小蚂蚁，把太阳搬回家

清早，我蹲在墙角，看见一条线从墙洞里出来。是小蚂蚁，出门了。露水还没干，它已经走了一段路。

线是直的，比我文具盒里的尺子还直。线是快的，比钟上的秒针还快。没有人喊一二一，可没有一只掉队。没有人举旗子，可没有一只走错。

它搬一粒米，比它的身子还重。它搬一片蝉的翅膀，比它的身子还宽。它抬一块饼干渣，比糖还甜。它抬着走，六条腿一步一步，从不肯停。它的触角朝前，一路探路，遇到缝就绕，遇到坑就跨。

路上碰见了，触角碰触角。碰一下，就懂了：粮食在前面，朝这边走。碰一下，就懂了：洞口在后面，家在那边。触角是两根小小的问句，也是两根小小的回答。

搬东西的时候，它的身子往前倾，像给路面鞠躬。转身的时候，队伍跟着拐弯，可不断。遇上小石子，队伍绕过去，绕完又直了。

一只蚂蚁搬，搬不动。两只蚂蚁抬着走。十只蚂蚁排成排，饼干自己上了墙。一百只蚂蚁连成线，把太阳也搬回了家。

我蹲在墙角读小蚂蚁。线短，我一口气读完。线长，我读了一上午。读到墙洞那里，最后一只蚂蚁刚好进去，露水在草叶上晒干了。

小蚂蚁，你别急。我把脚挪开，让你的队伍过去。小蚂蚁，你把太阳搬回家，明早还要早早出门，把那条细黑线，一直画到我的脚边。

我回家告诉妈妈，蚂蚁把太阳搬走了。妈妈问，太阳在哪儿。我说，在墙洞里，它们留着阴天用。妈妈没有笑，蹲下来，和我一起看那条线。

小蚂蚁，小蚂蚁，你这么小，小得像句号。你这么多，多得像一本书里的字。我读小蚂蚁，一上午读完了。我想接着读，明天清早再来。

Little Ant Carrying the Sun Home

Early in the morning, I squat by the wall corner and see a line coming out of the hole in the wall. It is the little ant, setting off. The dew is not yet dry, and it has already walked a stretch of road.

The line is straight, straighter than the ruler in my pencil case. The line is fast, faster than the second hand on the clock. No one shouts a marching count, yet no ant falls behind. No one carries a flag, yet no ant takes a wrong step.

It carries a grain of rice, heavier than its own body. It carries a piece of

cicada wing, wider than its own body. It lifts a crumb of biscuit, sweeter than candy. It lifts and walks, six legs one step at a time, never willing to stop. Its antennae point forward, feeling out the road, going around cracks and striding over hollows.

When they meet on the road, antennae touch antennae. One touch, and it is understood: the food is ahead, this way. One touch, and it is understood: the hole is behind, home is that way. The antennae are two small questions, and also two small answers.

When carrying, its body leans forward, as if bowing to the road. When turning, the line bends with it, but never breaks. When it meets a small pebble, the line goes around, and straightens again after passing.

One ant tries to carry, and cannot. Two ants carry it together. Ten ants line up, and the biscuit climbs the wall by itself. A hundred ants join into one line, and carry even the sun home.

I squat by the wall corner and read the little ant. When the line is short, I read it in one breath. When the line is long, I read it all morning. When I reach the hole in the wall, the last ant is just going in, and the dew has dried on the grass leaves.

Little ant, do not rush. I move my foot aside and let your line pass. Little ant, carry the sun home, and tomorrow morning set off early again, drawing that thin black line all the way to my feet.

I go home and tell my mother that the ants have carried the sun away. She asks where the sun is. I say it is in the hole in the wall, saved for cloudy days. She does not laugh; she squats down and looks at the line with me.

Little ant, little ant, you are so small, small as a full stop. You are so many, many as the characters in a book. I read the little ant, and finished it in one morning. I want to go on reading, so I will come back early tomorrow.

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.

