菜园是爷爷的一页诗

爷爷的菜园，是一页绿色的诗。我在早上读它，风一翻，一页是黄瓜，一页是豆角。

黄瓜是藤上的小孩，穿着绿衣裳，踮着脚往上长。长啊，长啊，忽然垂下来，像一个竖起来的感叹号，惊动了整个夏天。

豆角是一串逗号，挂在架子上，又细又长。风一来，它们就晃，嗒，嗒，嗒，敲着夏天的小鼓。

南瓜花举着大喇叭，趴在地上读，读得满院子打滚。它的叶子又大又圆，是诗里最宽的那一行，青蛙蹲在上面，当一个绿色的逗号。

菜园的小路是诗的行缝，两边站满小石子，像一字一字排队的字。爷爷的鞋走过，行缝就深一点，我走过，行缝就浅一点。

爷爷是这首诗里的标点。他蹲下，菜园就安静；他咳嗽一声，叶子就哗啦啦，全部读出声来。

清晨，爷爷读给菜园听。他提着水壶，水就是韵脚，滴，答，滴，答，落在黄瓜叶和豆角叶上，一页比一页绿。

中午，爷爷读给菜园听。他弯下腰拔草，直起来，再弯下去。他的背，是一行弯进土里的诗，弯向根，弯向种子睡觉的地方。

傍晚，换成我读给爷爷听。我坐在菜园门口的长凳上，大声读，把黄瓜读得直挺挺，把豆角读得晃悠悠。爷爷听着，笑着，顺手摘一根豆角，夹住我的书页。

我问爷爷，这首诗是谁写的呀？爷爷说，土地写头一行，雨添了几行，我呀，只是天天守着它，不让虫子插嘴。

我说，那我要朗诵它。用黄瓜当我的声音，用豆角当我的节拍，让爷爷站在诗的第一行，风一吹，就领着我们，一行一行往下走。

风又翻页了。菜园的诗，读一天，就新一天。爷爷的白头发，也落在这一页上，亮亮的，像给这首诗，加了一个发光的句号。

The Garden Is a Page of Poem by Grandpa

The garden of my grandpa is a green page of poem. I read it in the morning. The wind turns it over, one half is cucumbers, one half is green beans.

The cucumber is a child of the vine, wearing a green coat, standing on tiptoe to grow up. Growing, growing, it suddenly hangs down, like an exclamation mark stood upright, startling the whole summer.

The green beans are a string of commas, hanging on the trellis, thin and long. When the wind comes, they swing, tap, tap, tap, beating the little drum of summer.

The pumpkin flowers hold big trumpets and read while lying on the ground, rolling all over the yard. Their leaves are big and round, the widest line in the poem, and a frog squats on one of them, playing the part of a green comma.

The little path of the garden is the seam between lines, with small pebbles standing on both sides, like characters queued up word by word. When the shoes of grandpa pass, the seam grows a little deeper; when my shoes pass, it grows a little shallower.

Grandpa is the punctuation inside this poem. When he crouches, the garden goes quiet; when he clears his throat once, the leaves rustle aloud, and every one of them starts reading.

At dawn, grandpa reads to the garden. He carries the watering can, and the water is the rhyme, drip, dot, drip, dot, falling on cucumber leaves and bean leaves, each page greener than the last.

At noon, grandpa reads to the garden. He bends down to pull weeds, rises, bends again. His back is a line of poem bent into the soil, bending toward the roots, toward the place where the seeds sleep.

At dusk, it is my turn to read to grandpa. I sit on the bench at the garden gate and read aloud, making the cucumbers stand straight, making the beans swing. Grandpa listens, smiling, picks a green bean on the way, and uses it to hold my page.

I ask grandpa, who wrote this poem? Grandpa says, the soil wrote the first line, the rain added a few more, and I only watch over it every day, keeping the bugs from interrupting.

I say, then I will recite it. I will use the cucumbers for my voice, the beans for my beat, and let grandpa stand on the first line of the poem, so the wind can lead us onward, line by line.

The wind turns the page again. The poem of the garden grows new every day it is read. The white hair of my grandpa falls also on this page, shining, like a glowing full stop added to the poem.

