墙角下的蚂蚁在搬家

放学那天下午，我走在回家的路上，看见巷子口王大妈家的墙角有一条黑线。黑线在动，可又很整齐。我放下书包，蹲到旁边去看。

黑线是从墙根的一个小洞里出来的。那个洞就是蚂蚁的家。洞口只有米粒那么大，周围堆着一圈细细的黄土。蚂蚁从洞里出来，沿着墙根走，一个跟一个，谁也不撞谁。出去的蚂蚁和回来的蚂蚁迎面碰上，侧侧身子就让过去了，谁也不挡路。

我伸出手指想去碰那条线，前面的蚂蚁立刻停下来，原地转圈。隔壁的爷爷说，你别挡它们的路，它们会乱的。我把手指收回来，蹲在原地接着看。

我发现，两只蚂蚁碰面的时候，会用头上的触角碰碰对方的头，碰得很快，然后就各走各的。我猜它们不是在打招呼，可能是在互相传话。

这时候，我想起了书包里的饼干。我掰下一小碎块，放在一只蚂蚁的前面。那只蚂蚁绕着面包屑转了两圈，低下头推了一下，面包屑一动不动。它掉头往回走。

我以为它放弃了。没想到过了一会儿，墙根洞里呼啦啦出来一队蚂蚁，顺着刚才那条线走，把面包屑围住了。有的咬住前面，有的顶在后面，有的在旁边抬。面包屑动了，慢慢地，朝墙根那边挪。

路上有一颗凸起的小石子。蚂蚁们没有绕路，它们把面包屑抬起来，又落下，试了三次才过去。有只蚂蚁被压得翻了个身，六条腿朝天乱蹬，另一只蚂蚁过去，帮它翻了过来。

等最后一小块面包屑钻进墙根的洞里，天已经有点黑了。我站起来，腿麻得差点坐到地上。妈妈在巷子口喊我，问我怎么还不回家。

回家的路上我一直在想，那个小小的洞里，一定住着几百只蚂蚁。没有人给它们下命令，可它们知道谁该去探路，谁该推，谁该抬。一块面包屑对它们来说那么大，它们居然一起搬回了家。老师说的团结，我想，就是蚂蚁搬面包屑的样子吧。

The Ants Under the Wall Corner Are Moving House

One afternoon after school, on my way home, I saw a black line beside the wall corner of the house of Aunt Wang at the entrance of our lane. The line was moving, yet very neat. I put down my schoolbag and crouched beside it.

The line came out of a small hole at the foot of the wall. That hole was the home of the ants. The opening was only as big as a grain of rice, with a ring of fine yellow soil piled around it. Ants coming out walked along the edge of the wall, one after another, and none bumped into another. Ants going out and ants coming back met face to face, turned sideways to let each other pass, and none blocked the road.

I reached out my finger to touch the line, and the ants in front stopped at once and turned in circles. Grandpa next door said, do not block their road, or they will get confused. I pulled my finger back and crouched in place to keep watching.

I noticed that when two ants met, they touched the heads of each other with the feelers on their own heads, very quickly, and then each went its way. I guessed they were not greeting each other. Perhaps they were passing messages.

Then I remembered the biscuit in my schoolbag. I broke off a small piece and put it in front of one ant. That ant circled the crumb twice, lowered its head to push, and the crumb did not move at all. It turned around and walked back.

I thought it had given up. But after a while, a crowd of ants came out of the hole at the wall, followed the same line as before, and surrounded the crumb. Some bit the front, some pushed from behind, some held it up from the side. The crumb moved, slowly, toward the wall.

There was a raised pebble on the road. The ants did not go around it. They lifted the crumb up, and it fell down again. They tried three times and finally got over. One ant was pressed so that it rolled on its back, six legs waving in the air, and another ant went over to turn it back over.

By the time the last piece of the crumb disappeared into the hole at the wall, the sky had grown a little dark. When I stood up, my legs were so numb that I almost sat down on the ground. Mother called from the entrance of the lane, asking why I was not going home.

On the way home I kept thinking. That tiny hole must be home to hundreds of ants. No one gave them orders, yet they knew who should scout, who should push, and who should carry. One bread crumb is so big to them, and still they carried it home together. Unity, as our teacher says it, I think, looks like the ants carrying the crumb.

