那只蚂蚁，把米粒推了很多次

中午吃饭的时候，一粒米从我碗边掉了下来，落在食堂门口的地上。我正要抬脚走开，看见一个小黑点朝那粒米爬过去。是一只蚂蚁。

那只蚂蚁在米粒前面停下来。米粒白白的、胖胖的，比它的脑袋大好多。它绕着米粒走了两圈，触角碰一碰米粒的皮，然后走到米粒前面，低下头，用两条前腿往前推。米粒动了一下，又停住了。

它绕到米粒另一边，又推。米粒在原地转了半个圈。它把后腿蹬在地砖的缝里，整个身子往前顶，这次米粒往前滑出去一小段，可惜马上又滑了回来。

我蹲在旁边看。它试了一遍又一遍。有时候把米粒顶起来一点，米粒滚下去，正好砸在它的头上。它甩甩头，接着干。

推了好久，它忽然转身，朝墙根跑去。我以为它不要了。它在墙根的一道缝前面停下，触角动了动，很快，三只蚂蚁排成一串跟它爬了回来。

四只蚂蚁分了位置。两只钻到米粒底下，一只在头前用嘴咬着，一只在后面顶。米粒慢慢离开地面，歪歪地往前挪。它们爬得很慢，米粒晃晃悠悠，可就是没有掉下来。

米粒被抬到墙根那道缝前面。缝太窄，米粒塞不进去。它们在后面推，前面那只用嘴使劲拽，米粒卡在缝口，磨掉了一点，终于一头进去了。后面几只一起用力，整粒米一点一点挤了进去。

我站起来，腿有点麻。那粒米对我来说，弯腰捡一下都不值得，对那只蚂蚁来说，却是它自己搬不动的大东西。它没有哭，没有走开，先是自己一遍一遍试，搬不动了又去找帮手。

我想起上个星期，我学系鞋带，系了三次没系好，就把鞋带一扔，喊妈妈帮我。那个蚂蚁要是会说话，肯定会笑我。它那么小，力气那么少，一粒米都搬了一下午。我比它多两只手，还有一整条腿的力气，我有什么资格说做不到呢。

下午放学，我回家把那双鞋穿上，坐在门口重新系鞋带。系到第五次的时候，蝴蝶结出来了。我盯着那个歪歪的结看了好久，心里想的却是墙根底下那只蚂蚁。

The Ant That Pushed the Rice Grain Again and Again

At lunch, a grain of rice fell from the edge of my bowl and landed on the ground by the door of the cafeteria. I was about to walk away when I saw a tiny black dot crawling toward the grain. It was an ant.

The ant stopped in front of the rice grain. The grain was white and plump, much bigger than its head. It circled the grain twice, touched the skin of the rice with its feelers, then walked to the front of the grain, lowered its head, and pushed with its two front legs. The grain moved a little, then stopped again.

It went around to the other side and pushed again. The grain turned half a circle

in place. It dug its hind legs into the crack of the floor tile and pushed with its whole body. This time the grain slid forward a short distance, but it slid right back.

I crouched beside it and watched. It tried again and again. Sometimes it lifted the grain a bit, and the grain rolled down and landed right on its head. It shook its head and kept working.

After a long while of pushing, it suddenly turned around and ran toward the foot of the wall. I thought it had given up. It stopped in front of a crack at the wall, moved its feelers, and soon three ants came crawling back in a line behind it.

The four ants divided their places. Two went under the grain, one held the front end with its mouth, and one pushed from behind. The grain slowly left the ground and moved forward at a tilt. They crawled very slowly, the grain swaying, yet it never fell.

The grain was carried to the crack at the wall. The crack was too narrow for the grain. They pushed from behind while the one in front pulled hard with its mouth. The grain stuck at the mouth of the crack, wore down a little, and finally one end went in. The ones behind pushed together, and the whole grain squeezed in bit by bit until it disappeared.

When I stood up, my legs were a little numb. That grain of rice was not even worth bending down for me, yet for the ant it was a big thing it could not carry alone. It did not cry and it did not walk away. It first tried over and over by itself, and when it could not manage, it went to find helpers.

I remembered last week, when I was learning to tie my shoelaces. I tried three times, failed three times, threw the laces down, and called for Mother to help. If that ant could talk, it would surely laugh at me. It was so small, with so little strength, and it spent a whole afternoon on one grain of rice. I have two more hands than it does, and a whole leg full of strength. What right do I have to say I cannot do it.

After school in the afternoon, I put those shoes on, sat by the door, and tied the laces again. On the fifth try, a bow came out. I stared at that crooked bow for a long time, and what I thought of was the ant under the foot of the wall.