我的三个朋友住在书里

别人问我，你的朋友是谁。我说，三个。他们不住在隔壁楼，不住在同一个小区。他们住在《草房子》里，住在第一百四页、第二百页、第三百页。我一说他们的名字，他们就从书里探出头来。

桑桑是我的胆量。他敢把蚊帐拆了打鱼，我敢把手举起来。他敢骑大自行车冲下坡，我敢走进那间新教室。他疼的时候不喊疼，我摔破膝盖的时候，先看看四周，再站起来。他是火苗，我冷的时候，就翻开那一页，烤一烤手。

秃鹤是我的脊梁。有一回，我的门牙被同学数了又数，我回家，把脸埋进枕头。夜里我翻开书，秃鹤正把头抬得高高的，走过整条街。他替我走了一遍我没敢走的路。第二天我进教室，把下巴抬起来，抬得跟他一样高。数我的人愣住了。他是月亮，我黑的时候，他就自己亮起来。

纸月是我的安静。我吵过架，摔过门，把委屈喊得整栋楼都听见。纸月不。纸月把委屈叠成纸船，一只一只放进河里。我学着她的样子，把生气写在纸上，叠成小船，摆在窗台。风一吹，船头全朝着外面。气就消了。她是风，我乱的时候，她一过，我心里的芦苇就顺了。

火苗，月亮，风。别人有三个住在一条街的朋友，我有三个住在书里的朋友。他们不会转学，不会搬家，不会长大以后不理我。我走到哪，书带到哪，他们就在那儿等我，一页一页，站得整整齐齐。

你要不要也认识他们。认识他们很容易。去书架，抽出一本蓝封面的书，翻开。第一条河，一排草房子，一片艾地。桑桑先跑出来，白鸽扑棱棱。秃鹤慢慢走出来，头顶发光。纸月最后出来，轻轻地，怕踩疼了芦苇。

我的三个朋友，住在书里。你的三个朋友，也住在那儿。我们都在油麻地的河边，碰面。

My Three Friends Live Inside a Book

People ask me who my friends are. I say, three. They do not live in the next building or in the same neighborhood. They live inside The Straw House, on page 140, page 200, page 300. The moment I say their names, they poke their heads out of the book.

Sangsang is my courage. He dared to take apart the mosquito net to catch fish, so I dare to raise my hand. He dared to ride the big bicycle down the hill, so I dare to walk into that new classroom. When he hurt, he did not cry out. When I scrape my knee, I look around first, then stand up. He is a flame. When I am cold, I open to his page and warm my hands.

Bald Crane is my backbone. Once, a classmate counted my big front teeth again and again. I went home and buried my face in the pillow. At night I opened the book, and Bald Crane was walking down the whole street with his head held high. He walked, for

me, the road I did not dare to walk. The next day I entered the classroom with my chin lifted, as high as his. The kids who counted froze. He is the moon. When it is dark in me, he shines by himself.

Paper Moon is my quiet. I have quarreled, slammed doors, shouted my grievances loud enough for the whole building to hear. Paper Moon does not. She folds grievances into paper boats, one by one, onto the river. I learned from her: I write my anger on paper, fold it into little boats, and line them on the windowsill. When the wind blows, every bow points outward. The anger melts away. She is the wind. When I am in a mess, she passes, and the reeds inside me lie down smooth.

Flame, moon, wind. Others have three friends living on one street. I have three friends living in a book. They will not transfer schools, will not move away, will not grow up and ignore me. Wherever I go, the book goes, and they wait for me there, standing page by page, in perfect order.

Do you want to meet them too? It is easy. Go to the shelf, pull out a book with a blue cover, and open it. First a river, a row of straw houses, a field of mugwort. Sangsang runs out first, doves fluttering. Bald Crane walks out slowly, his head shining. Paper Moon comes last, softly, afraid of hurting the reeds' feet.

My three friends live inside a book. Your three friends live there too. We all meet by the river of Youmadi.