墙角的小小队伍

我在墙角蹲下来，看见一条小小的队伍。队伍是蚂蚁排的吗？是。队伍是从墙洞里出来的吗？是。队伍要去哪儿？去有粮食的地方。

队伍排得直，像老师画的横线。队伍走得快，像下课的铃声。我伸手指想拦一拦，手还没落下，队伍从我指缝里过去了，没有乱。

蚂蚁的触角在头上，像两根小天线。它们碰一碰，就说了话。说什么？我猜：前面有米粒。我猜：大家快来。我猜：小心那只脚。我猜的话，它们没有听见，它们继续走。

一只蚂蚁顶着一粒米，米比它的头还大。它的腿一步一步，走得很用力，像背着书包上坡。走到墙根，米不见了，墙洞把它收走了。洞口边守着一只大蚂蚁，一动不动，像门口的小卫兵，谁经过都不拦，就是站着。

后来我看见两只蚂蚁抬一片虫翅膀，四只蚂蚁顶一块饼干渣。再后来，一队蚂蚁连成一串，把一块大饼干抬了起来。饼干走路的样子，我笑出了声，又赶紧捂住嘴，怕吓着它们。

我问蚂蚁：你们不累吗？蚂蚁不回答，触角碰触角，继续走。我问蚂蚁：你们家在哪里？触

角朝墙洞一指。我再问：明天还来吗？队伍没有停，可我觉得它们点了头。

太阳升高了，队伍还在走。影子变短了，队伍还在走。我蹲得腿麻了，站起来，队伍从我脚边绕过去，绕完又直了。

我回家写了一首诗，写在作业本的背面。诗里有排队，有触角，有搬米粒。妈妈看见了，说这首诗没有难词。我说，是蚂蚁写的，我只是蹲在旁边听。

第二天清早，我又到墙角。队伍还在，比昨天更长。我把诗念给它们听，念到触角那一句，正好有两只蚂蚁碰了碰触角。我想，它们听见了。

The Little Line by the Wall Corner

I squat down by the wall corner and see a little line. Is the line formed by ants? Yes. Does the line come out of the hole in the wall? Yes. Where is the line going? To where the food is.

The line is straight, like the horizontal line the teacher draws. The line walks fast, like the bell at the end of class. I stretch out my finger to block it, but before my hand comes down, the line has passed between my fingers, still unbroken.

The antennae of the ants are on their heads, like two little radio antennas. They touch, and they are speaking. Saying what? I guess: there is rice ahead. I guess: everyone come quickly. I guess: mind that foot. The words I guess, they do not hear; they keep walking.

One ant holds a grain of rice on its back, and the rice is bigger than its head. Its legs step one by one, walking with effort, like carrying a schoolbag uphill. When it reaches the wall, the rice disappears, and the hole in the wall has taken it in. By the hole sits a big ant, motionless, like a small guard at the gate, who stops no one passing by and simply stands there.

Later I see two ants lifting a piece of insect wing, four ants holding up a crumb of biscuit. Later still, a line of ants joins into a chain and lifts a big biscuit up. The way the biscuit walks makes me laugh out loud, and I quickly cover my mouth, afraid of frightening them.

I ask the ants: are you not tired? The ants do not answer; antennae touch antennae, and they keep walking. I ask the ants: where is your home? An antenna points toward the hole in the wall. I ask again: will you come tomorrow? The line does not stop, but I feel they nodded.

The sun rises higher, and the line keeps walking. The shadows grow shorter, and the line keeps walking. My legs go numb from squatting, and I stand up; the line goes

around my foot and straightens again after passing.

I go home and write a poem, on the back of my homework book. The poem has the line, the antennae, and the carrying of rice. My mother sees it and says this poem has no hard words. I say the ants wrote it; I only squatted beside them and listened.

Early the next morning I go back to the wall corner. The line is still there, longer than yesterday. I read the poem aloud to them, and at the line about antennae, exactly two ants touched their antennae. I think they heard me.