

我的蓝色文具盒

我书包里最要好的朋友是一个蓝色的文具盒。它是过生日时妈妈送我的，铁皮的，比我的手掌长出一截，整片都是深蓝色，像游泳池最深的那一格水。盖子上印着一艘宇宙飞船，飞船后头拖着一串星星。飞船的边已经被我摸得发白，星星也磨掉了一颗，可我还是觉得它好看。

文具盒有个小开关，往左一按，啪的一声，盖子就弹开了。它里面分两层。上层是一条条圆凹槽，一共七个，铅笔们一排躺着，从短到长个儿排开：最左边是我用秃了的洞洞铅笔，右边依次是两支平时写字的、一支画画用的软铅笔，最后面躺着一支红色的，专门用来订正错误。下层是个浅格子，橡皮、尺子和一把小剪刀挤在里面。橡皮原先是白的，现在四个角都灰了，它旁边还躺着半块我捏成小人的橡皮泥。

每天早上，我把铅笔一支支放进去，盖子啪地扣上，它钻进了书包最外面的口袋。路上书包一颠一颠，我猜里面的铅笔也在打瞌睡。到了学校，它趴在我的桌角。上课它听我念课文，考试的时候，我紧张，手伸进书包摸到它冰凉的铁皮边，心就定了一点。上次数学考试，最后一道应用题我算了三遍，全靠那支软铅笔在草稿纸上沙沙地画线段图，它替我把难题拆开。

文具盒还有个暗藏的小机关：盖子内侧贴着一张指甲盖大的课程表，是开学时我自己抄的，边角已经卷起来了，我用透明胶带重新粘过两次。有了它，我再也不用早上翻书包找课程表。盒底还贴着一小条胶带，上面写着我的名字和班级，上学期文具盒在操场边被人捡到，就是靠这条胶带回到了我手里。

放学回家，我把它擦干净，铅笔一支支归位，红笔睡在最里面。文具盒不会说话，可我天天跟它在一起。它身上那些磨白的地方，都是我们一起上学留下的。

My Blue Pencil Case

The best friend in my schoolbag is a blue pencil case. Mom gave it to me on my birthday. It is made of tin, a little longer than my palm, and blue all over, like the deepest lane of a swimming pool. The lid has a spaceship printed on it, with a string of stars trailing behind. The edges of the spaceship have gone pale from my fingers, and one star has rubbed away, but I still think it is handsome.

The case has a little latch. Push it left and, with a snap, the lid springs open. Inside there are two layers. The upper layer has seven round grooves, and my pencils lie in a row, sorted from short to tall: on the far left is my worn-down dotted pencil, then two everyday writing pencils, then a soft drawing pencil, and in the back sleeps a red one used only for corrections. The lower layer is a shallow tray where the eraser, the ruler, and a tiny pair of scissors squeeze in together. The eraser used to be white; now its four corners are gray. Beside it lies half a lump of modeling clay I squeezed into a little person.

Every morning I drop the pencils in one by one, the lid snaps shut, and the case climbs into the outermost pocket of my schoolbag. On the way, the bag bounces, and I bet the pencils inside are dozing. At school it crouches on the corner of my desk. It listens to me read aloud in class, and during tests, when I get nervous, my hand reaches into the bag and finds its cold tin edge, and my heart settles a little. In the last math test I worked out the final word problem three times, all thanks to the soft drawing pencil scratching line diagrams across the scratch paper, breaking the hard problem open for me.

The case has a hidden trick too: on the inside of the lid sticks a fingernail-sized class schedule I copied myself at the start of term. Its corners have curled up, and I have re-taped it with clear tape twice. With it, I never dig through the bag for the schedule in the morning. On the bottom of the case is a small strip of tape with my name and class written on it; last term the case was found by the playground and came back to me because of that strip.

After school I wipe the case clean, put every pencil back, and tuck the red one into the back. The pencil case cannot talk, yet I am with it every single day. The worn pale spots on it are marks left by our school days together.

