《活着》片段里的田野：土地不哄人

上星期五，语文老师发给我们《活着》的一个片段。读完以后，我在座位上坐了很久，没有起来。老师说这本书是大孩子读的，我们读的是老师挑出来的干净片段，写的是土地、收成和劳作。

片段里的福贵，年轻时不懂事，把自家的田产输光了，他爹一气之下走了。后来他自己买回几亩田，决定一手一脚种。从那天起，他天不亮就牵牛下田，牛在前头拉，他在后头扶犁，犁过的土翻起来，一股潮湿的味道。老师把一句话写在黑板上：他弯腰插秧，直起身擦汗，再弯下去，秧苗已经插出去一整行。这是我记得最深的劳作场景。他不抱怨了，好像他不欠土地什么，是土地欠他的命，他还不完。

收成那一幕是书里最亮的。稻子熟了，整片田金黄金黄，福贵站在田埂上看了很久很久，像看不够。老师说她读到这里，几乎能闻到稻穗的香味。福贵说，土地不哄人，你把它侍候好，它就把你这一年的饭侍候好。

读到这里我想了很多。我们天天吃饭，可是没几个人想过米是从哪块土里长出来的。土地不会说话，它只是每年春天让种子发芽，秋天让穗子低头。福贵一辈子丢了那么多东西，最后陪着他的是那头老牛和那几亩田。田还在，他就还在。

我想起学校后面那块试验田，想起爷爷那几亩地。每年收割，爷爷蹲在田边，抓一把稻穗在掌心里搓，眯着眼看米粒，笑得很深。以前我只觉得好玩，现在我懂那个笑了。那是靠土地活了半辈子的人才有的笑。

《活着》这个片段教我一件事：人可以失去很多东西，但只要脚下有土地，手上有劳作，人就站得稳。这个秋天我记住了，福贵这个名字我也记住了。

The Field in the Excerpt of To Live: The Land Does Not Cheat

Last Friday our Chinese teacher handed out an excerpt from the book To Live. After reading it, I sat at my desk for a long time without standing up. The teacher said the whole book is for older readers, and what we read was a clean part chosen by her, about the land, the harvest, and labor.

In the excerpt, Fugui was reckless when he was young and lost the land and house of his family at the gambling table. His father left this world in anger. Later he bought back a few mu of land with his own hands and decided to farm it himself. From that day on he led the ox to the field before dawn. The ox pulled in front and he held the plough behind, and the turned soil gave off a wet smell. The teacher wrote one sentence on the blackboard: he bent down to plant rice seedlings, straightened up

to wipe his sweat, bent down again, and a whole row of seedlings was already planted. This is the scene of labor I remember best. He stopped complaining, as if he owed the land nothing, and as if the land owed him a life he could never pay back.

The harvest scene is the brightest part of the book. The rice ripened, the whole field was gold upon gold, and Fugui stood on the ridge and looked for a long, long time, as if he could never look enough. The teacher said she could almost smell the rice ears when she read this. Fugui said: the land does not cheat people. If you take good care of it, it takes good care of the food of your year.

I thought a lot at this point. We eat every day, yet few of us have asked which piece of soil the rice grew from. The land cannot speak. It only lets seeds sprout in spring and lets the ears bow their heads in autumn. Fugui lost so many things in his life, and in the end what stayed with him were the old ox and a few mu of field. The field was still there, so he was still there.

I thought of the test field behind our school, and of the few mu of land my grandfather farms. Every harvest season he squats at the edge of the field, takes a handful of rice ears, rubs them in his palm, looks at the grains with narrowed eyes, and smiles a deep smile. Before, I only thought it was fun. Now I understand that smile. It belongs to a person who has lived half a life leaning on the land.

This excerpt from To Live taught me one thing: a person can lose many things, but as long as there is land under his feet and labor in his hands, he stands firm. I remember this autumn, and I remember the name Fugui.

