

我们十几个人去找一个文具盒

下课铃刚响，我们组的小雅就哭了。她的绿色文具盒不见了，盒盖上贴着一只绿青蛙，是她爷爷买的。班长刘阳在讲台上拍两下手，问谁愿意帮忙找，呼啦一下，十几个人站起来了，我也站起来了。刘阳分工，我和胖墩负责二楼走廊和楼梯，从栏杆往下看，从地面往上看，一层一层过。

找东西是细活。楼梯每一级台阶的角落都要看一眼，走廊窗台上、饮水机旁边、图书角的架子底下，都得弯腰。我在二楼楼梯拐角捡到一支铅笔，笔杆上有小雅名字的首字母贴纸，我把铅笔放进自己口袋，心想文具盒可能散了一路。胖墩在图书角发现盒盖上的绿青蛙贴纸翘着边，喊我们过去，是图书角的老师收的，铅笔散在旁边，老师一样一样捡起来放好，说已经让值日生往你们班送去了。

我们几个往回跑，正好碰上来找我们的刘阳他们。大家一窝蜂跑回教室，小雅从班主任手里接过文具盒，一样一样往外摆，摆到那截断铅笔的时候停住了，因为断铅笔被人用纸条包了尖。刘阳挠挠头，说那纸条是他包的，他在楼梯上捡到铅笔，怕笔尖扎破文具盒，就顺手包了。小雅看着我们，说了声谢谢，声音小小的，我们十几个人一下子全笑了。

其实那天我自己也差点闯祸，找的时候我把图书角的一摞书碰倒了，是胖墩帮我一本一本码回去的，码完他跟我说，帮人找东西也得手脚轻，别帮倒忙。这句话我记到现在。

后来我们班有了个新规矩，是班主任提议的：谁的文具掉了，全班帮找；捡到的东西先放讲台失物处，写上捡到的地方。上个学期讲台的失物处收过四把尺子、两只手套和一个跳绳，一样一样都回到了主人手里。帮人找东西这件事，我们越做越熟练，像一件理所当然的事。那天在楼梯上捡到铅笔的时候，我心里忽然明白了一件事：帮别人找东西的时候，自己是快乐的，那种快乐比找到自己的玩具还要大。

The Day a Dozen of Us Hunted for One Pencil Case

The break bell had barely rung when Xiaoya from our group started crying. Her green pencil case was gone, the one with the green frog sticker on the lid that her grandpa had bought. Class monitor Liu Yang clapped twice on the podium and asked who wanted to help search, and in a whoosh a dozen of us stood up. I stood up too. Liu Yang split up the teams; Pudun and I took the second-floor corridor and the stairs, looking down over the railing and up along the ground, floor by floor.

Searching is careful work. Every corner of every stair step got a glance, and the windowsills, the water dispenser, the space under the reading corner shelves all required bending down. At the second-floor stair turn I found a pencil with an initial sticker of Xiaoya's name on its shaft. I put it in my pocket, thinking the case might have spilled along the way. At the reading corner, Pudun spotted the green frog sticker with a peeling edge, and called us over. The reading corner teacher had collected it; the pencils lay scattered nearby, and she had picked them up one by

one, saying she had already asked the duty students to deliver it to our class.

We ran back and bumped right into Liu Yang's team coming to fetch us. The whole crowd poured into the classroom, and Xiaoya took the case from our teacher, laying things out one by one. She stopped at the broken pencil, because someone had wrapped its tip in a paper sleeve. Liu Yang scratched his head and said he had wrapped it: he had found the pencil on the stairs and was afraid the sharp tip would poke a hole in the case, so he wrapped it up. Xiaoya looked at us and said thank you, very quietly, and all a dozen of us burst out laughing.

Truth is, I nearly caused trouble myself that day. While searching I knocked over a stack of books at the reading corner, and Pudun helped me restack them one by one, then told me that when you help someone search, your hands still have to be gentle, or your help becomes a mess. I remember that sentence to this day.

Later our class got a new rule, suggested by our teacher: when anyone loses a supply, the whole class helps search; found items go first to the lost-and-found spot on the podium, with the place they were found written down. Last semester the lost-and-found held four rulers, two gloves, and a jump rope, and every one of them traveled back to its owner. Getting good at helping others search feels more and more like something simply done. When I picked up that pencil on the stairs, I suddenly understood something: helping someone look for their things makes you happy, and that happiness is bigger than finding your own toy.