

一张卷子的故事：妈妈笑的那天晚上

发卷子那天是星期四。数学测验我考了九十二分，分数不算低，但卷子上三个红叉全跟粗心有关：计算题把减号看成加号，填空题漏了单位，还有一道选择题明明算对了却涂错了格子。老师在卷子上批了两个字：可惜。

回家路上我一直在想怎么跟妈妈说。上次她看到红叉时叹的那口气，我到现在还记得。我把卷子放在桌上，没有藏。妈妈放下菜篮子过来看，她没有马上说话，先把三道错题各问了我一遍：这道题你是不会做，还是看错了？我说是看错了。她点点头，让我把这三道题抄到错题本上，再各做一道同类型的题。

错题本是我上个月开始用的，前面已经记了十几条错误类型。妈妈翻了两页，发现我记录的粗心错误从每周五六次降到了两三次。她指着其中一页问我：这一周怎么只有一次？我说因为每天写完作业都按读题、查答案、对照三步检查一遍。妈妈没夸我，但嘴角往上弯了一下，眼睛里有光。

晚饭后她让我把那道看错符号的计算题再讲一遍思路。我讲到一半发现又差点漏单位，自己先停住补上了。妈妈在旁边笑了，这次是出声的笑，说：你自己能抓住自己的错误了，这比考一百分值钱。

我在周记里写：妈妈的笑不是卷子给的，是错题本一页一页换来的。粗心不是天生的毛病，它怕认真，你每天多检查一遍，它就少一次机会。那天晚上我把错题本放在枕头边，想着下星期让它再干净一点。

The Story of One Test Paper: The Evening Mom Smiled

Papers came back on a Thursday. I scored ninety-two on the math quiz, not a low score, but all three red X marks on the paper were about carelessness: I read a minus sign as a plus sign in a calculation, left out the unit in a fill-in blank, and on one multiple-choice question I had the right answer but filled in the wrong bubble. The teacher wrote two words on the paper: what a pity.

On the way home I kept thinking about how to tell Mom. I still remember the sigh she let out when she saw red X marks last time. I put the paper on the table instead of hiding it. Mom put down her grocery basket and came over. She did not speak right away. She asked me about each of the three wrong problems: did you not know how to do this one, or did you misread it? I said I misread it. She nodded and asked me to copy the three problems into my mistake notebook and then do one similar problem for each.

I started using the mistake notebook last month, and it already had more than a dozen error types recorded. Mom flipped through two pages and noticed my carelessness entries had dropped from five or six a week to two or three. She pointed at one page and asked: why only once this week? I said because every day after homework I check

with the three steps: read the problem, check the answer, compare with the textbook. Mom did not praise me, but the corner of her mouth lifted a little, and her eyes lit up.

After dinner she asked me to explain my thinking on the calculation where I misread the sign. Halfway through I almost missed the unit again, but I stopped myself and added it. Mom laughed out loud beside me and said: you can catch your own mistakes now, and that is worth more than a hundred points.

I wrote in my weekly journal: Mom's smile was not given by the test paper; it was earned page by page in the mistake notebook. Carelessness is not a born flaw. It is afraid of seriousness. Check one more time every day, and it loses one more chance. That night I put the mistake notebook by my pillow, thinking about making it a little cleaner next week.