

那道被订正的错题，我记了很多年

那道错题我到现在还记得：数学试卷第十四题，一个负号抄成了正号，整道题的解法都对，答案全错。分数扣掉八分，卷子发下来我只盯着那个负号看，越看越委屈，觉得这八分扣得不讲道理。

中午休息，数学老师把我叫到办公室。我以为要挨批评，结果他只是把卷子摊开，问我：这道题你考试的时候，心里在想什么？我想了半天，说抄条件的时候觉得前面那个符号应该是正的。他拿起笔，在那个符号下面画了条线：你自己看，题目里写的是什麼？我说是负的。他说：你看，你不是不会，你是把觉得当成了答案。

他让我当场重做。我重新抄条件，一步一步写，写到第二步他让我停，回头检查抄过来的数字。我核对了一遍，发现又漏了个括号。他没有催，坐在旁边改作业，等我自己发现。那天中午我订正了四道题，每一道都先核对条件再落笔。

走廊谈心的那次在几天以后。我在走廊背课文，背得磕磕绊绊，他抱着作业本路过，停下来听我背完，说：背书和做题是一个毛病，你总在最模糊的地方滑过去。他让我以后凡是心里闪过一个应该是的地方，都停下来回到原文再看一眼。走廊里就谈了这几句，前后不到三分钟，上课铃一响各自走了。

很多年过去，我早不记得那道题考的是什麼知识点，但那句话一直在：把觉得当成了答案。上学时它管的是错题，后来它管的是别的东西——写东西时觉得某个词应该是这个意思，就去查一遍；算账时觉得这个数应该是这样，就再核一遍。当年那八分扣得讲不讲道理，我早就不计较了。真正被改掉的不是那个负号，是那个在模糊处滑过去的习惯。

前几天收拾旧书，那张卷子从一本练习册里滑出来，边角都毛了。我把那个负号看了几秒，纸都黄了，字迹还清楚。我把卷子放回去，没扔。

The Corrected Mistake I Have Remembered for Years

I still remember that wrong problem: question fourteen on the math test, a minus sign copied as a plus. Every step of my solution was right, and the final answer was wrong. Eight points off. When the paper came back, I stared at that minus sign and felt the eight points were taken unfairly.

At noon, my math teacher called me to the office. I expected a scolding. He only spread the paper out and asked: when you copied this condition during the exam, what were you thinking? I thought for a while and said the sign in front felt like a plus. He took a pen, drew a line under the sign, and said: look yourself, what does the problem actually write? I said it is a minus. He said: you see, it is not that you cannot do it; you treated a feeling as an answer.

He made me redo it on the spot. I copied the conditions again, wrote step by step, and at the second step he stopped me and told me to check the numbers I had

copied. I went through them and found I had dropped a bracket. He did not hurry me; he sat beside me grading homework and waited for me to find it myself. That noon I corrected four problems, and each time I checked the conditions before putting pen to paper.

The talk in the corridor came a few days later. I was reciting a text aloud in the corridor, stumbling over the sentences. He passed by with a stack of notebooks, stopped, listened to the end, and said: reciting and solving share the same flaw; you always slide past the place where you are least sure. He told me that from then on, whenever the phrase 'should be' flashes through my mind, I should stop and go back to the original text. That was the whole talk, less than three minutes. The bell rang and we each went our way.

Years have passed. I no longer remember which concept the problem tested, but the sentence stays: you treated a feeling as an answer. At school it governed wrong problems; later it governed other things. When I write and feel a word should mean something, I look it up. When I add up a bill and feel a number should be that way, I check again. Whether those eight points were fair no longer matters. What was truly corrected was not the minus sign but the habit of sliding past the unclear place.

The other day, while sorting old books, that test paper slid out of an exercise book, its corners worn. I looked at the minus sign for a few seconds. The paper had yellowed, but the writing was still clear. I put it back and did not throw it away.