两片田：福贵的田和爷爷的田

读《活着》片段那几天，我脑子里总是出现两片田。一片是书里福贵的田，一片是我爷爷的田。它们隔着几十年，却像一对双胞胎。

先说书里的田。福贵输光田产以后，挑着担子去城里，攒了钱买回几亩地。他重新下田那天，先把旧犁修好，犁头在磨石上蹭得雪亮。春天他扶犁，牛在前面走，他跟在后面，肩膀一高一低。夏天他薅草，裤腿卷到膝盖，脚在泥水里拔一下就是一个响。到了秋天，稻子弯下腰，他夜里睡不着，起来到田边转一圈，摸一摸穗子，才回去睡。书里写他做这些的时候没有一点委屈，好像种地是他这辈子最该做的事。

再说我爷爷的田。爷爷那几亩田在村东头，一块一块像补丁。爷爷种了一辈子，牛都换了两头。每年四月他育秧，夜里两点起来放水，怕倒春寒冻了秧苗。六月他打药，背着药桶在田里走，影子被太阳晒得贴在脚边。九月割稻，他镰刀磨了三遍才下田，割完直腰，用镰刀把儿敲敲腿。两片田，两个人，动作一模一样。

书里福贵说土地不哄人。我爷爷没读过书，说不出这句话，可他做了一辈子。爷爷常跟我说：你对田好，田就对你好；你糊弄田，田就糊弄你的饭碗。原来福贵和爷爷说的是同一句话，一个写在书里，一个长在土里。

收成那天，福贵站在田埂上看了很久。我爷爷收了稻子，也蹲在晒场边看谷子，一看就是半天。我以前不明白他们看什么。现在我知道，他们看的是自己弯下去又直起来的腰，是一整个春天的水和汗。土地把这一切都记着，秋天一并还给你。

合上书，我在扉页上写了一句话：愿天下种地的人，都能看见自己的收成。

Two Fields: The Field of Fugui and the Field of Grandfather

In the days I read the excerpt from To Live, two fields kept appearing in my head. One is the field of Fugui in the book, and the other is the field of my grandfather. They are decades apart, yet they look like twins.

First, the field in the book. After Fugui lost the land of his family, he carried a shoulder pole to the town and saved money to buy back a few mu of land. On the day he returned to farming, he first repaired the old plough and ground the ploughshare bright on a whetstone. In spring he held the plough, the ox walked ahead, and he followed with one shoulder higher than the other. In summer he pulled weeds, his trouser legs rolled to the knees, and every step he lifted from the mud made a sound. When autumn came and the rice bowed its head, he could not sleep at night, got up, walked a round by the field, touched the ears, and then went back to bed. The book shows him doing all this without a trace of grievance, as if farming were the one thing he was born to do.

Now the field of my grandfather. His few mu of land lie at the east end of the village, patch after patch. He has farmed them all his life and changed two oxen. Every April he raises seedlings and gets up at two in the morning to manage the water, afraid of the late cold snap. In June he sprays medicine, carrying the tank through the field, his shadow glued to his feet by the sun. In September he cuts the rice, sharpening his sickle three times before entering, and when he finishes he straightens his back and taps his legs with the handle. Two fields, two men, exactly the same movements.

In the book Fugui says the land does not cheat people. My grandfather never went to school and cannot say such a sentence, yet he lived it his whole life. He often told me: treat the field well and the field treats you well; fool the field and it fools your rice bowl. So Fugui and my grandfather were saying the same thing. One

wrote it in a book, and one grew it in the soil.

On the day of harvest, Fugui stood on the ridge and looked for a long time. When my grandfather gathers the rice, he also squats by the drying ground and watches the grain for half a day. I used to wonder what they were looking at. Now I know. They were looking at their own backs that bent and rose again, at all the water and sweat of a whole spring. The land keeps all of it and returns it to you in autumn.

When I closed the book, I wrote one line on the title page: may everyone who farms live to see their own harvest.

