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.