别挡着它们的路

林海背着书包出了校门，在花坛边上蹲下来，就再没动。妈妈在校门口等了他两回，喊他，他也不应。他看见花坛沿上躺着一只死蚂蚱，两只蚂蚁正绕着它转。

一只蚂蚁爬上蚂蚱的背，爬到一半滑下来，再爬，又滑下来。另一只咬住蚂蚱翅膀的尖，往后拽。蚂蚱直挺挺躺在花坛沿上，细腿蜷着，一动不动。

咬翅膀的那只松了口，转身走了。林海以为它放弃了，从旁边的草里抽出一根树枝，想替它们把蚂蚱推到墙洞那边去。妈妈走过来，按住他拿树枝的手，说，再等一会儿。

走了的那只蚂蚁回来了，身后跟着一长串蚂蚁。它们把蚂蚱围住，有的咬头，有的咬腿，有的从后头顶，还有几只跑到前面，把路上的沙粒一颗一颗搬开。蚂蚱歪了一下，又被抬平，一寸一寸往前挪。

林海数着蚂蚁的数，数到三十几只就乱了。他回头想告诉妈妈，妈妈却先把食指竖在嘴边，让他别出声。

林海把身子蹲得更低。蚂蚱从他鞋带边上过去，他就把脚一点一点收回来，大气不敢出。有几只蚂蚁爬上了他的鞋面，碰了碰触角，又回到路上去。妈妈蹲在他旁边，两个人都不说话。

蚂蚱过了花坛沿，绕过一颗小石子，最后连着那一片黑压压的蚂蚁，一起进了墙上的一个小洞。回来的蚂蚁一个接一个从洞里爬出来。林海把搁在洞口边的书包挪开，站起来，对妈妈说，咱们走外边，别挡着它们的路。

回家的路上，妈妈问他刚才看了那么久在看什么。林海想了半天，说，蚂蚁起先是搬不动，后来就搬动了。妈妈没有再接话。第二天中午，林海把半块饼干放在花坛边上。他不知道蚂蚁用不用得上，就是想搭把手。

Do Not Block Their Road

Linhai came out of the school gate with his schoolbag, squatted down by the edge of the flower bed, and did not move again. His mother waited at the gate and called him twice, but he did not answer. He had seen a dead grasshopper lying on the edge of the flower bed, with two ants circling around it.

One ant climbed onto the back of the grasshopper, slid down halfway, climbed up again, and slid down again. The other bit the tip of its wing and pulled backward. The grasshopper lay on the edge of the flower bed, its thin legs curled up, completely still.

The ant that had been biting the wing let go and turned to leave. Linhai thought it had given up. He pulled a twig from the grass beside him and wanted to push the grasshopper toward the hole in the wall for them. His mother walked over and pressed the hand holding the twig, saying only: wait a little longer.

The ant that had left came back, with a long line of ants behind it. They surrounded the grasshopper: some bit its head, some its legs, some pushed from behind, and several ran ahead, carrying the grains of sand off the road one by one. The grasshopper tilted, was lifted level again, and began to move inch by inch.

Linhai tried to count the ants, but lost count past thirty. He turned to tell his mother, but she put her index finger to her lips first, telling him to be quiet.

Linhai crouched even lower. The grasshopper passed right by his shoelace, and he drew his foot back bit by bit, not daring to breathe loudly. Several ants climbed onto his shoe, touched their antennae, and went back down to the road. His mother squatted beside him, and neither of them spoke.

The grasshopper passed the edge of the flower bed, went around a small pebble, and at last disappeared into a little hole in the wall together with the crowd of ants. The returning ants crawled out of the hole one after another. Linhai moved his schoolbag away from the hole, stood up, and said to his mother: let us walk on the outside, and do not block their road.

On the way home, his mother asked what he had been watching for so long. Linhai thought for a while and said: the ants could not carry it at first, but later they did. His mother said nothing more. The next noon, Linhai placed half a biscuit by the flower bed. He did not know whether the ants would need it; he just wanted to help.