转学第一周，我陪一只蚂蚁走路

转学到新学校的第一周，我不认识几个人。课间别人三五成群，我总一个人到操场角落，蹲下来看地上。

那里墙根有个蚂蚁洞。第三天下午，我看见一只单独出来的蚂蚁，就盯着它。它从洞口出来，穿过水泥地，触角一直在点地。它走得急，却没有走错的样子。我蹲着陪它走，心里想，它也是一个人在赶路。

第五天，我又去找它。这次它走到一半，迎面碰到另一只蚂蚁，两只停下来碰了碰触角，很快又各自走开。就这么一碰，我看了好几遍才确认发生过。可我看见它之后脚步好像松了一点，走路的节奏都匀了。我想，它大概知道刚才那是自己人。

第六天放学，队伍排到操场边。我看见那条线：几十只蚂蚁排成一列，从墙根一直通到花坛，中间一只接一只，路过时互相碰一下。前几天那只独行的蚂蚁也在里面，混在队伍中，再也分不出。它找到了组织，组织也接住了它。

第七天中午，同桌忽然转过头，问我数学作业最后一题怎么解。我愣了两秒才反应过来他在跟我说话。讲完题他说了句谢谢，下午又把他的小零食分给我一半。我忽然想起那只蚂蚁——原来人和人之间，也就是碰一碰触角的事。

第二周，我跟着同桌他们一起去打乒乓球，四个人凑不满一局就轮流发球，笑得比谁都响。我不再在课间蹲到操场角落了，但路过墙根，我还会看一眼那条线。

现在回想那一周，那只蚂蚁替我把道理走了一遍：单独出发不丢人，那是每个个体都要走的一段；遇到同伴碰一碰，孤单就少一半；汇入队伍以后，你的路就成了大家的路。转学像被放到棋盘外，可只要往前走，总会碰到那两只触角，总会有一条线，等着把你接进去。

In My First Week at the New School, I Walked With an Ant

In my first week at the new school I knew almost nobody. During breaks others gathered in little groups, while I always squatted alone at the corner of the playground, looking at the ground.

There was an ant hole at the corner of the wall. On the afternoon of the third day I saw a single ant coming out, and I watched it. It left the hole and crossed the cement ground, its antennae tapping all the way. It hurried, yet it never seemed to take a wrong turn. I squatted there keeping it company, thinking: it is hurrying alone too.

On the fifth day I went to find it again. Halfway along, it met another ant coming the other way. The two stopped, touched the other with their antennae, then went their separate ways. I had to watch it several times before I was sure it had happened. But after that touch its steps seemed looser, its rhythm even. It must have

known, I thought, that the one it met was its own kind.

On the sixth day at the end of school, a line had formed by the playground. I saw it: dozens of ants in a single file, running from the wall corner all the way to the flower bed, one after another, each touching the next as they passed. The ant that had walked alone these past days was in it, mixed in, impossible to pick out. It had found its group, and the group had taken it in.

At noon on the seventh day, my deskmate suddenly turned around and asked me how to solve the last problem in the math homework. I froze for two seconds before realizing he was talking to me. After I explained it he said thanks, and in the afternoon he shared half of his snacks with me. I suddenly thought of that ant — so between people, it is only a matter of touching antennae.

In the second week I went to play table tennis with my deskmate and the others. Four people could not make a full game, so we took turns serving, laughing louder than anyone. I no longer squatted at the corner during breaks, but passing the wall I still glance at that line.

Thinking back on that week, the ant had walked the lesson through for me: setting out alone is nothing to be ashamed of, every individual must walk that stretch; when you meet a companion and touch antennae, half the loneliness is gone; once you join the line, your road becomes the road of all. Changing schools felt like being placed outside the board, but keep walking, and sooner or later you will meet those two antennae, and there will be a line waiting to take you in.