厨房窗台边的小火山

家里的厨房窗台一直是我的秘密实验室。周六早上，我决定把窗台边那一小块地方变成真正的实验台：一只透明杯子、一瓶没开封的老陈醋、半袋小苏打，还有我跟同桌磨了一早上才借到的一小瓶红墨水。

我照着《厨房里的三百六十五个小实验》里的样子，先往杯子里舀了满满三勺小苏打。粉末细得像雪，我用指头弹了弹杯底，看它落平、落实，又在里面滴了两滴红墨水。白粉末里绽开几小片淡红，像谁把桃花瓣撒进了雪地里。

最关键的一步是倒醋。我捏着醋瓶沿，把醋贴着杯壁往下倒，倒得极慢，生怕它提前激动起来。清亮的液体一碰到粉末，先是轻轻地噗了一声，紧接着整只杯子哗地闹开了——泡泡挤着泡泡往上涌，涌着涌着就染成了红色，漫过杯沿，一个叠一个地往外淌。

喷发了！真的喷发了！我忍不住大喊出声。泡沫在窗台上堆起来，滋滋作响，越堆越高，像一座正在长个儿的红色小山。醋的酸味顺着热气散开，整个厨房都是那股冲鼻子的清香，我吸一吸，眼睛都亮了。

妈妈从客厅跑过来，以为我打碎了什么，结果看见的是满窗台的红色泡沫，和我一张沾着泡泡的脸。她愣了两秒，笑出了声：你这是在做醋还是在做酱油？我一本正经地把醋瓶递给她：妈妈你倒，再让它喷一次。

妈妈也蹲了下来，往泡沫里又添了一点醋。果然，已经慢下来的冒泡又哗地热闹了一回。我们俩蹲在杯子前，看泡泡破了又起、起了又破，看到泡沫自己不再长高，才一起直起酸痛的腰。

收拾窗台花的时间比实验本身还长，可我一点也不觉得累。晚上妈妈包饺子，我蘸醋的时候，耳朵里又响起那阵滋滋的冒泡声。原来一瓶普普通通的醋里，藏着一个小火山，只等一个周六的早上，把它叫醒。

The Little Volcano by the Kitchen Window

The little corner of our kitchen counter has always been my secret laboratory. On Saturday morning I decided to turn that patch by the window into a real lab bench: a clear cup, an unopened bottle of aged vinegar, a half-empty bag of baking soda, and a small bottle of red ink I had begged my deskmate for all morning to borrow.

Following the steps in 365 Little Kitchen Experiments, I first scooped three heaping spoonfuls of baking soda into the cup. The powder was as fine as snow. I tapped the bottom of the cup with my finger and watched it settle flat and firm, then added two drops of red ink. Pale red blossoms opened in the white powder, as if someone had scattered peach petals into the snow.

The most important step was pouring the vinegar. Pinching the rim of the bottle, I let the vinegar run down the inside wall of the cup, as slowly as I could, afraid

it might get excited too early. The moment the clear liquid touched the powder, there was a soft pop, and then the whole cup burst into commotion - bubbles crowding against bubbles, surging upward, turning red as they rose, spilling over the rim one on top of another.

It erupted! It really erupted! I shouted without meaning to. The foam piled up on the counter, hissing, growing taller and taller, like a little red mountain in the middle of growing. The sour smell of vinegar spread with the warmth until the whole kitchen was filled with that sharp, clean scent. I breathed it in and my eyes lit up.

Mom came running from the living room, thinking I had broken something, only to find a counter full of red foam and my face dotted with bubbles. She froze for two seconds, then laughed out loud: are you making vinegar or soy sauce? I handed her the bottle with a straight face: Mom, you pour - let it erupt one more time.

She crouched down too and added a little more vinegar into the foam. Sure enough, the bubbling that had slowed down roared back to life. The two of us squatted in front of the cup, watching the bubbles break and reform, reform and break, and only straightened our aching backs when the foam stopped growing on its own.

Cleaning the counter took longer than the experiment itself, yet I did not feel tired at all. That evening when Mom made dumplings and I dipped one in vinegar, the hissing sound rose in my ears again. So an ordinary bottle of vinegar had been hiding a little volcano all along, waiting only for a Saturday morning to wake it up.