我在花坛边蹲了四十分钟

那个周六的下午，我在小区花坛边看见一条蚂蚁线。线的一头，一只蚂蚁停在一粒面包屑前面，绕着它转了两圈。我蹲下去看它，就再也没站起来。

开始的时候我根本坐不住。腿一会儿就麻了，妈妈在楼道口喊我回家吃饭，喊了两遍，我回了一句再等一会儿。其实那会儿我什么也没看见，就是不好意思走，觉得都蹲了这么久了。

那只蚂蚁用头顶面包屑，顶了一下，屑没动，又用肩膀撞，屑还是没动。它退回蚂蚁线里，碰了一个同伴的触角，两个一起往回走。我以为它放弃了，心里有点替它难过。

过了一会儿，线那头出来一串蚂蚁，七八只，排着队朝面包屑走。它们把屑围起来，前面两只拉，后面四只推，中间两只往上抬。面包屑动了一下，又停住，再动一下。我屏着气数它们的腿，数乱了，也不敢动。

线上传来了消息，一只大蚂蚁背着一条虫腿从洞里出来，和抬面包屑的队伍在路口错开。两边都停了停，让了让，谁也没有抢道。这个让路的过程没有谁喊，也没有谁指挥，它们碰一碰触角就办好了。我在旁边看得入了迷，连妈妈第三次喊吃饭都装作没听见。

路上有一条地砖缝。蚂蚁们抬着屑绕了个弯，多走了一截路。我看得着急，伸出手指想把缝抹平，指尖刚碰到线，蚂蚁全散了，面包屑孤零零躺在路中间。我后悔极了，把手缩回来，蹲回去等。

过了很久，触角一根一根重新碰起来，队伍又排好了，面包屑重新抬起来，绕开那条缝，一点一点挪进洞口的黑影子里。我抬头，天都快黑了，四十分钟就这么过去了。

我站起来的时候腿麻得走不动，一瘸一拐往家走，心里却特别满。我从前看书坐不住十分钟，做题也急，写两个字就想擦。那天我知道了，急的时候什么都看不见，蹲下来，静下来，蚂蚁就会把整个故事演给你看。

Forty Minutes by the Flowerbed

That Saturday afternoon, I saw a line of ants beside the flowerbed in our neighborhood. At one end of the line, one ant stopped in front of a crumb of bread and circled it twice. I squatted down to watch it, and I never stood up again until much later.

At first I could not sit still at all. My legs went numb quickly, and my mother called me twice from the stairway to come home for lunch. I answered that I needed a little more time. Really, I had seen nothing yet. I just felt too embarrassed to leave after squatting there so long.

The ant pushed the crumb with its head once, and it did not move. It bumped it with its shoulder, and it still did not move. Then it went back into the line and touched the antennae of a companion, and the two of them walked back together. I

thought it had given up, and my heart sank a little for it.

After a while, a string of ants came out from the other end, seven or eight of them, walking in a line toward the crumb. They surrounded it. Two pulled in front, four pushed behind, and two lifted from the middle. The crumb moved once, stopped, then moved again. I held my breath and counted their legs, lost count, and did not dare to move.

There was a crack between the paving stones on the road. The ants carried the crumb around it and walked a longer way. Impatient, I reached out my finger to smooth the crack flat. The moment my fingertip touched the line, all the ants scattered, and the crumb lay alone in the middle of the road. I regretted it at once, pulled my hand back, and squatted down to wait.

After a long time, the antennae found each other again one by one, the line formed again, and the crumb was lifted, carried around the crack, and moved bit by bit into the shadow of the hole. When I looked up, the sky was almost dark. Forty minutes had gone by.

When I stood up, my legs were too numb to walk properly, and I hobbled home with a full heart. Before that day, I could not sit still even ten minutes reading, and I rushed at my homework, wanting to erase every two characters I wrote. That day I learned that when you are in a hurry you see nothing, but if you squat down and grow quiet, the ants will act out the whole story for you.