我们是蚂蚁小队

我们住在墙洞里。天一亮，第一只蚂蚁就出门了。第二只跟着，第三只跟着，队伍排成一条细黑线，从墙根一直画到草丛。

我们的个子小，小得像一粒标点。我们的步子快，快得像下雨。没有人喊口令，队伍不乱。没有人管纪律，队伍不断。

触角是我们的小电话。碰一下，前面说：发现米粒，很大。碰一下，后面说：收到，就来。碰一下，大的让小的先过，前面的给后面的指路。两根触角，比谁的电话都快。

我们搬米粒。一粒米，够全家吃三天。我们抬虫翅膀，一片翅膀，够全家吃一星期。我们顶面包渣，渣比糖还甜，甜得队伍走得更稳。

一只蚂蚁搬米粒，米粒不动。两只蚂蚁抬，米粒晃了晃。三只四只五只一起上，米粒离了地。十只蚂蚁排成两列，米粒自己走路。我们喊着听不见的号子，米粒就走上了墙。

路上有小水洼，我们不绕。大的蚂蚁先趴下，小的蚂蚁踩着过去，一个接一个，水洼上搭起一座会抖的桥。桥是我们自己，路也是我们自己。

风把队伍吹乱过，我们重新排。雨把路冲断过，我们重新走。太阳出来，细黑线又出现了，比昨天更长，比昨天更直。

别踩我们的路。别拿水冲我们的洞。我们那么小，小得经不起一脚。我们那么多，多得能抬起比身子大十倍的粮食。

清早你蹲下来看，我们在排队。傍晚你蹲下来看，我们还在排队。夜里你睡着了，我们的触角还在碰：明天，米粒在那边，继续走。

我们是蚂蚁小队，住在墙洞里。我们的名字你记不住，我们的队伍你天天见。你见我们一次，就蹲下来看一次，这就是对我们最好的夸奖。

We Are the Ant Squad

We live in the hole in the wall. At daybreak the first ant sets off. The second follows, the third follows, and the line forms a thin black thread drawn from the wall all the way to the grass.

We are small, small as a punctuation mark. Our steps are fast, fast as falling rain. No one gives commands, yet the line is not in disorder. No one keeps discipline, yet the line never breaks.

Our antennae are our little telephones. One touch, and the front says: found a grain of rice, very big. One touch, and the back says: received, coming at once. One touch, and the big ones let the small ones pass first, the front ones show the way to those behind. Two antennae are faster than any telephone.

We carry grains of rice. One grain feeds the whole family for three days. We lift insect wings. One wing feeds the whole family for a week. We hold up crumbs of bread, sweeter than candy, and the sweeter they are, the steadier the line walks.

One ant tries to carry a grain, and it does not move. Two ants lift, and it wobbles. Three, four, five together, and the grain leaves the ground. Ten ants form two columns, and the grain walks by itself. We chant a count no one can hear, and the grain climbs up the wall.

When there is a small puddle on the road, we do not go around. The big ants lie down first, the small ones step over them, one after another, and a trembling bridge rises over the puddle. The bridge is ourselves, and the road is ourselves too.

The wind has scattered our line, and we form it again. The rain has cut our road, and we walk it again. When the sun comes out, the thin black line appears again, longer than yesterday, straighter than yesterday.

Do not step on our road. Do not pour water into our hole. We are so small that one step is more than we can bear. We are so many that we can lift grain ten times bigger than our bodies.

Squat down and look in the morning: we are in line. Squat down and look in the evening: we are still in line. At night when you sleep, our antennae are still touching: tomorrow, the rice is that way, keep walking.

We are the ant squad, living in the hole in the wall. You cannot remember our names, but you see our line every day. Every time you squat down to watch us, that is the finest praise you can give us.