文具盒里的两家人

我的文具盒是蓝色的，方方的，像一座两层的蓝色小房子。它站在我的书桌右上角，已经站了一年多。房子外墙印着一艘宇宙飞船，右下的角上磕掉了一小块漆，露出银白色的铁皮，那是它今年秋天从桌上跳下去留下的伤。

这座房子分两层，住着一大家子文具。上层是铅笔一家的房间，床是一条条圆凹槽。长铅笔睡左边，短铅笔睡右边，红笔的床在最里头，因为它晚上要值班，白天睡得沉。下层是橡皮、直尺和小剪刀的客厅。橡皮个子小，滚来滚去，总是睡不老实，早上打开盖子常常看见它横躺在过道上。直尺最长，斜着躺，一头顶到墙角。剪刀蜷在角落，只露出两个圆耳朵。

每天早上六点半，小主人把铅笔一根根扶正，关上大门，啪的一声锁好。房子就跟着他出门了。在书包里，房子和课本挤在一起，晃一路。到了教室，房子被请上桌角，一坐就是一天。上课铃响，小主人掀开盖子，取一支铅笔写字，铅笔在纸上沙沙地走，走出一排排整齐的字。考试那天，红笔被叫醒，帮小主人把写错的地方圈出来。美术课上，画画用的软铅笔出来画树，画完回来时鼻尖磨得圆圆的。

房子也有闹脾气的时候。有天下大雨，小主人忘了给它关严门，放学路上雨水灌进下层，橡皮泡得肿起来，剪刀的耳朵生了两粒锈点。那天晚上小主人把它放在窗台上晾，用纸巾把每个角落都吸干，一边吸一边跟它说话，像在道歉。第二天，铅笔们照样排队，直尺照样斜躺，房子又站回了书桌右上角。

晚上回到家，铅笔们挨个擦干净回床，橡皮抖掉身上的碎屑，直尺归位。小主人临睡前总要摸一下房子蓝色的屋顶，确认铅笔都在，才去洗漱。这就是我的文具盒，一座每天装着一家人上学放学的蓝色小房子。

Two Families Inside the Pencil Case

My pencil case is blue and square, like a little two-story blue house. It has stood on the upper right corner of my desk for more than a year. Its outer wall shows a spaceship, and on the lower right corner a chip of paint has knocked off, baring silver-white tin – the scar from the day this autumn it jumped off the desk.

The house has two floors, home to a big family of stationery. The upper floor is the pencils' bedroom, its beds a row of round grooves. The long pencils sleep on the left, the short ones on the right, and the red pen's bed is deepest in, because it works the evening shift and sleeps heavily by day. The lower floor is the living room of the eraser, the ruler, and the little scissors. The eraser is small and rolls around, never sleeping straight; open the lid in the morning and you often find it lying across the hallway. The ruler is the longest, lying diagonally with one head pushed against the wall. The scissors curl in the corner, showing only their two round ears.

Every morning at six thirty, the little master straightens each pencil, shuts the front door, and locks it with a snap. The house sets off with him. Inside the schoolbag it squeezes against the textbooks, rocking the whole way. In the classroom it is invited onto the corner of the desk and sits there all day. When class begins, the little master lifts the lid and takes out a pencil, which walks across the paper with a rustle, leaving neat rows of characters. On exam day the red pen is woken up to circle the mistakes. In art class the soft drawing pencil comes out to draw trees and returns with its nose ground round.

The house has bad days too. One day it poured, and the little master forgot to shut its door tight; rainwater flooded the lower floor, the eraser swelled soapy, and two rust spots appeared on the scissors' ears. That evening the little master set the house on the windowsill to dry, blotting every corner with tissue, talking to it as he blotted, almost apologizing. The next day the pencils lined up as usual, the ruler lay diagonally as usual, and the house stood back on the upper right corner of the desk.

In the evening at home, the pencils are wiped clean one by one and climb back into bed, the eraser shakes off its crumbs, and the ruler returns to its place. Before bed the little master always strokes the blue roof of the house, making sure

every pencil is home, before going to wash up. This is my pencil case: a little blue house that carries its whole family to school and back every day.