爷爷站在菜园正中央

我家楼下有一个菜园，菜园是爷爷的。菜园里有黄瓜，有豆角，还有爷爷，站在正中央。

黄瓜开花，一朵一朵小黄喇叭，嘀嘀，嘀嘀，吹给谁听呢？吹给豆角听。豆角正在搭梯子，一根一根往上爬，爬得比我的个子还高。

爷爷的草帽，是菜园里第二轮太阳。早上它东边晃，中午它头顶挂，傍晚它西边落。整个菜园，都绕着那顶草帽转。

爷爷浇水，水管弯弯，像一条慢吞吞的河。河水流到黄瓜跟前，黄瓜咕咚咕咚喝；流到豆角跟前，豆角哗啦哗啦摇。爷爷也喝水，他仰头，喉结一动一动，我猜他一定没有黄瓜喝得多。

爷爷捉虫，手指头一捏，一提，虫子就不见了。他不说疼，也不说脏，只说，叶子后面藏坏蛋，爷爷的眼睛是手电筒，一照一个准。

中午歇凉，爷爷坐在豆角架底下。影子小小的，铺在他脚边。他闭着眼睛，我以为他睡着了，可豆角一响，他的眼皮就动一下。原来他睡着了，还在值班。

黄瓜熟了，爷爷举起来，对着太阳看，像举一条绿色的光。豆角长了，爷爷捋直了，一捆一捆，像捋顺了一排绿色的句子。

爷爷的手上有泥，指甲缝里也有泥。可他不脏，菜园里长出来的东西，身上都带一点土，黄瓜带，豆角带，爷爷也带。那是菜园盖的印章，盖谁身上，谁就是菜园的人。

下雨天，菜园不出声。雨点替爷爷念诗，嗒嗒嗒，一行落在黄瓜叶上，一行落在豆角叶上，最后一行，落在爷爷的草帽上，帽檐滴水，像诗念出了标点。

我站在菜园边上想，爷爷是菜园种出来的吧？种下一顶草帽，长出一个爷爷；种下一个爷爷，长出一整个菜园。

我在心里悄悄许一个愿望：等我长大，我要做一棵会走路的菜，春天帮爷爷松土，夏天给爷爷打扇，秋天坐在菜园门口，等爷爷收工，把毛巾递上去。

风来了，黄瓜点头，豆角拍手，爷爷的草帽抬一抬。整片菜园都在说同一句话：好孩子，来，站到菜园正中央。

Grandpa Stands in the Middle of the Garden

Below our building there is a garden, and the garden belongs to my grandpa. Inside it there are cucumbers, there are green beans, and there is grandpa, standing right in the middle.

The cucumbers bloom, little yellow trumpets one by one, toot, toot, who are they

playing for? They play for the beans. The beans are building ladders, climbing up stick by stick, higher than I am tall.

The straw hat of my grandpa is a second sun inside the garden. In the morning it swings in the east, at noon it hangs overhead, in the evening it sets in the west. The whole garden turns around that hat.

Grandpa waters the plants, the hose bending like a slow, dawdling river. The river flows to the cucumbers, and they gulp, gulp; it flows to the beans, and they rustle, rustle. Grandpa drinks too. He tilts his head up, his throat moving, and I bet he never drinks as much as a cucumber.

Grandpa catches bugs with a pinch of two fingers, a lift, and the bug is gone. He never says it hurts, never says it is dirty. He only says there are villains hiding under the leaves, and the eyes of grandpa are a flashlight, catching every one they shine on.

At noon he rests under the bean trellis. His shadow lies small at his feet. His eyes are closed, and I think he is asleep, yet at the slightest sound of the beans his eyelid twitches. So even asleep, he is still on duty.

When a cucumber ripens, grandpa lifts it against the sun, like holding a bar of green light. When the beans grow long, he straightens them into bundles, like smoothing out a row of green sentences.

There is mud on the hands of grandpa, mud in the seams of his nails as well. Yet he is not dirty. Everything grown in a garden wears a little soil: the cucumber wears it, the beans wear it, and grandpa wears it too. That is the stamp of the garden, and whoever it stamps belongs to the garden.

On rainy days the garden keeps silent. The raindrops recite the poem for grandpa, tap, tap, tap, one line on the cucumber leaves, one line on the bean leaves, and the last line falls on the straw hat of grandpa, water dripping from its brim, as if the poem had recited out its punctuation.

Standing at the edge of the garden I wonder, was grandpa grown by the garden? Plant a straw hat, and a grandpa grows up; plant a grandpa, and a whole garden grows up.

I make a quiet wish inside my heart: when I grow up, I want to be a vegetable that can walk. In spring I will loosen the soil for grandpa, in summer I will fan him, in autumn I will sit at the garden gate, waiting for grandpa to finish work, holding out a towel.

The wind comes. The cucumbers nod, the beans clap, and the straw hat of grandpa tips up. The whole garden is saying one and the same sentence: good child, come,

stand in the middle of the garden.

