

我在讲台上等了三天

我在讲台的角落里，等了三天。

我是一只蓝色文具盒，盖子上印着恐龙，尾巴缺了半条——那是小主人三岁时用圆珠笔画掉色的。我的拉链头上系着一截蓝线结，是她奶奶打的，说这样好拉。

星期五放学，教室里像一锅烧开的水。小主人把我放在讲台上，去帮同学捡书包，然后人群就涌出了门。我躺在墨水瓶旁边，听着脚步声越来越远。我想喊她，可是文具盒不会喊。天黑下来的时候，一只大手把我拿起来，放进了讲台抽屉。抽屉里有粉笔灰的味道，我等了整整一个周末。

周一早晨，抽屉开了。老师把我举到半空，问全班：这是谁的？我看见小主人坐在第三排，手抬到一半，又缩回去。她以为我丢了，不敢说。老师点了她的名字。她走上讲台的时候，我在老师手里轻轻晃了一下——其实我想说，我一直在这儿，哪儿也没去。

老师当着她的面打开我，一样一样数：三支铅笔，一块橡皮，一把尺子，还有她塞在我最里侧口袋里的那张折成四折的小纸条，上面写着半首没编完的歌。小主人接过我的时候抱得很紧。后来我趴在她书包侧袋里，听见她小声跟我说：以后我每天晚上都数一遍你。

那天傍晚，我从书包侧袋的开口缝里，听见小主人的妈妈在打电话。老师说，孩子把我落在讲台上，三天不敢开口。电话那头安静了一会儿，那位妈妈说，家里什么都替她收拾，书包是晚上装好的，铅笔是削好的，连第二天穿什么都摆在床头。她的声音低下去：我没想到她丢了东西不敢说。老师在那头说，属于她自己的东西，让她自己清点吧。数过铅笔的孩子，才知道铅笔落在哪里。

那天晚上，小主人真的把我摊在书桌上，一支一支数。她把我放在门口的小凳上，说这样明天不会忘。她的妈妈站在房门口看了一会儿，没有伸手。

我在小凳上睡得很踏实。后来我还丢过一把尺子、一块橡皮，都是她自己找回来的。她找东西的时候翻书包的样子，笨手笨脚的，可是我觉得，那才是她自己的手。

讲台上落下的东西，会等人来领。可是有些东西，比如自己动手的习惯，得孩子自己长出来。我在她书包侧袋里，替她数着日子。

I Waited on the Teacher's Desk for Three Days

I waited in the corner of the teacher's desk for three days.

I am a blue pencil case with a dinosaur on the lid, missing half its tail — that faded when my little owner scratched it with a ballpoint pen at age three. A knot of blue thread is tied to my zipper pull; her grandmother tied it, so it would be easier to pull.

On Friday after school, the classroom was like a pot of boiling water. My little

owner set me on the desk to help a classmate pick up a backpack, and then the crowd poured out the door. I lay beside the ink bottle, listening to the footsteps fade. I wanted to call her, but pencil cases cannot call. When it grew dark, a big hand lifted me into the desk drawer. The drawer smelled of chalk dust, and I waited there the whole weekend.

On Monday morning the drawer opened. The teacher held me up in the air and asked the class: whose is this? I saw my little owner in the third row, raising her hand halfway and pulling it back. She thought I was lost and was afraid to speak. The teacher called her name. As she walked up to the desk, I wobbled gently in the teacher's hand — I wanted to say: I was here the whole time, I never went anywhere.

The teacher opened me in front of her and counted, one by one: three pencils, one eraser, a ruler, and the note folded into quarters that she had tucked in my innermost pocket, with half an unfinished song written on it. My little owner hugged me tightly when she took me back. Later, lying in the side pocket of her backpack, I heard her whisper to me: from now on I will count you every night.

That evening, through the opening of the side pocket, I heard her mother on the phone. The teacher said the child had left me on the desk and had been too afraid to speak up for three days. There was a pause on the line, then the mother said that at home everything was done for the child — the backpack packed at night, the pencils already sharpened, even tomorrow's clothes laid out by the bed. Her voice dropped: I never imagined she would be afraid to speak about losing something. The teacher said: let her count her own things herself. A child who has counted her pencils knows where they were left.

That night, my little owner really spread me out on the desk and counted me pencil by pencil. She set me on the little stool by the door, so I would not be forgotten tomorrow. Her mother stood in the doorway for a while, and did not reach out her hand.

I slept soundly on that stool. Later she lost a ruler and an eraser, and found both of them herself. The way she rummages through her backpack is clumsy, but that, I think, is what her own hands are for.

Things left behind on the teacher's desk wait to be claimed. But some things, like the habit of doing things yourself, have to grow in a child on their own. I sit in her side pocket, counting the days for her.