上台做实验前我紧张得手抖

科学课上，老师讲完大气压，问谁愿意上台做纸片托水的演示。教室里一下子安静了，我本来只想坐在座位上鼓掌，可老师看见了我举了一半又缩回去的手，说，就你吧。我站起来的时候腿有点软，讲台上的水杯、盆和卡纸看起来都特别大。

老师把盆垫在讲台边上，说万一洒了水进盆里。我先把玻璃杯凑到水壶下面接水，接得太满，端回讲台的路上水一直晃到杯沿，我走得更慢了，全班盯着我走，我觉得那几步路有一百米长。到了讲台，我把卡纸盖上去，用食指按着。轮到手腕翻的时候，我发现自己的手在抖，抖得很轻微，但杯子边上的水纹跟着抖。我心想别抖啊，然后手腕一翻，翻得太急，纸滑了，整杯水哗地倒在盆里，只差一点就浇到老师的鞋。

教室里有人笑，有人吸一口气。我的耳朵烫得厉害，站在原地不知道手往哪放。老师没说我，只把杯子重新递给我，说再来一次，科学家做这个实验也洒过水。我把盆里的水倒掉，重新接了一杯，这回只接到九分满。我深吸一口气，数了一二三，才把纸按上去，按了整整十秒，感觉纸和杯口粘成一块了，才慢慢往下翻。翻的过程我只盯住纸的边，边没有翘，我就一直翻。杯子倒过来了。纸托着水，稳稳的。我举了十秒，才翻回盆上。

全班哗地鼓掌，后排的赵小磊喊了一声牛。我下讲台的时候腿还是软的，不过这回是高兴的软。回座位后同桌问我，你第一次是不是故意的。我说不是，我手抖得自己都看见了。同桌说，那你第二次怎么不抖了。我想了想说，第二次光顾着数一二三了，没工夫抖。

后来我在周记里写：这个实验教会我的不只是大气压。手抖的时候，杯子会替你诚实；洒了那杯水没什么，重新接一杯就行。科学课上老师还说过一句话，我抄在文具盒背面：失败是实验的一部分。现在我觉得这句话挺好听——它的意思是，洒掉的那杯，也算做完了。

My Hands Shook Before I Went on Stage

In science class, after the teacher finished explaining air pressure, she asked who would come up front and demonstrate the paper-holds-water trick. The room went silent all at once. I had only meant to stay in my seat and clap, but the teacher spotted my hand halfway raised and then pulled back, and said, you it is. My legs went soft as I stood up. On the podium, the glass, the basin, and the card paper all looked enormous.

The teacher set the basin at the edge of the podium, saying in case of spills the water goes into the basin. I filled the glass under the pitcher, filled it too full, and on the walk back to the podium the water kept rocking to the rim. I walked slower, the whole class watching my steps, and those few steps felt a hundred meters long. At the podium I laid the card on top and pressed with my index finger. When it came time to roll my wrist, I noticed my hand was shaking — barely, but the water rings at the glass's edge trembled along with it. Stop shaking, I told myself, then flipped my wrist too fast. The paper slipped, and the whole glass crashed into the

basin, missing the teacher's shoes by a little.

Some in the class laughed, some gasped. My ears burned; I stood there not knowing where to put my hands. The teacher did not scold me. She just handed me the glass again and said try once more — scientists spilled water doing this experiment too. I emptied the basin, refilled the glass, this time only to nine-tenths. I took a deep breath, counted one, two, three, then pressed the paper down and held the press for a full ten seconds, until the paper and the rim felt like one piece, and only then turned it over slowly. During the turn I watched only the edge of the paper; as long as the edge did not curl, I kept turning. The glass came upside down. The paper held the water, steady. I held it up for ten seconds, then turned it back over the basin.

The whole class burst into applause, and Zhao Xiaolei in the back row shouted one word: awesome. My legs were still soft walking off the podium, but this time it was the happy kind of soft. Back at my desk my deskmate asked if the first failure was on purpose. I said no — my hands shook so much I saw it myself. He asked why they did not shake the second time. I thought a while and said: on the second try I was busy counting one-two-three and had no time to shake.

Later I wrote in my weekly journal: this experiment taught me more than air pressure. When your hands shake, the glass tells the truth for you; and spilling that glass is nothing — just fill another one. The teacher once said a line I copied onto the back of my pencil case: failure is part of the experiment. Now I think that line sounds nice. It means the spilled glass counts as done, too.