一场雨过后，菜园红了一半

放假第一天，我就住到了爷爷家。放下书包我就往菜园跑，心想终于能摘西红柿了。结果跑到篱笆跟前一看，我愣住了：满架子的果子还是青的，青得发亮，一个红的都没有。我站在篱笆外头，手搭在竹竿上，半天没说话。

爷爷从园子里出来，手上都是土。他说，急什么，再等几天。我问要等几天，爷爷说他也说不准，反正天一热，雨一下，它们自己就红了。

我不信。可是第二天夜里下了一场大雨，雨打在篱笆上噼噼啪啪，我在屋里听见了，心里还惦记着那些青果子。

早上雨停了，我穿着拖鞋就往菜园跑。跑到跟前，我啊了一声。红了一半。真的红了一半。昨天还全青的架子，今天挂着一串一串的红，红的上面还挂着水珠，一颤一颤的。青的那些也变了颜色，青里透黄，黄里透白，跟昨天不是一个样子了。

我喊爷爷。爷爷慢慢走过来，看了一眼说，你看，我说过的。他去墙角拿了竹篮子，从篱笆的缺口递给我。篮子是新的，竹篾还青着，爷爷说专门编的，等着果子红。

那天早上我摘了满满一篮。红透的放篮子底，半红的放上面，爷爷说半红的放几天也能吃。我蹲在架子底下往上看，叶子缝里全是红的，像藏了一架子的灯笼。有一只瓢虫爬在一个红西红柿上，红红的背，上面全是小点点，比西红柿还好看。

篮子太重，我提不动，爷爷从缺口把篮子接过去，一手提篮子，一手扶我出篱笆。走到院门口，我把篮子放下，挑了最红的一个，在衣襟上擦了擦，咬一口，沙瓤的，又甜又面。

晚上我在日记本上写：菜园最神奇的地方，是它不声不响。你看着它几天没变化，一场雨过去，它忽然红给你看。我喜欢爷爷的菜园，喜欢那些不声不响、一到时候就红透的西红柿。

After One Rain the Garden Turned Half Red

On the first day of vacation I went to live at the house of my grandfather. I dropped my schoolbag and ran straight to the garden, thinking at last I could pick tomatoes. When I reached the fence I froze. The whole shelf of fruits was still green, shining green, not one red among them. I stood outside the fence with my hand on a bamboo pole, and for a long while I said nothing.

My grandfather came out of the garden with soil all over his hands. He said, why the hurry, wait a few more days. I asked how many days. He said he could not say exactly, but once the weather turns hot and one rain falls, they will turn red by themselves.

I did not believe him. But that night a heavy rain fell, pattering on the bamboo fence, and I lay in the room listening, my heart still with those green fruits.

In the morning the rain stopped. I ran to the garden in my slippers. When I got there I cried out. Half red. Truly half red. The shelves that were all green yesterday now hung with strings of red, and the red ones still wore drops of water that trembled in the light. The green ones had changed too, green turning yellow, yellow turning pale, no longer the colors of yesterday.

I called my grandfather. He walked over slowly, took one look and said, you see, I told you. He went to the corner of the wall and brought a bamboo basket, and handed it to me through the gap in the fence. The basket was new, its bamboo strips still green. He said he wove it on purpose, waiting for the fruits to ripen.

That morning I filled the basket to the brim. The fully ripe ones went to the bottom, the half red ones on top, for grandfather said the half red ones will ripen in a few days at home. I crouched under the shelf and looked up. Between the leaves everything was red, like a whole shelf of hidden lanterns. A ladybug crawled over one red tomato, its back red and covered with little dots, prettier even than the tomato.

The basket was too heavy for me to carry. My grandfather took it through the gap, lifting the basket with one hand and steadying me out of the fence with the other. At the yard gate I set the basket down, chose the reddest tomato, rubbed it on my shirt, and bit into it. It was sandy inside, sweet and soft.

At night I wrote in my diary: the strangest thing about the garden is that it makes no sound. You watch it for days with no change, then one rain passes and it suddenly turns red before your eyes. I love the vegetable garden of my grandfather, and those quiet tomatoes that ripen fully the moment their time comes.