爷爷的葡萄园开了门

放暑假第二天，爸爸骑摩托带我回老家。车还没停稳，爷爷就站在院门口笑，身后那扇通往葡萄园的小门开着，像早就在等我。

爷爷的葡萄园不大，三十几架葡萄排成两行，架子低得伸手就能够到。进了园，先看的不是地上的路，而是头顶。一串串葡萄挂在架子上，紫的像攒了一冬天的话，终于要说出口；青白的还硬着，贴着叶子打盹。阳光从叶缝里漏下来，落在地上变成一块一块的光斑，风一吹，光斑就挪位置，像谁在数地上的果子。

爷爷递给我一把剪刀，教我把串托在左手心，剪刀贴着果梗剪，手不能松，松了串散了，果子会哭。我学着剪第一串，手抖，剪了两刀才断。那串紫得发黑，果粉完整，像蒙着一层薄薄的霜。爷爷接过去，没放进筐，反而举起来对着光看了看，说这串留种，明年嫁接就靠它。我心里一紧，赶紧又去剪第二串，想再剪一串配得上它的。

剪到第五六串，我坐下架下的石凳歇气。旁边一颗葡萄熟得发亮，掉在裂开的砖缝里。我捡起来，在衣角上蹭了蹭，塞进嘴里。果皮一咬就破，汁水又甜又凉，顺着指缝往下流。正闭眼享受，爷爷在架子那头喊：偷吃也不叫上我。我脸一红，举着剩下半串给他送过去。他尝了一颗，眯着眼说，今年这架最甜，就是给你留的。

回家那天，我把剪下的头一串用报纸托着，放在车窗座上，一路没敢靠椅背，怕压着。到家把它供在窗台上，谁也不许动。妈妈笑我，把葡萄当奖杯。我说，这本来就是奖杯，是爷爷的园发给我的。

后来每次路过水果摊，我都忍不住看葡萄的果梗剪得齐不齐。剪得齐的，我就想起爷爷的剪刀贴着果梗那一下，想起他说，手不能松，松了串散了。我觉得这话不只是说葡萄的。

Grandpa Orchard Opened Its Gate

On the second day of summer vacation, my father took me back to the countryside on his motorbike. Before the engine stopped, Grandpa was already standing at the gate, smiling, with the little door to his grape orchard open behind him, as if it had been waiting for me all along.

The orchard was not large. Three dozen vines were trained in two rows on low trellises, low enough to touch with a raised hand. When you entered, the first thing to look at was not the path but the sky above. Clusters hung from the trellis: purple ones like words kept all winter, finally ready to be spoken; pale green ones still hard, dozing against the leaves. Sunlight leaked through the gaps in the leaves and fell in patches on the ground. When the wind blew, the patches shifted, like someone counting the fruit.

Grandpa handed me the scissors. Rest the cluster in your left palm, he said, cut close to the stem, and do not loosen your hand. If the hand loosens, the cluster

scatters, and the berries will cry. My first cut trembled; it took two snips to get through. The cluster was purple almost to black, its bloom intact, as if dusted with thin frost. Grandpa took it, held it up to the light, and announced that this one would be kept for seed stock, for next year grafting. My heart tightened, and I hurried to cut a second, hoping for one worthy of standing beside it.

By the fifth or sixth cluster I sat down on the stone bench under the trellis to rest. A single grape, ripe and shining, had fallen into a crack in the brick. I picked it up, rubbed it on my sleeve, and put it in my mouth. The skin burst at the first bite, the juice sweet and cold, running down between my fingers. Eyes closed in delight, I heard Grandpa call from the far end of the rows: Sneaking snacks without inviting me. My face went red, and I carried the half cluster over to him. He tasted one, eyes narrowing, and said this row was the sweetest of the year, saved just for you.

The day we left, I carried the first cluster home on a bed of newspaper, propped on the seat beside the window, afraid to lean back and crush it. I placed it on the windowsill at home, and no one was allowed to touch it. My mother laughed at me for treating grapes like a trophy. It is a trophy, I said, issued to me by Grandpa orchard.

Ever since, whenever I pass a fruit stall, I cannot help checking whether the stems of the grapes are cut neatly. When they are, I remember the moment of Grandpa scissors close to the stem, and his words: do not loosen your hand, or the cluster scatters. I think he was not only talking about grapes.