输了比赛以后，我看见一只蚂蚁

下午第二节课后是年级接力赛。第三棒交到我手里的时候，我们班排在第二。我把棒接歪了，棒在地上弹了一下，我弯腰去捡，再站起来，前面已经落了两个人。

我们班最后输了。回教室的路上，没有人怪我，可我自己的耳朵一直烫。走到操场边上的墙角，我停下来，因为我想蹲一会儿，不想让同学看见我的脸。

就在我蹲下的地方，地砖上有一粒米。不知道是谁的午饭掉的那一粒。一只蚂蚁正在搬它。

那只蚂蚁在米粒前面，低着头推。米粒比它大，它推一下，米粒动一点点，又停。它换个方向再推，米粒转了个身，还在原地。它用背去扛，扛不起来，米粒压下来，把它整个压趴了一下。它把腿撑开，从米粒底下钻出来，抖了抖，又回到米粒前面。

它继续推。我在心里数，一次，两次，五次，十次。它的动作都慢了，可它没有走开。我蹲在那儿，忘了接力赛，忘了耳朵烫，数它推了多少次。

第十几次以后，它转身跑了。我替它着急，心想它到底还是放弃了。结果它从墙缝里带出来三只蚂蚁。四只蚂蚁到了米粒边上，谁也没接着硬推，它们分了工，两只垫在米粒底下，一只咬住一头，一只在后面顶。米粒离地了，斜斜地、稳稳地往前挪。

米粒进了墙缝以后，我还在蹲着。我忽然想起那只蚂蚁被米粒压趴的那一下。它被压趴了，钻出来，抖一抖，接着干。我的接力棒掉在地上弹了一下，我捡起来再跑，我们班的同学也没有停，最后两棒追回来一个名次。

那天晚上我在日记里写，输掉比赛很难过，可是难过不是最要紧的事。最要紧的是像那只蚂蚁一样，被米粒压趴了，钻出来，抖一抖，再回到米粒前面。推不动的时候，还可以去墙缝里喊同伴。我们班的最后两棒，就是我的三只同伴。

到了上体育课的那天，我们练接力交接棒。体育老师让我们练二十次。练到第十一次的时候我又掉了棒，我捡起来，接着练第十二次。体育老师路过我旁边，说，你昨天可不是这样。我笑了笑，没说话。我心里知道，是墙角那只蚂蚁教我的。

After Losing the Race, I Saw an Ant

After the second class in the afternoon came the grade relay race. When the baton was passed into my hands at the third leg, our class was in second place. I took the baton crookedly. It bounced once on the ground. I bent to pick it up, and when I stood again, two runners were already ahead of me.

Our class lost in the end. On the way back to the classroom, nobody blamed me, but my own ears burned the whole time. By the wall corner at the edge of the playground, I stopped, because I wanted to crouch for a while and did not want my classmates to see my face.

Right where I crouched, there was a grain of rice on the floor tile. It was one of those grains dropped from someone's lunch. An ant was carrying it.

The ant stood in front of the grain, head lowered, pushing. The grain was bigger than it was. It pushed once, the grain moved a tiny bit and stopped. It changed direction and pushed again. The grain turned around and stayed in place. It tried to lift the grain with its back, could not, and the grain pressed down and flattened the ant for a moment. The ant spread its legs, crawled out from under the grain, shook itself, and went back to the front of the grain.

It kept pushing. I counted in my head: one, two, five, ten. Its movements had grown slow, yet it did not walk away. I crouched there, having forgotten the relay race and my burning ears, counting how many times it pushed.

After more than ten tries, it turned and ran. I worried for it, thinking it had given up after all. Instead it brought out three ants from the crack in the wall. When the four ants reached the grain, none of them kept pushing blindly. They divided the work. Two wedged themselves under the grain, one bit one end, and one pushed from behind. The grain left the ground and moved forward at a tilt, steady and slow.

After the grain went into the crack, I was still crouching. I suddenly remembered the moment the ant was flattened by the grain. It was flattened, crawled out, shook itself, and went back to the front of the grain. My baton had bounced once on the ground. I picked it up and kept running, and the classmates of our class did not stop either. The last two legs won back one place.

That evening I wrote in my diary that losing the race was painful, but being painful was not the most important thing. The most important thing was, like that ant, to be flattened by the grain, crawl out, shake yourself, and go back to the front of the grain. And when you cannot push it anymore, you can still go to the crack in the wall and call your companions. The last two legs of our class were my three companions.

The next day in P.E. class, we practiced baton passes. Our P.E. teacher told us to practice twenty times. When I dropped the baton again on the eleventh try, I picked it up and went on to the twelfth. The P.E. teacher passed by and said, you were not like this yesterday. I smiled and said nothing. I knew in my heart that the ant by the wall corner had taught me.