桑桑的火针

《草房子》是我们班读书月的时候读完的。说实话，刚拿到书我不太想读，封面上就是几间草房子，土土的。老师说要读完整本书写感受，我就一天十几页地赶。可是读到桑桑生病那章，我忽然不赶了，一页一页慢下来。

桑桑的脖子上长了一个包，医生说是很吓人的病，治的办法是火针，一根烧热的针，往那个包里扎。我读这一段的时候手心出汗。我妈在旁边削苹果，问我怎么了。我说，火针听起来太疼了。我妈说，那你也接着往下看呀。

接着往下看，我才发现桑桑真了不起。他坐在治疗床上，两只手把床沿攥得指节发白，可他没有哭喊。扎完了，他还问医生，下一次什么时候来。我举着书愣在那儿，脸有点热，因为我想起去年打针的事。

去年冬天我发烧，去社区医院打针。护士拿着针走过来，我一边哭一边扭，我妈两只手按住我的胳膊，按出红印子。护士说就疼一下，我哭的时间比打针的时间长多了。打完出来，我胳膊上还有我妈指甲掐的印。

桑桑面对的火针，比打针疼一百倍，他都知道疼，还是自己坐上去。那天晚上我把书翻回去，又读了一遍那一段。我想，勇敢的人原来不是不害怕的人，是害怕了还肯坐稳、不跑的人。

今年初夏我得了一次扁桃体炎，要打三天针。第一天我躺在治疗床上，学桑桑那样攥着床沿。护士说，今天没哭呀。我没说话，心里正想着桑桑坐在治疗床上的样子，想着他攥白的指节。

书的最后，桑桑的病好了，头发重新长了出来，黑黑的。我读到那一页笑出了声。同桌问我笑什么，我说，桑桑病好了。其实我不光是替桑桑高兴，也是替我自己高兴，替那个学会坐稳的我。

The Fire Needle of Sangsang

I finished Grass House during our class reading month. To be honest, when I first got the book I did not much want to read it. The cover showed nothing but a few thatched houses, plain and earthy. The teacher said we had to read the whole book and write our feelings, so I raced through a dozen pages a day. But when I reached the chapter where Sangsang falls ill, I stopped racing and slowed down page by page.

A lump grew on the neck of Sangsang, and the doctor said it was a frightening illness. The cure was a fire needle, a red-hot needle pushed into the lump. My palms sweated while I read that part. My mother was peeling an apple beside me and asked what was wrong. I said the fire needle sounded far too painful. She said, then keep reading and see.

Keeping on, I found Sangsang truly remarkable. He sat on the treatment bed, both hands gripping its edge until his knuckles went white, yet he never cried out. When

it was over, he even asked the doctor when the next session would come. I held the book up, stunned, my face warm, because I remembered my own injection last winter.

Last winter I had a fever and went to the community clinic for a shot. When the nurse walked over with the needle, I cried and twisted while my mother pinned my arms down with both hands, leaving red marks. The nurse said it would hurt only for a moment, but I cried far longer than the shot took. When we walked out, my arms still bore the marks of the fingernails of my mother.

The fire needle facing Sangsang was a hundred times more painful than a shot, and he knew it hurt, yet he climbed onto the bed himself. That night I turned back and read the passage again. I thought: brave people are not people who feel no fear; they are people who feel fear and still agree to sit steady and not run.

In the early summer of this year I got tonsillitis and needed injections for three days. On the first day I lay on the treatment bed and gripped its edge the way Sangsang did. The nurse said, no tears today. I said nothing. Inside I was picturing Sangsang on his treatment bed, his knuckles gone white.

At the end of the book, Sangsang gets well, and his hair grows back black. I laughed out loud on that page. My deskmate asked what was funny. I said, Sangsang is better. Actually I was not only happy for Sangsang. I was also happy for myself, for the me who learned to sit steady.