不肯浮的鸡蛋

暑假科学作业是做一次实验并写记录。我选了盐水浮鸡蛋——鸡蛋、玻璃杯、盐，材料三分钟就凑齐了。鸡蛋从冰箱门里拿出来还凉凉的，杯子是我挑了最大的一只，盐罐打开，我数好勺子，准备开始。

先倒水。自来水倒进杯子大半杯，我用勺子把鸡蛋贴着杯壁放下去，它扑通一声坐到底，横躺着，一动不动。我在记录本上写第一行：下午四点零五分，鸡蛋在清水里下沉，躺底。

接着加盐。第一勺，平平一勺，用筷子搅到盐粒看不见，鸡蛋不动。第二勺，搅，还是不动。第三勺，第四勺，水开始发浑，杯底的盐堆成一层白的，化不掉了。我有点急，心想这鸡蛋是不是太胖。我妈看了一眼，说加点温水，化得快。我倒掉半杯凉水换成温水，又添两勺，搅了整整一分钟，盐终于不见了。

鸡蛋是在第五勺盐之后浮起来的。它不是一下子窜上来，先是慢慢立起来，大头离开杯底，接着整个蛋悬在水里，像一个忘了收脚蹼的潜水员。我屏着气看它一寸一寸往上走，最后顶上探出水面，鼓起一个小小的黄帽子。我写第二行：四点三十一分，加盐五勺，鸡蛋浮起，露出水面一点。

实验做完，我把原理抄在记录本上：鸡蛋比清水重，同样大小的一杯，鸡蛋那头沉，所以往下掉；盐化进水里，盐水比清水重，盐加得够多，盐水比鸡蛋还重，就把鸡蛋托起来了。这就是密度。我在旁边加了一句自己的话：不是鸡蛋变轻了，是水变强了。

后来我又倒着验了一遍：把浮着的鸡蛋捞出来放进清水，它又沉底；把那杯盐水倒进另一只有清水的杯子，鸡蛋慢慢升上来。鸡蛋从头到尾是同一只，变的都是水。这个实验前后只用了二十多分钟，我的记录写了三页。我妈说写这么多干什么，我说每一勺盐都算数，不能不算。

The Egg That Refused to Float

The summer science homework was to run one experiment and keep a record. I chose the salt-water floating egg — an egg, a glass, and salt: the kit came together in three minutes. The egg was still cool from the fridge door. I picked the biggest glass, opened the salt jar, counted out the spoonfuls, and got ready.

Water first. Tap water to three-quarters of the glass, then I slid the egg down the wall on a spoon. It plopped onto the bottom, lay on its side, motionless. I wrote the first line in my notebook: 4:05 PM, the egg sinks in plain water, lying at the bottom.

Then the salt. First spoonful, level, stirred with a chopstick until the grains vanished — the egg did not move. Second spoonful, stir, still nothing. Third, fourth: the water turned cloudy, and salt piled white on the bottom, refusing to dissolve. I got a little anxious, wondering if this egg was simply too fat. My mother glanced over: add some warm water, it dissolves faster. I poured out half the cold

water, replaced it with warm, added two more spoonfuls, and stirred a full minute until the salt finally disappeared.

The egg rose after the fifth spoonful. It did not shoot up at once: first it stood up slowly, its blunt end lifting off the bottom, then the whole egg hung in the water like a diver who forgot to retract his fins. I held my breath and watched it climb inch by inch until its top poked through the surface, a little yellow cap. I wrote the second line: 4:31 PM, five spoonfuls of salt, the egg floats, breaking the surface.

When the experiment was done I copied the principle into the notebook: an egg is heavier than plain water — for the same volume the egg side wins, so it falls; salt dissolved in water makes the water heavier, and once enough salt is in, the salt water outweighs the egg and lifts it up. That is density. Beside it I added a line of my own: the egg did not get lighter — the water got stronger.

Afterward I ran it backward to check: the floating egg went back into plain water and sank again; pour that salt water into another glass holding a plain-water egg, and the egg slowly rises. The same egg the whole time — it was the water that kept changing. The experiment took barely twenty minutes; my record ran three pages. My mother asked what I was writing so much for. I said every spoonful of salt counts, and you cannot leave one out.