我把奶奶的手写进作文

我的作文以前像点名册：我的奶奶很慈祥，我的奶奶很勤劳，我的奶奶很节约，一句一段，十分钟就能写完一篇。直到读曹文轩的《草房子》，我才知道我的作文为什么立不起来。

书里写秦大奶奶，几乎没说她是个什么样的人，只写她守着一亩田，在田里种瓜，学校孩子来偷瓜她就骂，骂完又挑最大的送过去；写她跳进水里捞一个落水的孩子，湿淋淋地回来，坐在门槛上。我读到这里愣了：一个人长什么样，原来不用形容词，用她做过的事。

书里写杜小康家败之后摆摊，也只写两样东西：白手套，小瓷碗。手套为什么是白的？因为他再穷也要把摊支得体面。一个词没写坚强，可我看见了坚强。曹文轩写人物，像给每个人发一件道具，道具一出手，人就活了。

上个月的单元作文《我的奶奶》，我试着照这个方法写。我把慈祥勤劳全删了，写奶奶冬天剥蒜，手指上的裂口一道一道，她把裂口在围裙上蹭一下，接着剥；写她把卖菜的钱一张一张抹平，压在抽屉最底下。写的时候我想起秦大奶奶，笔就停不下来，平时三行就没话的地方，越写越多。

作文发下来，老师在那段裂口上画了红波浪线，批了四个字：有真东西。我盯着那四个字看了很久。以前我的作文得优，是因为形容词堆得齐；这次得优，是因为我把看见的东西放进去了。这两样的差别，是《草房子》教我的。

现在我的文具盒里压着一张小纸条，上面写着从书里学来的两句话：写人别用形容词，先想他手里拿着什么；写事别喊口号，先想他做过什么。纸条边角已经磨圆了，我每次写作文都先看它一眼。读和写之间原来就隔着一层窗户纸，曹文轩替我捅破了，剩下的路，我自己一笔一笔走。

I Wrote My Grandma's Hands into My Essay

My essays used to read like a roll call: my grandma is kind, my grandma is hardworking, my grandma is thrifty — one sentence per paragraph, and I could finish one in ten minutes. Not until I read Cao Wenxuan's Grass House did I understand why my essays could never stand up.

When the book writes about Grandma Qin, it almost never says what kind of person she is. It only writes that she guards one mu of field, plants melons there, scolds the school children who come to steal them — and then picks the biggest one and hands it over anyway. It writes that she jumps into the water to rescue a drowning child, comes back dripping wet, and sits on the doorstep. I froze at that line: so this is how a person is drawn — not with adjectives, but with the things she has done.

When the book writes about Du Xiaokang setting up his stall after his family fell

on hard times, it mentions only two things: white gloves, small porcelain bowls. Why white gloves? Because however poor he was, he would keep his stall decent. The book never uses the word strength, yet I saw strength. Cao Wenxuan builds characters the way a playwright hands each one a prop: once the prop appears, the person comes alive.

For last month's unit essay, My Grandma, I tried this method. I deleted every word like kind and hardworking. I wrote about my grandma peeling garlic in winter, the cracks on her fingers opening one by one; she would rub a crack against her apron, then keep peeling. I wrote about how she smoothed out the bills from selling vegetables one by one and pressed them at the bottom of a drawer. As I wrote, I thought of Grandma Qin, and my pen would not stop. Where I usually ran out of things to say after three lines, the words kept coming.

When the essays came back, my teacher had drawn a red wavy line under the paragraph about the cracks, with four characters in the margin: real things there. I stared at those four characters for a long time. Before, my essays got top marks because my adjectives were neatly stacked; this time the top mark came because I put in what I had actually seen. The difference between those two is what Grass House taught me.

Now a small slip of paper rests inside my pencil case, carrying the two lines I learned from the book: to write a person, skip the adjectives and first ask what is in their hands; to write an event, skip the slogans and first ask what they did. The corners of the paper are worn round, and I glance at it once before every essay. Between reading and writing there was only a sheet of paper thin as a window screen — Cao Wenxuan pierced it for me, and the road left over, I will walk stroke by stroke myself.

那本被我翻烂的素材本

我有一个素材本，是老师要求的：每周一页好词好句。以前我抄的是作文选里的万能句，什么骄阳似火、岁月如梭，抄完连自己都不信。读《草房子》那个月，我的素材本变了样。

书里有一段写芦苇荡：暴风雨夜里，芦苇连片倒下去，又立起来，杜小康追鸭子，脸上分不清是雨还是水。我在车上读到这段，到家就把它整段抄进本子，抄了大半页。这不是任务要求的量，是我自己愿意的。我还抄了药寮里温幼菊老师唱的那支没有词的歌，抄秃鹤的光头在太阳底下发亮那一句。抄的时候我在想：这些句子为什么好？它们没有一个词在喊好看，可画面自己站出来了。

真正让我明白积累有什么用，是十一月的周记，题目是那一次大风雨。我坐在桌前发懵，忽

然想起素材本上那半页芦苇：连片倒下去，又立起来。我把句子改了几个字放进去：楼下的树倒下去，又立起来，环卫工人在雨里把树枝一根一根拖走。写动作的时候，我又想起曹文轩写杜小康追鸭——先写摔，再写爬起来。我照着把环卫工人滑了一跤、扶住车把继续拖，写进了周记。

周记本发下来，老师在评语里写：这一段像亲眼看见的。我心里得意，不是因为我聪明，是因为那半页芦苇在我肚子里住过。以前抄万能句，抄完就忘，因为它们没进过我的心；《草房子》的句子我抄了一遍，又在脑子里过了无数遍，它们是我的了。

现在我给素材本定了新规矩：只抄真心喜欢的，一段也行，半页也行，抄完在旁边写一行为什么喜欢。这个学期本子薄了，可我写周记再没憋过。从读到写，中间没有捷径，只有把别人的好句子养在自己肚子里，等它们自己跳出来。

The Notebook I Read to Pieces

I keep a notebook of good words and sentences, as our teacher requires: one page every week. Before, I copied the all-purpose lines from essay anthologies — blazing sun like fire, years flying like a shuttle — sentences even I did not believe. The month I read Grass House, my notebook changed shape.

