放大镜本

三年级以前，我一写记事作文就写流水账。早上起床，吃了早饭，上学，放学，回家，睡觉——一天写满三行，再加一句「今天真是快乐的一天」。好朋友赵一帆看了我的作文，笑得趴在桌上，笑完他从书包里掏出一个皱巴巴的本子，说：送你，这是我的「放大镜本」。

那个本子里夹着一张纸条，纸条上就一句话：把一分钟写成十分钟。我不懂。他给我演示。他说：你写「妈妈叫我起床」，六个字对不对？可妈妈走进房间用了三步，第一步门轴响，第二步拖鞋声，第三步床边坐下，床陷下去一点。她先摸我额头，再说「面好了」，说完捏了捏我的被角。你看，一分钟的事，写出来是一整页。

他教我把作文里最要紧的那一分钟找出来，像用放大镜照着它。别的都可以一句带过，起床、吃饭、上学，一笔就过去；只有那一分钟，要写声音、写动作、写说的话。他说：流水账不是写得平，是放大镜没举对地方。

我第一次用放大镜写的是「爷爷修自行车」。别的全略过，只写他蹲在车边那十分钟：扳手卡住螺母，他哈一口气再拧；链条上黑油沾到指头，他在裤子上蹭，蹭完手上更黑；修好以后他站起来扶了扶腰，试骑半圈，回头喊我：来，坐后面。那篇作文得了九十一，老师在末尾写：会写细节了。

一开始我也不会举放大镜。写洗手，我把开水龙头、抹肥皂、擦干手从头到尾写了一遍。赵一帆看了说：你放大镜举错了地方。洗手最要紧的一分钟，是肥皂泡在水底下散开的那一下。我重写，只写两手掌对搓、白泡变成清水珠、水砸在池子里的声音。那篇很短，老师旁边批了两个字：干脆。

后来我的放大镜越举越准。写运动会，我只写冲线前那二十秒；写包饺子，只写捏褶子那一只手。同学都说我的作文「有画面」。期末我的作文被老师念给全班听，念完有人回头看我，我耳朵烫烫的。

赵一帆的放大镜本现在传到我手里了，我在第一页添了一行：一分钟写成十分钟，别的都放过。这个心得送给所有写流水账的同学：不是你不会写，是你的放大镜还没举起来。借我朋友的放大镜，先用着，用熟了，它就是你的。

The Magnifying-Glass Notebook

Before fourth grade, every time I wrote a narrative composition it turned into a running account: got up, had breakfast, went to school, came home from school, went to bed—three lines for a whole day, plus one sentence: what a happy day today. My good friend Zhao Yifan read my composition and laughed face-down on the desk. After laughing he pulled a crumpled notebook from his schoolbag and said: a gift for you, this is my magnifying-glass notebook.

Inside the notebook was a slip of paper with one sentence on it: write one minute

as ten minutes. I did not understand. He demonstrated. He said: you write "Mother woke me up," six characters, right? But Mother took three steps into the room—step one, the door hinge creaked; step two, the slippers slapped; step three, she sat on the edge of the bed and the mattress sank a little. She first touched my forehead, then said "the noodles are ready," and after speaking she pinched the corner of my quilt. You see, one minute of events becomes a whole page when written.

He taught me to find the most important minute in a composition and shine the magnifying glass on it. Everything else can pass in one sentence—getting up, eating, going to school, one stroke and done; only that one minute gets sounds, movements, and spoken words. He said: a running account is not flat because you write badly—it is flat because the magnifying glass is pointed at the wrong place.

The first thing I magnified was "Grandfather fixes the bicycle." I skipped everything else and wrote only the ten minutes he squatted by the bike: the wrench stuck on the nut, he breathed on it and turned again; black grease from the chain got on his fingers, he wiped them on his trousers and his hands got blacker; after fixing it he stood up, rubbed his lower back, test-rode half a circle, and turned to call me: come, sit behind. That composition got ninety-one, and the teacher wrote at the end: now you can write details.

At the beginning I could not hold the glass steady either. I wrote about washing hands and described turning on the tap, rubbing in soap and drying hands from start to finish. Zhao Yifan read it and said: you are magnifying the wrong minute. The important minute of washing hands is the second the soap foam disappears under the water. I rewrote it, with only the rubbing of palms, the white foam turning into clear drops, and the sound of water on the basin. That piece was short, but the teacher wrote two words beside it: brief and clean.

Later my magnifying glass got more and more accurate. For the sports meet I wrote only the twenty seconds before the finish line; for making dumplings I wrote only the one hand pinching the folds. Classmates all say my compositions "have pictures." At the final exam the teacher read my composition to the whole class, and when she finished some turned to look at me and my ears burned.

The magnifying-glass notebook of Zhao Yifan is in my hands now, and I added one line on the first page: write one minute as ten minutes, let everything else go. This reflection goes to every classmate who writes running accounts: it is not that you cannot write—your magnifying glass has not been lifted yet. Borrow the glass of my friend and use it first; once it is worn smooth, it becomes yours.