作文课上的蚂蚁，帮了我大忙

我以前最怕写作文。老师说要写真实的事，我坐在桌前想啊想，想出来的事都像别人家的：扶老奶奶过马路，下雨送同学回家。我妈说，你院子里的事就不少，你看见过吗？我答不上来。

暑假里，我在院子墙根发现一个蚁洞。那天我在门口吃西瓜，一粒西瓜籽掉在蚁洞边上。一只蚂蚁跑过来，搬不动，就跑了。我以为它不要了，结果它领了六只蚂蚁来，每只都先用触角碰一碰那颗籽。八只蚂蚁一起使劲，西瓜籽晃晃悠悠地移动了。我看得连西瓜都忘了吃。

从那天起，我有个小习惯：兜里揣个巴掌大的本子，蹲在墙根记。我记了八天。籽是怎么被搬走的，蚂蚁碰头是怎么停下的，下雨前它们怎么往台阶上走，全在里头。本子第一页我还写了一行字：别写编的，写看见的。

开学第一堂作文课，题目是《一件有趣的事》。我写我们家的蚂蚁，写西瓜籽，写八只蚂蚁一起使劲时那颗籽晃晃悠悠的样子。我写得很慢，因为每句话我都要回想一下本子上记的，怕写错。

第二天，老师把我的作文当堂朗读。读到西瓜籽移动那一段，全班笑了，笑得很响。老师问我：这个细节是真的吗？我说是，我记了八天。老师说：这就是作文的样子。

我的作文本上第一次得了三个星。我妈拿去看，看了半天说：原来你天天蹲墙根，是在攒作文。我觉得她说得不太对，又不全错。我不是为了作文才看蚂蚁的，我看蚂蚁的时候只想看。可是看进去的东西，写作文的时候自己会排队出来。

现在我再也不怕写作文了。我的兜里还是揣着那个本子。蚂蚁教会我：真实的东西不在脑子里编，在眼睛外面等着，你去看，它就跟你走。

The Ants in My Composition Saved Me

I used to dread writing compositions. The teacher said to write true events, and I sat at my desk trying to think of something, but everything I thought of sounded like events from the lives of other people: helping an old lady cross the road, walking a classmate home in the rain. My mother said, plenty happens in your own yard, have you ever seen any of it? I could not answer.

During the summer vacation, I found an ant hole at the base of our yard wall. That day I was eating watermelon at the gate, and a watermelon seed dropped beside the hole. An ant ran over, could not lift it, and ran off. I thought it had given up, but it returned with six ants, and each one first tapped the seed with its feelers. Eight ants pushed together, and the seed wobbled along the ground. I was so absorbed that I forgot to eat my watermelon.

From that day I kept a small habit: a palm-sized notebook in my pocket, and I crouched by the wall to take notes. I wrote for eight days. How the seed was carried

off, how two ants stopped when they bumped heads, how the line climbed the steps before the rain, all of it was in there.

In the first composition class of the new term, the topic was an interesting event. I wrote about the ants in our house, about the watermelon seed, about the way the seed wobbled as eight ants pushed together. I wrote slowly, because for every sentence I checked my memory against the notebook, afraid of getting it wrong.

The next day, my teacher read my composition aloud to the class. When she reached the part where the seed moved, the whole class laughed out loud. She asked me: is this detail real? I said yes, I watched for eight days. She said: this is what a composition should look like.

For the first time my composition book got three stars. My mother read it slowly and said: so every day you crouched by the wall, you were saving up material. I think she is not quite right, but not wholly wrong either. I did not watch the ants for the sake of compositions. When I watched them, I only wanted to watch. But what truly goes into the eyes lines up by itself and walks out when it is time to write.

I am not afraid of compositions anymore. The little notebook is still in my pocket. The ants taught me this: real things are not invented in the head. They wait outside your eyes. Go and look, and they will follow you home.