

## BOHSEUNG

It was early Sunday morning with a shining sun. At the Home Depot I saw hundreds of baby plants and a crowd of shoppers with smiling faces. I imagined what they were thinking.

"I love fresh vegetables growing in my backyard. Isn't it wonderful that we can have them on our dinner table?"

"These flowers would be perfect for our front yard. We would have a very colorful garden in the spring".

Every gardener has their own dream of a bright future for these seeds. Planting a garden is one way to put our hopes, dreams and pleasures in the soil. And when the time is right, we can say "Wow. Our hopes have popped up like little firecrackers."

Spring is such an energetic season. Birds are singing. Trees and flowers are budding. Wind is blowing very warm with a fresh smell. Everything in my backyard is awakening, like people yawning and stretching as they get out of bed in the morning.

My own garden requires constant attention. Everyday I put my effort into it. Getting up early in the morning, checking the weather, looking at the soil, watering and fertilizing when necessary. I notice how much the garden has grown, and if I see a problem I try to fix it. Some days I am so upset when a leaf has turned brown. And some days I am so happy when a plant finally bears fruit. The more my plants grow, the more my memory of them grows too.

Growing my garden is like raising my boys. Sometimes they are hard to handle and I want to cry. Other times I am laughing with them nearly all day long. As my sons are growing, beautiful memories are growing too. We all create beautiful memories with our children.

My mother lives in Korea and I live in the U.S. She has visited us several times in the last few years, especially to keep in touch with her grandsons. She has many good memories of me growing up, and during these visits, she cultivates new memories with her grandsons. My sons understand Korean, but they aren't fluent, and my mother doesn't speak English at all. Nevertheless, during her visits I have watched my mother smiling and laughing all the time. The more smiles on my mother's face, the more beautiful memories are building up.

One day she asked me to plant some Korean vegetables in our backyard. After I made a small soil bed, my mother tended the growing garden every day. Finally, we had fresh vegetables on our dinner table. She taught the boys how to say the name of each vegetable in Korean, and which ones were their grandfather's favorites.

While she stayed with us, we made many memories of our growing garden. The day before my mother left, it was raining. She was standing at the backdoor, gazing at the garden. Looking at her, I knew that she would have these warm memories in her heart once she was back home.

Sounds of the rain whispered my mother's words in my ear: "My love, my son and grandson. I am your mother and grandmother. I will always remember this time we have spent together. I will miss you so much."