雪下了整夜

半夜里，小宇好像听见了声音，很轻，像蚕吃桑叶，簌簌，簌簌，响了很久。他把头从被窝里伸出来听了听，什么也没有，又缩回枕头里睡熟了。他不知道，窗外的雪一直下到了天亮。

清晨他一推窗，世界变了颜色。天低低的，白里发青，压着屋顶。院里的枣树秋天落了叶子，光秃秃的枝子如今每根都顶着一线雪，像倒着长的珊瑚。巷子口的电线上积了厚雪，一只麻雀落上去，出溜一下滑了一跤，抖下一蓬雪粉。小宇把手贴在窗玻璃上，冰得掌心发麻，他回头就喊，爸，下雪了，下得好大！喊声把爸爸从被窝里拽了出来。

上学路上，整条街都换了模样。平时吆喝最响的煎饼摊今天安静，小区门口扫雪的叔叔挥着大扫帚，扫帚蹭着雪面，刷啦，刷啦。汽车开得极慢，像拉车老牛，车顶的雪一坨一坨往下溜。小宇专挑花坛边没人踩过的雪走，咯吱，咯吱，一脚一个白窝。他路过那棵大槐树，故意抬脚踹了一下树干，树上的雪哗地落下来，他一头扎进去，再抬头，眉毛和睫毛上全是白的，活像个小老头。槐树底下躲雪的地方露出一个小小的雪窝，他把自己踩出的那个窝看了半天，觉得那是雪替他留的座位。路过早点铺，玻璃上蒙着一层水汽，有人在里头画了一个笑脸，油汪汪的包子香从门缝里挤出来，混进冷空气里，闻着更香了。

下课铃一响，小宇飞跑下楼。操场上的雪又松又软，人一踩就陷下去，爬起来膝盖就是白的。男生们当场摆开打雪仗的阵势。小宇个子矮，蹲在操场边的大雪堆后面专门捏雪球，捏好一个就递给前排的高个儿。雪球在空中划出一道道白线，有的砸在篮球架横梁上，散开的雪粉落得底下那男生一头一脸，他甩甩头，打得更凶了。隔壁班的女生原本站在跑道边上看，男生们冲她喊，来呀，一起打！女生犹豫了一下，弯腰捏起一个雪球扔过来，不偏不倚，正砸在小宇鼻尖上。小宇眨巴眨巴眼睛，成了个滚地葫芦，女生捂着嘴笑，跑过来给他拍脸上的雪。大家的呼吸在冷空气里变成一团团白雾，升起来，又散了。上课铃响的时候谁也不肯走，几个人一边往楼梯上挪一边约定，明天要是再下，接着打。

回到教室，窗户玻璃很快蒙上了水汽。小宇伸出手指在上面画了一个雪人，雪人的边儿慢慢化了，他的嘴角一直翘着。窗外，雪又飘起来了，安安静静地，接着下它的。

The Snow Fell All Night Long

Around midnight, Xiaoyu thought he heard something. It was very soft, like silkworms chewing mulberry leaves, rustling, rustling, for a long time. He stuck his head out from the quilt, listened, heard nothing, and sank back into the pillow, fast asleep again. He did not know that the snow outside kept falling until dawn.

Early in the morning he pushed the window open, and the world had changed color. The sky hung low, pale white touched with blue, pressing down on the rooftops. The jujube tree in the yard had lost its leaves in autumn, and now every bare branch wore a thin line of snow, like coral growing upside down. The wires at the alley mouth were thick with snow. A sparrow landed on one, slipped, tumbled, and shook down a puff of snow dust. Xiaoyu pressed his palm against the window glass until it went

numb with cold, then turned and shouted, Dad, it snowed! A huge snow! His shout dragged Dad out of the quilt.

On the way to school the whole street had changed. The pancake stall that usually shouted the loudest was quiet today. The uncle sweeping snow at the compound gate swung his big broom, brushing the snow surface, swish, swish. The cars crawled along like old oxen pulling carts, and clumps of snow slid off their roofs. Xiaoyu deliberately walked on the untouched snow beside the flower beds, crunch, crunch, leaving a white hollow with every step. Passing the big locust tree, he gave the trunk a kick on purpose. The snow on the tree came down with a whoosh. He ducked his head into it, and when he looked up again his eyebrows and eyelashes were all white, looking exactly like a little old man. Under the tree, where the snow had not fallen, there was a small hollow, and he stared at the footprint he had made for a long while, thinking the snow had saved that seat just for him. By the breakfast shop the window glass was fogged, and someone inside had drawn a smiley face on it. The greasy fragrance of steamed buns squeezed out through the door crack and mixed into the cold air, smelling even better.

The moment the break bell rang, Xiaoyu flew downstairs. The snow on the playground was soft; a step sank in, and when you got up your knees were white. The boys immediately set up a snowball battle. Xiaoyu was short, so he squatted behind the big snow pile at the edge of the playground, making snowballs and handing each one to the tall boys in front. The snowballs drew white arcs through the air. One hit the crossbar of the basketball hoop, and the scattered powder rained down on the boy underneath, head and face. He shook it off and fought even harder. A girl from the next class had been standing by the track watching. The boys shouted at her, come on, join us! She hesitated, bent down, picked up a snowball and threw it. It landed fair and square on Xiaoyu's nose. He blinked, tumbling over like a roly-poly toy, and the girl covered her mouth laughing and ran over to brush the snow off his face. Everyone's breath turned into clouds of white mist in the cold air, rising and vanishing. When the class bell rang nobody wanted to leave. A few of them shuffled up the stairs making a promise: if it snows again tomorrow, we keep fighting.

Back in the classroom, the window glass fogged over quickly. Xiaoyu drew a snowman on it with his finger. The edges of the snowman slowly melted, and the corners of his mouth stayed turned up. Outside, the snow began to drift again, quiet and steady, carrying on its own falling.