菜园里的声音课

你听过菜园吗？菜园不是哑巴。菜园里，每一种菜都会说话，每一种声音都不一样。

黄瓜说话很轻。它一夜长一寸，顶着一朵小黄花，那是它把声音举在头顶上，不响，只亮。你要是凑近听，能听见它拔节的动静，咔，很轻的一下，像铅笔削尖。

豆角说话很脆。嫩豆角一掐，啪，断了，那声音又白又嫩，带着水汽。老豆角更会说话，晒干以后一捏，哗啦，哗啦，整面墙都在给它鼓掌。

爷爷也有自己的声音。他的咳嗽最特别，比雷轻，比门响，比锄头落地还要慢半拍。咳嗽一响，黄瓜藤抖一下，豆角架应一声，整个菜园都知道爷爷来上工了。

爷爷的锄头是菜园里的鼓。咚，咚，咚，土翻过来，露出湿的一面，虫子吓得搬家，蚯蚓探头看戏。爷爷的脚步是鼓刷，沙，沙，沙，从黄瓜畦走到豆角畦，再从豆角畦走回黄瓜畦。

菜园还有安静的声音。黄瓜顶花，是安静；豆角挂架，是安静；爷爷蹲在地头不说话，把耳朵贴在叶子边上，那种安静最大，盖过了整条马路。我学会了这种安静，考试前我在心里念一遍，心就稳了。

我在教室里朗诵《菜园》。我念黄瓜，念得又轻又亮；我念豆角，念得又脆又响；我念到爷爷弯下腰的那一行，全班忽然安静，静得能听见一颗种子，在谁的课本里发芽。

老师请我念第二遍。第二遍我加上了声音，咳嗽声，锄头声，豆角哗啦声。念完，后排一个男生举手，说老师，我闻见了，我闻见菜园了。

放学我跑下楼，冲进菜园，站在爷爷跟前，一个字都不说。爷爷也不问，递给我一根黄瓜。我咬一口，咔嚓，真脆。我把这个声音还给菜园，它接住了。

原来朗诵不用念完。一根黄瓜咔嚓一声，就是菜园替我念完了最后一段。爷爷笑了，皱纹里全是声音，一层一层，都是我的，都是菜园的。

A Lesson of Sounds in the Garden

Have you ever listened to a garden? A garden is not mute. In a garden, every vegetable can speak, and every voice sounds different.

The cucumber speaks very softly. It grows an inch in one night, wearing a small yellow flower on its head. That flower is its voice held up on top, not loud, only

bright. If you lean close, you can hear it stretching its joints, snap, one very light sound, like a pencil being sharpened.

The green bean speaks very crisply. Snap, a tender bean breaks in two, and that sound is white and soft, carrying water vapor. The old beans are even better at speaking. Once dried, squeeze them, rustle, rustle, and the whole wall claps for them.

Grandpa has his own voice too. His cough is the strangest of all, lighter than thunder, louder than a door, half a beat slower than a hoe hitting the ground. When the cough sounds, the cucumber vine shivers, the bean trellis answers, and the whole garden knows grandpa has come to work.

The hoe of grandpa is the drum of the garden. Dong, dong, dong, the soil turns over, showing its wet side, the bugs move house in fright, and the earthworms poke their heads out to watch the show. The footsteps of grandpa are a drum brush, swish, swish, swish, from the cucumber bed to the bean bed, then back from the bean bed to the cucumber bed.

The garden also has quiet sounds. A cucumber wearing its flower is quiet; beans hanging on the trellis are quiet; grandpa crouching at the head of the field saying nothing, pressing his ear against the edge of a leaf, that quiet is the loudest of all, louder than the whole street. I have learned this kind of quiet. Before an exam I recite it once inside my heart, and my heart steadies.

In the classroom I recite my poem about the garden. I recite the cucumbers, softly and brightly; I recite the beans, crisply and loudly; and when I reach the line where grandpa bends down, the whole class suddenly goes quiet, so quiet you could hear a seed sprouting inside the textbook of somebody.

My teacher asks for a second round. In the second round I add the sounds, the cough, the hoe, the rustle of dried beans. When I finish, a boy in the back row raises his hand and says: teacher, I smelled it, I smelled the garden.

After school I run downstairs, dash into the garden, stand in front of grandpa, and say not a word. Grandpa asks nothing either. He hands me a cucumber. I bite into it, crunch, truly crisp. I give that sound back to the garden, and the garden catches it.

So a recitation does not have to be finished aloud. One crunch of a cucumber, and the garden has read the last stanza for me. Grandpa smiles, and his wrinkles are full of sounds, layer upon layer, all of them mine, all of them belonging to the garden.