原来做实验的人也会脸红

《一次有趣的实验》里有一段我读了三遍。书里那个人被同学推上台，在全班面前演示他的实验。第一遍做，失败了。器材摆了一桌，台下开始有人窃窃私语。书里写他的脸一下子红了，耳朵也烫。我读到这里停下来，因为这种烫我太熟悉了。可是他没有下台。他站在原地，把失败的杯子挪到一边，跟全班说，我再做一次，请你们再给我三分钟。第二遍，他做得比第一遍慢，每一步都报给大家听。成功了。台下鼓掌，他说的第一句话是：刚才那次失败也算数，它让我们知道哪一步不能急。

我合上书，想起三年级那次。科学课举手上台演示种豆子，我把土倒多了，水浇下去，杯底的洞漏出一股泥汤，全班笑。我说了句我肚子疼，逃下讲台，蹲在厕所里不想回去。后来那节课后面讲了什么，我一点都不知道。我躲掉的其实不是那三分钟，是往后每一次想举手的心。

书里那个人跟我一样脸红，一样耳朵烫，台下也一样有人笑。不一样的只有一件事：他把失败留在了台上。他在书里写，失败站在台上当众被看了一遍，就没有那么可怕了；你越躲，它越大，你回头看它一眼，它就变小一点。这句话我背了下来，因为它不是我聪明地想出来的道理，是一个跟我一样怕笑的人，站在台上想出来的。

期末科学展示日报名的时候，我举了手。我报的项目是纸片托水，就是那张纸托住一整杯水的实验。准备的那几天，我在家把杯子打翻过四次，水洒了一桌。以前洒了我会发脾气，这次我把每次打翻的原因写在纸条上：第一次纸边没压平，第二次杯子提太快，第三次手按到纸上了。展示那天，我把这几张纸条也带上了台，失败的那几次，我照样讲给全班听。纸片托住水的那一秒，台下鼓掌，我听见我们班的调皮大王说了一声真牛。

读完这本书我明白：实验这个词里本来就装着失败两个字，做实验的人不是不会失败的人，是失败了还肯说请再给我三分钟的人。书里那个人在台上脸红的样子，我现在闭眼就能看见。他脸红，但他没有下台。以后每次想逃的时候，我就让他在讲台上替我站一会儿。

So the Man Doing the Experiment Blushed Too

There is a passage in One Fun Experiment I read three times. The man in the book is pushed on stage by his classmates to demonstrate his experiment in front of the whole class. The first attempt fails. Equipment covers the table, and whispers begin below the stage. The book writes that his face went red all at once, and his ears burned. I stopped reading there, because I know that burning too well. But he did not leave the stage. He stood where he was, moved the failed cup aside, and told the class: let me do it once more, please give me three more minutes. The second time he worked slower than the first, narrating every step out loud. It worked. The class applauded, and his first words were: the failure just now counts too. It showed us which step must not be rushed.

I closed the book and remembered my own time in third grade. I raised my hand in science class to demonstrate planting a bean. I poured in too much soil, and when the

water went in, a stream of muddy soup leaked out of the hole in the cup bottom. The whole class laughed. I said my stomach hurt, fled the stage, and squatted in the bathroom, refusing to go back. I do not remember a single thing the rest of that lesson taught. What I really dodged was not those three minutes. It was every hand I wanted to raise after that.

The man in the book blushes just like me, his ears burn just like mine, and people below the stage laugh just the same. Only one thing is different: he left his failure on the stage. He wrote in the book that a failure which stands on stage and is looked at by everyone loses its power. The more you hide, the bigger it grows; glance back at it once, and it shrinks a little. I memorized that sentence, because it is not a clever idea invented by a smart person. It was thought up on a stage by a man who feared laughter just as much as I do.

When sign-ups opened for the end-of-term science showcase, I raised my hand. My entry was the paper-card water trick, the one where a card holds up a full glass of water. In the days of practice I knocked the glass over four times at home, soaking the table. Before, spills would have made me throw a tantrum. This time I wrote the reason for each spill on a slip of paper: first time the card edge was not flat, second time I lifted the glass too fast, third time my finger pressed on the card. On showcase day I carried those slips onto the stage with me, and I told the whole class about the failed attempts too. The second the card held the water, the class applauded, and I heard our class clown say: that is seriously cool.

After reading this book I understood: the word experiment already contains the word failure inside it. A person who does experiments is not someone who cannot fail. It is someone who fails and still says, please give me three more minutes. The way the man in the book blushes on stage, I can see it with my eyes closed now. He blushes, but he does not leave. From now on, every time I want to run, I will let him stand on my stage for a while.