There is a passage in the book about the reed marshes: on a stormy night the reeds fall in whole sheets, then rise again, and Du Xiaokang chases his ducks, his face impossible to read — rain or water, who can tell. I read that passage on the bus, and the moment I got home I copied the entire passage into my notebook, more than half a page. That was far more than the assignment asked for; I did it because I wanted to. I also copied the wordless song Teacher Wen Youju sings in the medicine shed, and the line about Tuhe's bald head shining in the sun. As I copied, I kept asking: why are these sentences good? Not one word shouts beautiful, yet the picture stands up by itself.

What truly showed me the value of accumulation was November's weekly journal, titled The Big Storm. I sat at my desk, stuck, and suddenly remembered those half-page reeds in my notebook: falling in sheets, then rising again. I changed a few words and put them in: the tree downstairs fell, then rose again; a sanitation worker dragged the branches away one by one in the rain. For the actions, I remembered how Cao Wenxuan writes Du Xiaokang chasing ducks — first the fall, then getting back up. I followed that pattern: the worker slipped, gripped the cart handle, and went on dragging.

When the journals came back, my teacher wrote in the margin: this paragraph reads as if seen with one's own eyes. I was pleased inside — not because I am clever, but because those half-page reeds had lived in my belly. The all-purpose sentences I used to copy vanished on contact, because they never entered my heart; the sentences from

Grass House I copied once and then turned over in my mind countless times. They became mine.

Now my notebook has new rules: copy only what I truly love — one paragraph or half a page, and beside it write one line about why I love it. This term the notebook is thinner, but I have never again sat gasping over a journal entry. Between reading and writing there is no shortcut: only raise other people's good sentences inside your own belly, and wait for them to jump out on their own.

那天我学会写一个人的两面

我以前写人物，只敢写一面。写爸爸就是严厉，写妈妈就是温柔，一个人从头到尾一个脾气，像复印出来的。读《草房子》以后，我把从前的那些作文全推翻了。

书里最让我吃惊的人物是桑桑的爸爸桑乔。他是油麻地小学的校长，开会时一脸严肃，儿子闯了祸，他当着众人的面把桑桑叫到跟前，一顿狠揍，打得毫不留情。可就是这个人，儿子生病以后，他天天背着桑桑去看病，一家医院一家医院地跑。夜里桑桑疼，他一个大男人蹲在门口，不出声。曹文轩没有解释这算不算好爸爸，他只是把两件事都写出来：打的那一下，和背的那一路。

我合上书想了很久。我爸爸不也这样吗？我数学考砸那次，他把卷子拍在桌上，说我不用心，声音大得隔壁都听见。可第二天早上，我发现自行车链条掉了，夜里被人修好上了油，车座还调高了一格——我上周抱怨过一句腿伸不开。他嘴上从没提过修车的事。

后来的作文《我的爸爸》，我头一回写了两面：拍卷子的手，和上油的手。我写他凶完背过身去，写我假装睡了，听见他在工具箱前翻扳手的动静。写完自己读了一遍，人物第一次像站起来了，不再是纸片人。那天晚上我翻出以前的作文重看，满纸都是我的爸爸很严厉，一句话翻来覆去，连我自己都看得脸红。

老师这次的评语是一句话：他既是校长，也是爸爸。我把它抄在素材本扉页。这就是《草房子》给我的最大启发：人是两面的，好作文敢把两面都写出来，不替任何人辩护，也不替任何人遮掩。打那一下是真的，背那一路也是真的。把两件事都摆出来，剩下的感动，读者自己会来拿。

The Day I Learned to Write a Person's Two Sides

When I used to write about a person, I dared show only one side. My father was strict, my mother was gentle — each character kept a single mood from beginning to end, like a photocopy. After reading Grass House, I tore down all my old essays.

The character that surprised me most in the book is Sang Sang's father, Sang Qiao. He is the principal of Youma Di primary school, stern-faced at every meeting. When his son did something wrong, he called the boy over in front of everyone and beat him hard, without mercy. Yet it was the same man who, after his son fell ill, carried him on his back from hospital to hospital, day after day. At night, when the pain kept the boy awake, this big grown man squatted by the door without making a sound. Cao Wenxuan never explains whether this makes him a good father. He simply sets down both things: the strike, and the road on his back.

I closed the book and thought for a long time. Isn't my father the same? The time I failed my math exam, he slapped the paper onto the table and said I hadn't tried, loud enough for the neighbors to hear. But the next morning I found that my bicycle chain had come off during the night, been fixed and oiled, and the seat raised one notch — I had complained last week that my legs couldn't stretch out. He never once mentioned fixing the bike.

In my later essay, My Father, for the first time I wrote both sides: the hand that slapped the paper, and the hand that oiled the chain. I wrote how he turned his back after scolding me, and how I pretended to be asleep and heard him rummaging for a wrench by the toolbox. When I finished and read it through, the character stood up for the first time, no longer a paper cutout.

The teacher's comment this time was a single sentence: He is both a principal and a father. I copied it onto the first page of my notebook. This is the greatest lesson Grass House taught me: a person has two sides, and a good essay dares to write both — defending no one, hiding nothing for anyone. The strike was real, and the road on his back was real too. Set both things down, and the rest of the feeling, the reader will come and take it by themselves.