靠窗的座位，我的季节岗位

开学换座位，别人都抢中间的位子，我举手申请靠窗。同桌笑我：靠窗冬天灌风，你傻呀。我不争，心里说：窗户外面那棵银杏，归我了。

我是这么想的：教室四面墙，只有这扇窗会自己换画。春天它挂出嫩绿，夏天挂深绿，秋天挂金子，冬天挂一把光秃秃的枝。别人看一学期，我看一整年。

我给这棵银杏建了一张卡，钉在文具盒盖里：三月十二日，芽苞鼓起来，像扣了一树小纽扣；四月九日，叶子有我的指甲盖大，风一吹哗啦啦，声音比下课铃还好听；九月二十八日，第一片黄叶落地，我把它捡起来夹进数学书。

记录细节这件事，一开始是老师布置的观察作业，一周一次。后来我改成每天记一句，写在卡背面。一句就一句，多了不写。别小看这一句，为了找这一句，我课间都不趴桌子了，全站在窗边看。

变化出现在期中考试以后。那次作文写秋天，全班大半的人写秋天是金色的田野，我写银杏叶落在窗台上，像谁给我寄来一张书签，还写了值日生扫地时叶子跟着扫帚跑。作文发下来，老师在末尾画了三个圈，写了四个字：有自己的话。

十一月，班主任把我那几张观察卡复印了，贴上班级墙报，标题是：一个人的四季。有同学围着看，说原来这棵树有这么多事。那一刻我特别骄傲，不是因为我被贴上了墙，而是我发现，那棵树真的被我一天一天看熟了，像看熟了一个朋友的脸。

冬天叶子落光，我以为没得记了。结果发现树杈间藏着一个空鸟巢，还发现光枝丫上落麻雀的位置每天不一样。我这才知道，观察没有下班的时候，叶子谢了有叶子谢了看的东西。

现在我的作文本从三行流水账长到了两页，老师红笔的批注从空变成了一串。要问我学到了什么，我想说的是：不是我爱上了修辞，是我爱上了看。窗户是个老实的先生，不讲话，也不考我，它只把一棵树的一年摆在我眼前，让我自己数。

明年春天，那棵银杏还会发芽，我的卡已经留好了空页。这个季节岗位，我想一直干下去，干到我们毕业。

The Window Seat, My Season Post

At the start of term when seats changed, everyone fought for the middle rows, while I raised my hand to ask for the window seat. My deskmate laughed: the wind leaks in by the window in winter, are you silly? I did not argue. Inside I said: the ginkgo tree outside this window belongs to me.

Here was my thinking: the classroom has four walls, and only this window changes its own painting. In spring it hangs out pale green, in summer deep green, in autumn gold, in winter a bundle of bare branches. Others look at it for one term; I get to watch it for a whole year.

I made a card for the ginkgo and pinned it inside my pencil case lid: March 12, the buds swelled up, as if a tree full of small buttons had been fastened on; April 9, the leaves reached the size of my fingernails, and when the wind blew they rustled, a sound nicer than the recess bell; September 28, the first yellow leaf landed, and I picked it up and pressed it inside my math book.

Recording details began as the observation homework the teacher assigned, once a week. Later I changed it to one sentence a day, written on the back of the card. Just one sentence, never more. Do not underestimate that one sentence. To find it, I stopped resting my head on the desk at recess and stood at the window watching instead.

The change appeared after the midterm exam. In that essay about autumn, most of the class wrote that autumn is a golden field, while I wrote about a ginkgo leaf landing on the windowsill like a bookmark someone mailed me, and about the leaves running along with the broom as the class monitor swept. When the essay came back, the teacher had drawn three circles at the end and written four characters: words of your own.

In November, our homeroom teacher photocopied my observation cards and put them on the class bulletin board under the title: The Four Seasons of One Person. Classmates gathered to look, saying they never knew this tree had so many doings. I felt proud at that moment, not because my work went up on the wall, but because I realized I had truly grown familiar with that tree day by day, the way one grows familiar with the face of a friend.

In winter the leaves all fell, and I thought there was nothing left to record. Then I found an empty bird nest hidden in the fork of the branches, and noticed that the perching spots of the sparrows on the bare twigs changed every day. Only then did I learn that observation never clocks out; when the leaves are gone, there are things to see precisely because they are gone.

Now my composition notebook has grown from three lines of a dull account to two full pages, and the red-pen notes from the teacher have grown from blank to a string. If you ask what I have learned, I would say: it is not that I fell in love with rhetoric, but that I fell in love with looking. The window is an honest teacher. It does not talk and does not quiz me. It simply lays one year of one tree before my eyes and lets me count it myself.

Next spring that ginkgo will bud again, and my card already has blank pages saved. I want to keep this season post for a long time, until we graduate.