

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.