridge came to the rescue, and one single bite made a cool feeling travel all the way from my mouth down to my belly, and the whole summer turned into one big red smile.

Mom froze some of the melon juice into little ice pops, red little ice sticks that we hid carefully in the freezer, and I licked them one lick outside and one lick inside, and the coolness stayed around my mouth for a very long, long time.

We did not throw the rinds away either, because we left a thin white layer on them, and Grandma cut them into little square pieces and mixed them with sugar and vinegar, crunchy and sour at the same time, and one plate of cold melon-rind salad brought another round of laughter.

The little kid from next door came over to share the watermelon with us, and one watermelon suddenly became four big plates, and we ate melon and played word games together, and our laughter jumped over the wall and into the yard next door without any permission.

Dad carved a little crab out of a watermelon rind, with a green shell and a red mouth, and we set it on the windowsill to dry, and it could not move and it could not eat anything, but every single time we looked at it, we laughed all over again.

At night when the air finally cooled down, we carried the melon out into the courtyard, and we ate our slices while counting the stars one by one, and one star seemed to fall right onto the melon, so we named it a star seed and fought over who would get to eat it.

Grandpa said the melon vines were only planted in the spring, and he watered them for more than a whole month just to earn this one bite of sweetness, so every time we eat melon we should remember that inside every piece of red flesh there is a spring

rain hiding quietly.

Laughter is the easiest thing to find in the summer, because it hides inside the crack of the melon and inside the splash of the pool, inside the seeds flying through the air and the old fan swaying under the tree, just waiting for us to pick it up one by one.

If anybody ever asks me what summer vacation tastes like, I lift my watermelon slice up high and answer out loud: it tastes sweet, it tastes cool, and it tastes exactly like laughter, one big bite and the whole summer is right there inside my mouth.