旧文具盒和它的一天

三年级开学第一天，妈妈把一个新的蓝色文具盒放进我的书包。它亮得能照见手指，飞船图案蓝得发亮，开关很紧，要用力按才能打开。我把它按在桌上，啪，打开；再啪，扣上，玩了一整个早读。

它的里面我早就研究透了。上层七个圆凹槽，我按高矮给铅笔排了队；下层浅格子里，橡皮靠左边，直尺压着底，剪刀卡在右边，谁也不挤谁。这个摆法我练了三天，闭着眼也能摆对。同桌笑我讲究，我说这样上课找东西快，不用在盒子里乱摸。

一学期过去，文具盒陪我过了很多天。早读它蹲在桌角，我念课文，它安安静静听着。语文课要划好词，我啪地掀盖，拇指一挑就拿到铅笔，不用低头翻找。数学单元考试那次，我的铅笔芯啪地断了，全班都在写字，我手心冒汗。我摸到文具盒，从下层摸出那支削好的备用铅笔，笔尖还是尖的，是前一天晚上妈妈刚削的。那道题我按时做完了。还有一次更险：上课铃响了，我才想起直尺忘在家里，急得团团转。我打开文具盒，直尺正斜躺在下层，一头顶着墙角，像早就在等我。老师说，你的文具盒倒收拾得清爽。我听了心里美滋滋的。

文具盒慢慢旧了。飞船的边磨白，磕掉漆的角长出了一点锈，开关松了，轻轻一按就开。可它里面还是整整齐齐：铅笔排着队，橡皮躺回左边，红笔睡在最里头。有天晚上我收拾书包，把它擦了一遍，忽然发现它已经陪我走了整整一个三年级——从开学第一天亮得照手，到现在开关一按就开。

妈妈说下学期可以换个新的。我抱着它想了想，说先不换。它旧是旧了，可它里面每一支铅笔睡在哪，我闭着眼都知道。换一个新的，我又得重新认识一遍。

The Old Pencil Case and Its Day

On the first day of third grade, Mom put a brand-new blue pencil case into my schoolbag. It was shiny enough to show my finger in it, the spaceship pattern blazing blue, and the latch so stiff I had to press hard to open it. I slapped it on the desk: snap, open; snap, shut. I played with it through the whole morning reading period.

I had already studied everything inside it. The upper layer has seven round grooves, and I lined the pencils up by height; in the lower tray the eraser keeps the left, the ruler lies flat along the bottom, the scissors wedge into the right, and

nobody crowds anybody. I practiced that arrangement for three days until I could do it with my eyes shut. My deskmate teased me for being fussy. I said it makes things fast to find in class – no fishing around blind.

The term went by, and the case kept me company through many days. During morning reading it crouched on the desk corner while I recited texts, listening quietly. In Chinese class, to underline good phrases, I snapped the lid open and flicked out a pencil with my thumb without looking down. Once in a math unit test, my pencil lead snapped with a crack while the whole class was writing, and my palms went sweaty. I found the case by touch, reached into the lower tray, and came out with the sharpened spare pencil – its tip still sharp, sharpened by Mom the night before. I finished that problem on time. There was an even closer call: the bell rang and I remembered I had left my ruler at home, and I was spinning in panic. I opened the case, and there lay the ruler in the lower tray, diagonal, one head against the corner, as if it had been waiting for me all along. The teacher said, your pencil case is kept nice and tidy. I glowed inside at that.

The case grew old slowly. The spaceship's edges wore pale, the chipped corner grew a little rust, and the latch loosened until a light press opens it. But inside everything is still in order: pencils in line, the eraser back on its left, the red pen asleep in the back. One evening while packing my bag I wiped it down and suddenly realized it has already walked a whole third-grade year with me – from the first day of school, shiny enough to show my face, to now, when the latch opens at the faintest press.

Mom said I could get a new one next term. I held the old case and thought a while, then said not yet. It is worn, true, but inside it I know with my eyes shut where every pencil sleeps. A new one would mean getting acquainted all over again.