挡路的那只蚂蚁没有离队

《观察蚂蚁》里有一段，很多人会翻过去，我划线划了两遍。蚂蚁队伍抬着食物遇到一道砖缝，缝太宽，小蚂蚁跨不过去。前面的蚂蚁爬上缝沿站住，后面的排成一串，把食物一件一件往上递。有只蚂蚁太小，爬不上缝沿，就一直在缝底待着，负责把食物递上去。等队伍递完，它自己爬出来，追上队伍。

作者特意写了一句：那只小蚂蚁在缝底待的时间比谁都长，可它一次也没有往别的缝口走，它认定这条队伍就是它该待的地方。

作者写：挡路的那只没有离队，队伍就是它抬的东西。这句话，我是在六年级合唱比赛那天听懂的。

我们班唱一首讲全世界合成一家人的歌，伴奏是一个男生弹钢琴。第二段开头，他错了一个和弦，琴声停了半拍。指挥的手也僵了一下，可音乐老师在侧台没有喊停，全班接着唱，那个男生找回位置，把第二段弹完了。他的左手在琴键上抖，右手却稳，硬是把错的那一小节接回了拍子上。

比赛完，我听见有人说，就差那一个错，不然我们是一等奖。那个男生难受了好几天，课间一个人坐在琴房练那一小节。音乐老师走过去坐在他旁边，陪他把那一小节弹了一遍，说，全班都接着唱，那一小节就不算错。

后来颁奖，我们班拿了二等奖，全班喊得窗户嗡嗡响。弹琴的男生跑到前排，领带歪了，笑得比谁都大声。回教室的路上，他走在最中间，李想搂着他的肩膀，说明年还让他弹，他嘴上说随便，耳朵却红到了脖子。

缝底的蚂蚁抬不动食物，可它一直在递；男生错了一个和弦，全班接着唱。书里说小蚂蚁有大力量，大在没有谁离队。我们班也一样，力量不在二等奖还是二等奖，在琴声断掉那一瞬，没有一个人停嘴。

下节班会课，我们班还要合唱一次，我要站在第二排中间。要是再有人出错，我就是接着唱的那群人里的一个。

The Ant That Got in the Way Never Left the Line

There is a passage in Watching Ants that many readers skim past, but I underlined it twice. The ant column carrying food came to a crack between bricks, too wide for the small ants to cross. The ants in front climbed onto the edge of the crack and stood their ground; the ants behind formed a chain and passed the food up one by one. One ant was too small to climb onto the edge, so it stayed at the bottom of the crack the whole time, passing the food upward. When the last piece was passed, it climbed out on its own and caught up with the column.

The author writes: the one who got in the way never left the line, and the line

was what it was carrying. I understood that sentence during the sixth grade chorus competition.

Our class sang a song about the whole world becoming one family, with one boy playing the piano accompaniment. At the start of the second verse he missed a chord, and the sound stopped for half a beat. The conductor's hands froze for a moment too, but our music teacher in the wings did not call a stop; the whole class kept singing, and the boy found his place again and played the rest of the verse through.

After the competition I heard someone say that one mistake was the only thing between us and first prize. The boy was embarrassed for days, sitting alone in the piano room during breaks practicing that one bar. Our music teacher walked over, sat beside him, and played the bar through with him once, saying: the whole class kept singing, so that bar was not a mistake.

At the awards ceremony our class won second prize, and the whole class shouted so loudly the windows rang. The boy at the piano ran down to the front row, his tie crooked, laughing louder than anyone.

The ant at the bottom of the crack could not carry food to the top, but it kept passing food up. The boy missed a chord, but the whole class kept singing. The book says the great strength of small ants lies in nobody leaving the line. Our class is the same: the strength was not in which prize we won, but in that moment when the sound broke and not one person stopped singing.

At the next class meeting our class will sing as a chorus again, and I will stand in the middle of the second row. If someone makes a mistake again, I will be one of the ones who keep singing.