

窗外的银杏树，教我慢慢长

初二那年，我的座位靠窗，窗外立着一棵和学校一样老的银杏树。那一年，我的成绩像掉进水里的石头，尤其是物理，怎么使劲，图像题都横在面前像一堵墙。我开始怀疑自己，甚至想过干脆放弃，混一天算一天。

初春的时候，银杏还光着枝子。别的树一个一个冒芽，它不动，像睡熟了。我问看门的叔叔，叔叔说，银杏慢，要等地完全暖透才肯发芽。我心里笑它：这么慢，岂不是永远落后？

可很快我发现不一样。别的树新叶被倒春寒冻焦的时候，银杏的芽苞才刚刚要开，一个都没受伤。到了初夏，它的叶子绿得又厚又实，一把一把小扇子，一点也不比那些早发的树稀。

夏天有一晚刮大风下暴雨，我以为银杏的枝子肯定要断光。第二天早上，它确实断了几根，可断口上包着一层硬硬的疤，疤边上又拱出新的小芽。植物不抱怨倒霉的事，它们只管接着长。

秋天，银杏黄透了，全班都去树下拍照。深秋北风里，别的树早落光了叶子，它还攥着最后几片金黄，在风里晃，不肯轻易掉下来。

第二年开春，我的物理成绩慢慢爬了回来。我没有熬夜刷题，只是从最基础的受力图开始，每道图像题画一遍，一天弄懂一道。这像极了银杏：发芽晚，可发得稳。我终于明白，成长有自己的节奏，一时落后不等于一辈子落后。

我还开始记错题本，每周把做错的题抄下来，周日重做一遍。起初本子上全是红叉，到了冬天，红叉明显少了。季节一圈一圈转，本子一页一页厚，我的成绩终于止跌，开始往上走。

现在每当我心慌，就望一眼窗外那棵银杏。它提醒我：慢不可怕，可怕的是不再生长。接下来一年，我要像银杏那样，不慌别人早早发芽，只管暗暗攒力气，把缺的东西一点一点补回来。

The Ginkgo Outside My Window Taught Me to Grow Slowly

In Grade 8, my desk sat by the window, and outside the window stood a ginkgo tree as old as the school. That year my grades sank like a stone thrown into water, especially in physics: no matter how hard I tried, the graph problems stayed a wall in front of me. I began to doubt myself and even thought about giving up and drifting through the days.

In early spring the ginkgo was still bare. Other trees sprouted one after another, but it did not move, as if asleep. I asked the groundskeeper uncle, and he said the ginkgo is slow; it sprouts only after the ground is fully warm. I laughed at it in my heart: at that pace, would it not always fall behind?

But soon I noticed something different. When the young leaves of other trees were scorched by the late-spring cold, the buds of the ginkgo had barely opened, so not one was hurt by the chill. By early summer its leaves were green and thick, shaped like little fans, and no less lush than the trees that sprouted early.

One summer night a violent storm broke, and I thought the ginkgo would surely lose its branches. The next morning it had lost a few, but the broken ends were sealed with a hard callus, and new buds were pushing out from the edges of the wounds. Plants do not cry over bad luck; they simply keep growing.

In autumn the ginkgo turned golden, and the whole class came to take photos under it. In the howling north wind of late autumn, other trees had long dropped their leaves, but it still held on to the last few golden ones, swaying in the wind, not willing to fall easily.

The next spring my physics grades had slowly climbed back. I did not pull any all-nighters; I just started from the simplest force diagrams, drew every graph problem once, and understood one problem a day. It was exactly like the ginkgo: sprouting late, but sprouting steadily. I finally understood that growth has its own rhythm, and falling behind for a moment does not mean falling behind for a lifetime.

I also kept a correction notebook, copying the problems I got wrong each week and redoing them on Sundays. At first the pages were full of red crosses; by winter the red crosses had clearly decreased. The seasons turn round after round, the notebook grows page after page, and my grades finally stopped dropping and began to rise.

Now whenever I feel anxious, I look out of the window at that ginkgo. It reminds me: being slow is not the fear; stopping growth is. In the year ahead I want to be like the ginkgo, not panicking because others sprout early, quietly building my strength, and making up what I lack one piece at a time.