打翻杯子以后，全班等他把盐加完

科学课，每组一杯清水、一枚鸡蛋、一罐盐。我们组的加盐任务是马小跳领的——不是跳远那个马小跳，是我们组马小跳，手比谁都快。他第一勺沿杯壁倒，第二勺搅得飞快，水都搅出了漩涡，鸡蛋在漩涡里转了两圈，又沉回杯底。

第三勺、第四勺，杯底开始有盐没化完，白花花一层。组长林小雨提醒他慢点搅，马小跳嘴上说好，手还是快。第五勺他倒得太猛，盐呛进杯壁和鸡蛋之间，他拿筷子去拨，筷子一顶，杯子在桌上滑了半圈，撞上课本，哗——半杯盐水漫出来，淌了马小跳一袖子。

组里一下子静了。马小跳僵在那儿，手还举着勺子，脸涨得通红。按平时的脾气，林小雨早该发火了，水都淌到她的作业本边上了。她没发火，抽出纸巾按在桌面的水上，说：先把水按住。另外两个组员也忙起来，一个扶杯子，一个把作业本往远处搬。

老师从讲台走过来，看了一眼湿透的桌面，只问了一句：杯子还能用吗？林小雨说能。老师说：那接着做。她转身去别的组，从头到尾没提打翻两个字。

杯子里的水洒了小半杯，林小雨把清水瓶递给马小跳：你来续。马小跳续了水，手还有点抖。林小雨说：刚才加到第五勺了对吧，接着数。马小跳点头，把勺子伸进盐罐，压平，第六勺。这一次他搅得极慢，筷子贴着杯底画圈，一圈，两圈。

第七勺下去，杯底的盐开始化得慢了。马小跳的手停在半空，眼睛盯着鸡蛋，不敢搅了。林小雨替他把最后一勺盐送进杯子，说：你来搅最后一下。马小跳的筷子沉下去，慢慢地画了三圈。鸡蛋晃了晃，离开了杯底，悬在半水，然后一点一点往上蹭，蹭到水面，露出半个头。

我们组先没喊，四个人围着杯子屏住呼吸，等鸡蛋躺稳了，才一起欢呼。全班其他组听见动静，呼啦围过来。有人问你们加了几勺，马小跳抢着说八勺，中间打翻过一次。他说打翻那三个字的时候，声音没有低下去，反而挺了挺胸口。

下课收器材，林小雨在实验记录单的失败一栏写：打翻半杯盐水。在原因一栏写：手快。在怎么办一栏写：等他把盐加完。老师巡过来看见，把这一行念给了全班听。那节课最后老师说什么我都记不清了，只记得全班看马小跳的眼神，不笑他，也不可怜他，就是等着，等一个人把剩下的盐加完。

After the Cup Spilled, the Whole Class Waited for Him to Finish the Salt

Science class: one glass of water, one egg, one jar of salt per group. Our group's salt duty went to Ma Xiaotiao, not the long-jump Ma Xiaotiao, just our Ma Xiaotiao, whose hands were faster than anyone's. His first spoonful went down the cup wall; on the second he stirred so fast the water spun into a whirlpool. The egg circled twice inside it and sank back to the bottom.

Third spoonful, fourth. Undissolved salt began piling white at the bottom. Our

group leader Lin Xiaoyu told him to stir slower. His mouth said okay; his hands did not listen. On the fifth he poured too hard, salt jamming between the cup wall and the egg. He poked with a chopstick, the chopstick nudged, the glass slid half a turn across the desk, hit the textbook, and splash, half the salt water spilled down Ma Xiaotiao's sleeve.

The group went silent all at once. Ma Xiaotiao froze, spoon still raised, face burning red. In normal times Lin Xiaoyu would have exploded already; the water was creeping toward her notebook. She did not explode. She pulled out tissues and pressed them onto the spreading water, saying: hold the water down first. The other two members got busy too, one steadying the glass, one moving notebooks out of harm's way.

The teacher walked over from the podium, glanced at the soaked desk, and asked one question: is the glass still usable? Lin Xiaoyu said yes. The teacher said: then keep going. She turned to another group and never once mentioned the spill.

The cup had lost most of its water. Lin Xiaoyu passed the water bottle to Ma Xiaotiao: you refill it. He refilled, hands still shaking a little. Lin Xiaoyu said: we were at five spoonfuls, right? Keep counting. He nodded, dipped the spoon into the salt jar, leveled it, sixth spoonful. This time he stirred extremely slowly, the chopstick tracing circles along the bottom, one circle, two.

After the seventh spoonful, the salt at the bottom began dissolving slower. Ma Xiaotiao's hand hung in midair, eyes locked on the egg, afraid to stir. Lin Xiaoyu delivered the last spoonful of salt into the cup for him and said: you do the final stir. His chopstick sank and traced three slow circles. The egg wobbled, lifted off the bottom, hung in mid-water, then inched upward, inch by inch, until it broke the surface and showed half its head.

Our group did not shout at first. The four of us circled the glass holding our breath, and only when the egg lay steady on top did we cheer together. Other groups heard the commotion and swarmed over. Someone asked how many spoonfuls. Ma Xiaotiao answered before anyone else: eight, with one spill in the middle. When he said the spill, his voice did not drop. His chest straightened instead.

While packing up, Lin Xiaoyu wrote in the failure column of the lab sheet: spilled half the salt water. In the cause column: hands too fast. In the what-we-did column: waited for him to finish the salt. The teacher passed by, read that line aloud to the whole class. I cannot remember what the teacher said at the end of that class. I only remember the way the class looked at Ma Xiaotiao: not laughing, not pitying, just waiting, waiting for one person to finish adding his salt.