

花苞的请柬

花苞给春天写了一张请柬，写得很慢很慢，整整写了一个冬天 / 请柬上没有一个字，只有一点粉、一点黄，和一点点淡淡的香气 / 露珠特意赶过来，替它贴上一枚亮晶晶的邮票 / 风一吹，请柬就出发了，第一站去找住得最近的那只小蜜蜂

蜜蜂认得路，一看请柬就笑了，提起空篮子立刻动身出发 / 蝴蝶收到请柬，挑了最花哨的那件衣裳，飞了半个山坡赶来赴约 / 太阳也收到了请柬，它来得最晚，却把最亮的位置留给了花心 / 连路过的蒲公英都停下来，撑着小白伞站了好一会儿

花瓣一片一片打开的样子，就是请柬被人拆开的那个瞬间 / 一片花瓣是椅子，一片花瓣是桌子，还有一片花瓣是灯 / 露珠摆在盘子中间，亮晶晶的，谁看了都想凑近尝一小口 / 谁来都请坐，谁都欢迎，花说，今天不分大小，全是客人 / 蚂蚁也收到了，它来得最早，坐在最小的那片花瓣上，一声不吭地听 / 连最小的蚜虫也赶来了，站在花瓣的最边上，害羞得不敢往里走一步，只把小脑袋探进来一点点

我也收到过一张这样的请柬，那天放学我正好路过那个花坛 / 那朵花开得很用力，花瓣张得大大的，像正在大声念我的名字 / 我蹲下来，轻轻跟它说了声你好，声音小得怕打扰旁边的同学 / 它点点头，把一阵香轻轻送进了我敞开的书包，和我的课本放在一起 / 那张请柬我一直留着，夹在文具盒的盖子里，每个春天都重新寄一次，收件人一直是我 / 我把这件事告诉同桌，同桌说，我昨天也收到了 / 我们约好，明年春天，一起在花坛边等那张请柬

An Invitation from a Flower Bud

The flower bud wrote an invitation to spring, writing very slowly, taking the whole winter to finish it / The invitation had no words on it, only a little pink, a little yellow, and a faint soft fragrance / The dewdrop came on purpose to stick on a shiny little stamp / One blow of wind and the invitation set off, its first stop the nearest little bee

The bee knew the way, laughed the moment it saw the invitation, picked up its empty basket and left at once / The butterfly got its invitation, picked out its most fancy dress, and flew across half the hillside to arrive on time / The sun got one too; it came the latest but left the brightest seat for the heart of the flower / Even a passing dandelion stopped, holding its little white umbrella, standing nearby for a while

Petals opening one by one are the very moment the invitation is unwrapped / One petal is a chair, one petal is a table, and one petal is a lamp / The dewdrop sits in the middle of the plate, sparkling, so everyone who sees it wants to lean close and taste a little / Whoever comes, please sit; everyone is welcome, says the flower; today no one is big or small, all are guests / The ant got one too, arriving earliest, sitting on the smallest petal, listening without a sound / Even the tiniest

aphid hurried over, standing at the very edge of a petal, too shy to step inside, poking just its little head in

I once received such an invitation, when I passed that flower bed on my way home from school / That flower bloomed with all its strength, petals spread wide, as if reading my name out loud / I crouched down and softly said hello, my voice small enough not to disturb the classmates nearby / It nodded and sent a wave of fragrance into my open schoolbag, placing it next to my textbooks / I have kept that invitation all along, tucked inside the lid of my pencil box; every spring it mails it again, and the addressee has always been me / I told my deskmate about it, and my deskmate said, I got one yesterday too / We made a promise: next spring, we will wait by the flower bed together for that invitation