小田鼠的储藏洞

小田鼠灰灰住在田埂底下。秋天一到，稻子镰了，玉米秆也干了，它把鼻子从洞口探出来，闻见的全是粮食的香味。

妈妈说：该挖储藏洞了。灰灰问：储藏洞是什么？妈妈说：就是把秋天收进地底下，冬天再拿出来吃。

灰灰选了一块高坡，开始挖洞。它的爪子小小的，土一粒一粒往外扒。挖了半个下午，洞才到它的腰那么深。它抹抹脸，接着挖。

蚱蜢从洞口跳进来，说：别挖啦，太阳这么好，来玩呀。灰灰摇摇头：我的洞还空着呢。蚱蜢蹦走了，灰灰听见它在远处唱歌。

洞挖好了，三个小间，一间放谷子，一间放豆子，最大的一间留给玉米。灰灰在最大那间的地上踩得平平的，还铺了一层干草。

搬玉米才是大活儿。玉米棒子比灰灰还大，它啃下一粒，拖进洞里，再啃一粒。一粒太轻，两粒又挤。它想了个办法，把玉米棒子竖起来，抱着它滚，滚到洞口再一粒一粒往里塞。

青蛙蹲在泉眼边劝它：差不多就行了，冬天还早呢。灰灰说：冬天不早啦，等我装满这个洞，冬天就到了。

灰灰每天天不亮就出门。露水打湿了胡须，它甩一甩，继续走。它背过玉米粒、黄豆、稻米，还背过一块别人丢的南瓜，啃得满脸都是橘色的渣。

有一回它拖一粒特别大的玉米粒，半路卡在石缝里。它往前拱不动，往后拽不出，急得原地转了三圈。它绕到石头另一边，从松土那头把路挖宽，玉米粒骨碌碌滚进了洞里。

装最后一粒玉米那天，灰灰站在最大那间里转了一圈。三面墙堆得整整齐齐，顶上还留了一指高的空。它把最后一粒按在顶上，像给房子盖上了最后一块瓦。

头一场雪落下来的时候，灰灰在洞里啃着玉米粒，听见外面风呼呼地刮。玉米是甜的，还带着秋天的太阳味。它想，明年秋天，还要再挖一个大洞。

The Storage Burrow of a Vole

Little Gray the vole lived under the field ridge. When autumn came, the rice was cut and the corn stalks dried out. She poked her nose out of the burrow and smelled nothing but grain.

Mother said: time to dig a storage burrow. Little Gray asked: what is a storage burrow? Mother said: it is putting autumn underground so you can take it out and eat it in winter.

Little Gray chose a high slope and started digging. Her claws were small, and she

scraped the soil out grain by grain. Half an afternoon later, the hole was only as deep as her waist. She wiped her face and kept digging.

A grasshopper hopped in and said: stop digging, the sun is wonderful, come play! Little Gray shook her head. My burrow is still empty. The grasshopper bounced away, and far off she heard him singing.

When the burrow was done it had three small rooms: one for grain, one for beans, and the biggest one for corn. Little Gray stamped the floor of the biggest room flat and spread a layer of dry grass on it.

Carrying corn was the big job. A corn cob was bigger than she was. She gnawed off one kernel, dragged it in, then gnawed off another. One kernel was too light, two did not fit. She thought of a trick: she stood the cob upright, hugged it, and rolled it to the burrow mouth, then pushed the kernels in one by one.

A frog sat by the spring and advised her: enough is enough, winter is still far away. Little Gray said: winter is not far. By the time this burrow is full, winter will be here.

Every day Little Gray set out before dawn. Dew wet her whiskers; she shook them and kept walking. She carried corn kernels, soybeans, rice grains, and once a piece of pumpkin someone had thrown away, chewing until her face was orange with pulp.

Once she dragged an unusually large kernel, and halfway home it wedged in a crack between stones. She could not push it forward and could not pull it back. She spun around three times in a panic. Then she went around to the other side of the stone and dug the path wider from the soft soil, and the kernel rolled into the burrow.

The day she placed the last kernel, Little Gray stood in the biggest room and turned around once. The three walls were stacked neat and tidy, with a space one finger high left at the top. She pressed the last kernel into that space, like laying the final tile on a roof.

When the first snow fell, Little Gray sat in the burrow nibbling a corn kernel, listening to the wind howling outside. The corn was sweet, still carrying the taste of autumn sun. She thought: next autumn, I will dig another big burrow.