一碗饭要走多远的路：读《活着》想到的

昨天吃晚饭，我把碗里的饭剩下小半碗。妈妈没说什么，把碗端走了。晚上我读《活着》的片段，读到福贵蹲在田边看稻子，忽然脸上一热。我想起那小半碗白米饭，想起它跟福贵那片田，原来是同一条路走来的。

片段里写福贵重新种地，一年到头没有闲天。三月修水利，四月育秧，五月插秧，六月薅草打虫，八月守水，九月收割，十月晒谷进仓。老师让我们把这些月份抄在积累本上，抄的时候我的手是酸的。我过的是衣来伸手的日子，他过的是把骨头别在庄稼里日子。可书里一点苦腔都没有，福贵干这些的时候心里是稳的，因为他知道，地里的收成就是他一家的命根。

书里有一处写收成写得最好。稻子灌浆那阵，福贵天天傍晚去田边走一圈，捏一捏稻穗，看浆灌得饱不饱。稻子熟了以后，他打谷打到半夜，谷粒打在拌桶上噼噼啪啪，像下了一场响雨。他直起腰听这个声音，笑得露出缺了的牙。我读着读着也笑了。原来收成的声音是这样的，原来人最高兴的声音，是自己汗水变成的声音。

我开始想土地这件事。土地真奇怪，它不挑人。福贵败过家，土地照样长稻子；爷爷话少，土地照样给他好收成。它只看你弯不弯腰。它也不哄人，你偷一天懒，秋天它就少给你一把谷。我们课本上说民以食为天，我以前背句子，现在我有点信了：人头顶的天，有一半是从脚下的土里长出来的。

今天中午，我把剩饭的事跟妈妈说了，说以后不剩了。妈妈问我怎么突然懂事了。我说，我读了一个叫福贵的人，他让我看见一碗饭要走多远的路，从春天的水，走到秋天的镰刀，再走到我的碗里。

How Far a Bowl of Rice Travels: Thoughts on To Live

Yesterday at dinner I left a small half bowl of rice in my bowl. My mother said

nothing and carried the bowl away. That night I read the excerpt from To Live, and when Fugui squatted by the field looking at the rice, my face suddenly grew hot. I thought of that small half bowl of white rice, and of how it had traveled the same long road as the field of Fugui.

The excerpt shows Fugui farming again with no idle day in the whole year. In March he mends the water channels, in April he raises seedlings, in May he plants rice, in June he pulls weeds and catches worms, in August he guards the water, in September he harvests, in October he dries the grain and carries it to the barn. Our teacher asked us to copy these months into our notebook of accumulations, and my hand grew sore while copying. I live a life where clothes and food arrive by themselves; he lived a life with his bones wedged into the crops. Yet the book has no tone of bitterness at all. Fugui did these things with a steady heart, because he knew the harvest of the field was the root of life for his family.

The best writing in the excerpt is about the harvest. When the rice was filling with milk, Fugui walked around the field every evening, pinched an ear, and watched whether the grain was plump. After the rice ripened, he threshed it until midnight, and the grains striking the threshing tub sounded like a rain of noise. He straightened his back to listen to that sound and smiled with his missing teeth showing. I smiled too while reading. So this is the sound of a harvest. The happiest sound a person can hear is the sound his own sweat turns into.

I began to think about the land. The land is strange. It does not choose people. Fugui once ruined his family, and the land grew rice for him all the same; my grandfather is a man of few words, and the land gives him a good harvest all the same. It only watches whether you bend your back. It does not cheat you either. Steal one day of laziness, and in autumn it gives you one handful less of grain. Our textbook says that food is the heaven of the people. Before, I only recited the sentence. Now I partly believe it: half of the heaven over a person grows up from the soil under his feet.

At noon today I told my mother about the leftover rice and said I would not waste it again. She asked what made me mature all at once. I said: I read about a man named Fugui, and through him I saw how far a bowl of rice has to travel, from the water of spring, to the sickle of autumn, and then into my bowl.