我陪蚂蚁搬了一下午面包

星期六下午，我在小区花坛的墙角发现了一个蚂蚁洞。洞口在两块砖头的缝里，边上堆着一小堆新土，土粒湿湿的，粘在一起。我把半块面包放在洞口不远的水泥地上，然后蹲在旁边，等。

先来的是一只单独的蚂蚁。它个头不大，跑得倒快，沿着墙根一路小跑，跑到面包跟前，用触角碰了碰面包的边，又爬到面包上面走了一圈，然后跳下来，原路跑了回去。它这一跑，我注意到它贴着砖缝的边，好像地上有一条看不见的线。

我突发奇想，捡起一颗小石子，放在它刚才跑过的那条线上，把路截断。过了一会儿，那只蚂蚁带着一队蚂蚁回来了。领头的跑到石子跟前，停下来，触角对着石子动了动，然后绕着石子转，转了两圈才找到过去的路。后面的蚂蚁跟着它绕。原来它们真的有一条路，而且路上有它们留下的东西。

我又用粉笔在地上画了一道白线，横在它们的路中间。蚂蚁走到白线上，有的直接穿过，有的停下来转圈，队伍有点乱了。领头的蚂蚁在白线上来回走了几趟，才把队伍重新带到原来的方向上。我猜它们是靠鼻子闻着走的，粉笔的白粉把那个味道盖住了一点。

队伍排起来以后，场面就热闹了。面包屑被分成好几块，大的那块要十几只蚂蚁一起抬。它们抬的方式很有意思，有的咬住不放，有的用前腿抱着，有的在后面推。面包屑走几步停一下，因为总有蚂蚁绊倒。绊倒的蚂蚁爬起来，重新找位置，队伍接着走。

搬着搬着，天上下起了小雨点。我抬头看天，想跑回家。再低头看蚂蚁，它们搬得更快了，有几只蚂蚁干脆钻进洞里，又出来，再进去。后来我才明白，它们是要在下雨前把粮食都搬回家。

雨大起来之前，最后一块面包屑也进了砖缝。我站起来往家跑，路过花坛的时候，看见墙角的蚂蚁洞边上，那只最先发现面包的蚂蚁还在洞口转，触角朝着外面，像是在数还有谁没有回来。

回到家，我的裤腿上蹭了一道粉笔印。妈妈问我下午干什么去了，我说我陪蚂蚁搬了一下午面包。妈妈笑我傻。可是我觉得不傻。一只蚂蚁搬不动的东西，十几只蚂蚁就抬走了；一只蚂蚁找不到的路，它们留个味道就能找到。书上说团结力量大，我以前不懂，那个下午以后，我懂了。

I Kept Company With the Ants Carrying Bread All Afternoon

On Saturday afternoon, I found an ant hole at the wall corner of the flower bed in our neighborhood. The opening sat in the gap between two bricks, with a small pile of fresh soil beside it. The soil grains were damp and stuck together. I put half a piece of bread on the cement ground not far from the hole, then crouched beside it and waited.

The first to arrive was a single ant. It was small but ran fast, trotting all the way along the foot of the wall. It reached the bread, touched the edge with its feelers, climbed onto the bread and walked a circle on it, then jumped down and ran back the same way. As it ran, I noticed it kept close to the edge of the brick gap, as if there were an invisible line on the ground.

A thought struck me. I picked up a small pebble and placed it on the line it had just run, cutting the road. After a while, that ant came back leading a column. The leader reached the pebble, stopped, moved its feelers toward it, then circled around it and found the way past after two turns. The ants behind followed it around. So

they really did have a road, and there was something they left on it.

Then I drew a white line with chalk across their road. Ants reaching the white line either walked straight through or stopped and turned in circles, and the column got a little confused. The leading ant walked back and forth on the white line several times before it brought the column back to the right direction. I guess they walk by smelling their way, and the chalk dust covered a bit of that smell.

Once the column was formed, the scene became lively. The bread was divided into several pieces, and the big piece needed more than ten ants to carry it together. Their way of carrying was interesting. Some bit and would not let go, some hugged it with their front legs, some pushed from behind. The bread moved a few steps and stopped, because some ant always tripped. The fallen ant got up and found its place again, and the column kept going.

While they were carrying, raindrops began to fall. I looked up at the sky and wanted to run home. Looking down again, I found the ants moving faster. A few of them dived into the hole and came out, then dived in again. Only later did I understand. They wanted to get all the food home before the rain.

Before the rain grew heavy, the last piece of bread also went into the gap between the bricks. I stood up and ran home. Passing the flower bed, I saw that by the ant hole at the wall corner, the ant that had found the bread first was still circling at the opening, its feelers pointing outward, as if counting who had not come back.

When I got home, there was a chalk mark on my trouser leg. Mother asked what I had done all afternoon. I said I had kept company with the ants carrying bread all afternoon. Mother laughed and called me silly. But I do not think it was silly. What one ant cannot carry, more than ten ants can lift away; what one ant cannot find, they can find by leaving a smell behind. The book says unity makes strength great. I did not understand it before. After that afternoon, I do.

