

去年我也在这里赌过花

三月十九日，星期四，晴。我在日记第一行写：去年今天，我也在这里赌过花。

事情要从今天清晨说起。六点半到校，我把书包扔在教室就下了楼，想去花坛看看。昨天傍晚我数过，石凳边那排连翘上有八个花苞，紧得像铁锈色的小钉子。我想赌一把，赌今早会不会开出一个。跑到跟前，何止一个，五个都开了，黄色的花瓣薄得能透光。我蹲下来数，剩下三个还闭着，尖上挂着水珠。值日生推着车从后面经过，问我蹲着干什么，我说数花。他愣了一下，也蹲下来一起数，数完说，开了五个，挺准的，然后推车走了。我掏出日记本，记下时间、气温、开花的方位，笔尖走得很快，怕慢一点就漏掉什么。写日记的心情和昨天完全不同，昨天是等，今天是追。

上楼的时候，一本旧日记从抽屉里掉出来，是七年级下学期的，里面还夹着去年三月包书皮的纸。翻开掉开的那一页，日期是去年三月十九日，那一天我写的是：今天冷，花没开，我赌明天。我站在走廊上看了很久。原来去年我也在这里赌过花。那本日记后面几页写的都是考试、换座位、跟同学闹别扭，花的事只占了那一行，可花把那一天记得清清楚楚，今年照样在差不多的日子开出来，一天也没有早，一天也没有晚。

早读前我又去了一次花坛。五个开的在风里点头，三个闭着的还是那么紧。我蹲下来把今天的样子写进日记：今年开了五个。去年我赌明天，今年我赌剩下的三个。写完我加了一句：花不写日记，可它一天都没有迟到过。我们总说明天再看，可明天看花的人，已经不是今天的人了。这句话我没敢让同桌看见。

早读铃响了，我把两本日记摞在一起塞进抽屉，最上面压着去年那张包书皮的纸。窗外那排玉兰的叶子已经长得很密，花早谢了，可我知道它们明年还会来。就像我知道，明年三月，我也会站在这里，赌下一个花苞。

Last Year I Bet on the Flowers Here Too

Thursday, March 19, sunny. On the first line of my diary I wrote: last year on this day, I also stood here betting on the flowers.

It started this morning. I got to school at half past six, dropped my schoolbag in the classroom, and ran downstairs to the flower bed. Yesterday evening I had counted eight buds on the row of forsythia by the stone bench, tight like little rust-colored nails. I wanted to make a bet, to bet whether one would open this morning. When I got there, far more than one had opened. Five were out, their yellow petals thin enough to let light through. I squatted and counted. The remaining three were still shut, water beads hanging on their tips. The student on cleaning duty pushed his cart past behind me and asked what I was crouching for. I said I was counting flowers. He froze for a second, then crouched down and counted with me. Five opened, he said, pretty close guess, and pushed his cart away. I took out my diary and wrote down the time, the temperature, which side the flowers faced. My pen moved

fast, afraid that if I slowed down I would miss something. My mood while writing was completely different from yesterday. Yesterday I was waiting. Today I was chasing.

Going upstairs, an old diary fell out of my desk, the one from seventh grade, second term, with last year's brown-paper book cover still tucked inside. The page it landed open on was dated March 19 of last year. That day I had written: cold today, flowers did not open, I bet on tomorrow. I stood in the corridor and read it for a long time. So last year I had also stood here betting on the flowers. The pages after that line were all about exams, seat changes, and quarrels with classmates. The flowers took up only that one line, yet the flowers remembered that day perfectly. This year they opened on nearly the same date, not a day early, not a day late.

Before morning reading I went to the flower bed once more. The five opened flowers nodded in the wind; the three closed ones were still tight. I squatted and wrote today's scene into my diary: five opened this year. Last year I bet on tomorrow; this year I bet on the remaining three. Then I added a line: the flowers keep no diary, yet they have never been late for a single day. We always say we will look tomorrow, but the person looking tomorrow is no longer the person of today. I did not dare let my deskmate see that sentence.

The reading bell rang. I stacked the two diaries, pushed them into my desk, and pressed last year's brown paper on top. Outside the window the leaves of the magnolia row had grown thick. Their flowers were long gone, but I know they will come back next year. Just as I know that next March I will stand here again, betting on the next bud.