书里的人先问了一个为什么

《一次有趣的实验》里有一段，别人都觉得该跳起来欢呼，书里那个人却没有。实验成功了，他坐在那儿，盯着杯子，问了一句：为什么会这样？就是这一句让我把书翻得慢了下来。因为我做过的所有实验，成功的瞬间都是欢呼，然后就没有然后了。我把成功当成结束，书里的人把成功当成开始。

书里写他为了回答自己的为什么，翻书、查资料、又重做实验，把每一步都记下来。他写的那几页记录，比实验本身还好看。他写哪一次失败了，写他猜错了几次，写他有一次以为找到了答案，结果第二天重做又不对了。我读那些猜错的地方，越读越佩服。欢呼谁都会，坐下来承认自己猜错，不是谁都做得到。

我拿自己的吹泡泡试了一下。我以前吹泡泡，吹出来就吹出来，最多比谁吹得大。这次我故意停下来问：为什么有的泡泡是圆的，有的会歪成一条长虫？我蹲在楼下试了十几分钟。用圆铁圈吹，泡泡圆；把铁圈捏成方的，吹出来还是圆的；把铁圈捏成长条，慢慢拉，泡泡先变长，然后啪地断成几个小圆。我跑去问科学老师，老师想了半天说，大概是泡泡自己想把表面缩到最小，圆是最省事的形状。我不完全懂，但我把那十几分钟看到的都记在了本子上，包括我猜错的那两次：我猜过是铁圈的形状决定的，猜过是风吹的。

书里那个人让我明白，眼睛看到好玩，只是实验的一半。另一半在嘴巴上：要问为什么。还有一半在手上，就是像他那样把猜错也记下来。我现在有一个专门的本子，封面写着为什么，里面全是没答完的问题。它们不像考试那样有标准答案，可每一个都等着我自己去够。

合上书那天，我在书的最后一页夹了一张纸条，上面写：下次实验成功的时候，先别欢呼，先问为什么。这张纸条现在还夹在那里。它替我看着我自己，看我会不会一高兴，又把那个为什么漏掉了。

The Man in the Book Asked Why First

There is a part in One Fun Experiment where everyone would think it is time to cheer, but the man in the book does not. The experiment has succeeded. He sits there, stares at the cup, and asks: why did this happen? That single question made me slow down my reading. Every experiment I have ever done ended with a cheer at the moment of success, and then nothing. I treated success as the ending. The man in the book treated it as the beginning.

The book writes that to answer his own why, he went through books, looked things up, and ran the experiment again, recording every step. Those pages of his records are more enjoyable than the experiment itself. He wrote down which attempts failed, how many times he guessed wrong, and how one morning he thought he had the answer, only to redo it the next day and find he was wrong again. I read those wrong guesses over and over, more and more in awe. Anyone can cheer. Few can sit down and admit they guessed wrong.

I tried it on my own bubble blowing. Before, when a bubble came out, that was that; at most we competed for the biggest one. This time I deliberately stopped and asked: why are some bubbles round while others stretch into a long worm? I squatted downstairs and tested for over ten minutes. With a round wire loop, the bubbles came out round. I bent the loop into a square, and the bubbles were still round. I bent it into a long strip and pulled slowly: the bubble stretched long, then snapped into several small round ones. I ran to ask our science teacher. He thought for a long while and said, probably a bubble wants to shrink its surface to the smallest possible, and the circle is the laziest shape. I do not fully understand it, but I wrote down everything I saw in those ten minutes, including my two wrong guesses: that the shape of the loop decides it, and that the wind decides it.

The man in the book taught me that eyes seeing something fun is only half of an experiment. The other half sits in the mouth: ask why. And another half is in the hand, recording the wrong guesses the way he did. I now keep a special notebook with the word Why on its cover, filled with questions that have no answers yet. They do not come with standard answers like exams do, but each one is waiting for me to reach it.

The day I closed the book, I tucked a slip of paper into its last page. It says: next time an experiment succeeds, do not cheer first. Ask why first. That slip is still there. It watches me for the book, making sure that in my excitement I do not let the why slip away again.