值日那天，全班围住了一堵墙

科学老师布置了一项观察作业，要求每人观察一种小动物，写一篇观察日记。我选了蚂蚁，因为蚂蚁就在学校里面，不用去别处找。

星期四是轮到我们班值日。扫地的刘小胖扫到教室后墙的墙角，忽然弯下腰，盯着地砖缝看，然后喊了一声。全班的人呼啦一下围了过去。

墙角的踢脚线那里有一道很细的裂缝，裂缝口堆着一点土。从裂缝里出来一条蚂蚁排成的队，沿

着墙根走，经过拖把池，一直走到垃圾桶旁边。队伍细得像谁用铅笔在墙上画的一条线。

不知道是谁说的，刘小胖的座位里有一块没吃完的面包。刘小胖掰了一小块，放在队伍旁边的地上。那块面包屑比一只蚂蚁大出几十倍。一只蚂蚁先过来，围着面包屑转了一圈，触角碰上去，然后它转身往回走，沿着队伍的方向。

过了一会儿，队伍里分出一小股蚂蚁，直奔面包屑去。它们到了以后并不乱抢，而是各自找位置。有的爬到面包屑上面，有的钻到面包屑底下，有的排在面包屑和墙之间。然后面包屑动了，一点一点往墙根挪。

那几分钟，几十个同学围成一圈，没有一个人说话。平时最爱接话的赵天天也闭着嘴。我们全都蹲着，脑袋凑在一起，看那一小块面包在地上走。面包屑走到拖把池的台阶前上不去，蚂蚁们把它举起来一次，没成功，又落下来。第二次，好像多了几只蚂蚁，面包屑翻过了台阶。

后来老师从办公室过来，看见我们围成一圈，问怎么了。班长小声说，老师你快看，蚂蚁在搬面包。老师也蹲下来看。看了一会儿，老师没说话，掏出手机拍了一张照片。

面包屑最后一角钻进墙缝的时候，队伍里还有蚂蚁在往外面走。我忽然想到一个问题，它们搬面包，是不是因为要下雨了，要把吃的都存进家里？老师听见我嘀咕，说，可以回去查一查，蚂蚁对空气里的湿气很敏感，搬家常常是在准备躲雨。

那天我的观察日记写了很多行，比平时写作文还顺。我在最后写：几十个同学围着一堵墙看蚂蚁搬面包，谁也不说话，这大概就是团结最好的样子。蚂蚁搬的是面包，我们看懂的是它们谁也没有丢下谁。

On Duty Day, the Whole Class Crowded Around One Wall

Our science teacher assigned an observation task. Each student had to observe one small animal and write an observation diary. I chose ants, because ants are right inside the school, and I did not need to go anywhere else to find them.

On Thursday it was our class's turn for cleaning duty. Liu Xiaopang, who was sweeping, swept up to the wall corner at the back of the classroom. Suddenly he bent down, stared at the gap between the floor tiles, and shouted once. The whole class crowded over in a rush.

At the baseboard in that corner there was a very thin crack, with a bit of soil piled at its mouth. From the crack came a column of ants, walking along the foot of the wall, passing the mop sink, all the way to beside the trash bin. The column was as thin as a line someone drew on the wall with a pencil.

Somebody said that Liu Xiaopang had an unfinished piece of bread in his desk. Liu Xiaopang broke off a small piece and put it on the ground beside the column. That crumb was dozens of times bigger than one ant. One ant came over first, circled the

crumb once, touched it with its feelers, then turned and walked back along the direction of the column.

After a while, a small branch split off the column and headed straight for the crumb. When they arrived, they did not scramble. Each one found its own place. Some climbed onto the bread, some went under it, some lined up between the bread and the wall. Then the crumb moved, inch by inch, toward the foot of the wall.

For those minutes, dozens of classmates stood in a circle around it, and not one of them spoke. Zhao Tiantian, who always blurted things out in class, kept his mouth shut too. We were all crouching, our heads close together, watching that small piece of bread walk across the ground. The crumb could not climb the step at the mop sink. The ants lifted it once and failed, and it fell back down. The second time, it seemed more ants joined, and the crumb rolled over the step.

Later the teacher came from the office and saw us in a circle, asking what happened. The monitor whispered, teacher, look quickly, the ants are carrying bread. The teacher crouched down to look too. After a while, the teacher said nothing and took out a phone to take a photo.

When the last corner of the crumb slipped into the crack, there were still ants in the column walking outward. A question suddenly came to me. Were they carrying bread because it was going to rain, and they wanted to store all the food at home? The teacher heard me muttering and said, you can look it up when you go home. Ants are very sensitive to moisture in the air, and moving house is often them getting ready to hide from rain.

That day my observation diary ran to many lines, smoother than my usual compositions. I wrote at the end: dozens of classmates crowding around a wall to watch ants carry bread, and nobody speaking. That is probably the best shape of unity. The ants were carrying bread, and what we understood was that none of them left any other behind.