

抽屉里的旧文具盒

十一月二日 星期日 晴。

今天我做了一件在别人看来可能有点怪的事：把用了两年多的旧文具盒收进了抽屉，而不是扔进垃圾桶。

旧文具盒是铁皮的，军绿色，是我表哥上高中时用剩的，传给了我。传到我手里的时候它就不新了：盒盖上的绿漆在两个角上磕掉了，露出银白的铁皮底；合页松了，打开的时候盖子会歪一下才立稳；盒底的漆磨薄了一小块，摸上去比别处光滑。里面靠盖那一侧印着一行小字，是生产厂的地址，漆磨得只剩一半，我闭着眼都能背出来。这两年它替我挡过不少事：同桌的笔袋拉链崩开过，弹飞的圆珠笔砸在它身上，砸出一个浅浅的坑。

换新的念头是上周起的。它的合页彻底松了，盖子耷拉着，笔在课上滚出来两次，一次滚到前排女生脚边，我红着脸钻下去捡。周五放学，爸爸带我去超市文具区。我没挑花哨的，选了一个灰色的布文具盒，拉链顺滑，内部分格清楚。付款的时候爸爸问我，旧的怎么办，扔了吧。我说，不扔。

回家后我找了块旧毛巾，把铁皮盒里外擦了一遍，磕掉漆的地方擦不出颜色，但灰擦干净了。我把它立在书桌抽屉里，让它靠着台灯底座，像靠在墙边休息。抽屉里还有上学期用完的半盒笔芯、一沓折角的草稿纸。它们是一类东西，都干完活了。

躺下以后我想了很久，为什么舍不得扔。这个盒子不是我妈买的，是表哥传下来的，他考上了大学，人在外地。盒子上的坑和掉漆，一格一格都有出处。扔掉它，好像把一段传下来的东西随手丢掉了。收进抽屉不一样，它还在，只是不再干活。

新文具盒在书桌上待命，旧的在抽屉里待着。我想，往后每打开一次抽屉，我都会想起它替我挡过的那一记圆珠笔。

The Old Pencil Case in the Drawer

November 2, Sunday, sunny.

Today I did something that others might find a little strange: I put my pencil case of more than two years into a drawer instead of throwing it into the trash can.

The old one is made of tin, army green, handed down to me by my cousin after he finished high school. It was already not new when it reached me: the green paint on both corners of the lid had been knocked off, showing the silvery metal underneath; the hinge was loose, so the lid tilted once before standing steady when opened; a patch of paint on the bottom had worn thin and felt smoother than the rest. On the lid side inside there was a line of small print, the factory address, half of it worn away, and I could recite it with my eyes closed. Over these two years it shielded me from many things: my deskmate's pen bag once burst open, and a ballpoint pen flew out

and hit it, leaving a shallow dent.

The idea of replacing it came last week. Its hinge went completely loose, the lid hung down, and pens rolled out twice in class; once a pen rolled to the feet of the girl in front, and I climbed down to fetch it with a red face. After school on Friday, my father took me to the stationery section of the supermarket. I did not pick a fancy one; I chose a gray cloth pencil case with a smooth zipper and clear inner compartments. At the checkout my father asked what to do with the old one, and suggested throwing it away. I said: no.

After we got home I found an old towel and wiped the tin case inside and out. The knocked-off paint did not come back, but the dust came off. I stood it upright in the desk drawer, leaning against the base of the desk lamp, like resting against a wall. The drawer also holds a half box of refills from last term and a stack of draft papers with folded corners. They are the same kind of things, all off duty.

After lying down I thought for a long time about why I could not bear to throw it away. My mother did not buy this case; my cousin passed it to me. He got into a university and is far away now. Every dent and every flake of paint on it has its own story. Throwing it away would be like tossing away something that had been handed down. Keeping it in the drawer is different: it is still there, just no longer on duty.

The new pencil case stands ready on the desk, and the old one stays in the drawer. I think that every time I open the drawer from now on, I will remember that ballpoint pen it once blocked for me.