一个雪人的自述

我生在今天早上第一节课后的课间，生在操场东南角。说起来你可能不信，我的出生不是一瞬间的事，是一点一点滚出来的。两个穿蓝校服的孩子，用一捧雪滚成雪球，雪球越滚越大，最后要四个人推着走。他们把我摞起来，三层，最上面那层放歪了，一个女孩伸手把我扶正。我就是这样来到这个世界上的。

我的样子是他们商量着定的。眼睛是两根胡萝卜，从值日生的菜篮里顺出来的；鼻子后来换成了一粒石子；帽子是一只红色的旧铁桶，扣在头顶上，桶沿压着我的额头。有个男孩把自己的围巾解下来缠在我脖子上，围巾是灰蓝色的，还带着他身上的热气。他们给我起名叫大白。我站在操场边上，看见整个世界都是白的：旗杆是白的，篮球架顶上是白的，教学楼的窗台排着一溜白边，只有操场上孩子们的衣服是红的黄的蓝的，一团一团在白里移动。这是我看见的全部颜色。

我的耳朵很好。我听见课间铃炸响，然后整个操场哗地热闹起来。我听见雪在鞋底下面咯吱咯吱，听见雪球砸在棉袄上的噗噗声，听见有人喊，瞄准大白的左边，别打头。有个孩子把雪球捏得太实，扔出去邦的一声打在我肩膀上，把我左肩打缺一块，他们又手忙脚乱地给我补上一块新雪。新补的雪和旧雪颜色不一样，白得更生。我听见一个女孩笑着说，大白今天穿了补丁。我站在那儿动不了，可我心里得意。

我也知道冷是什么滋味——因为我本身就是冷。可有热的东西靠近我。孩子们堆我的时候，手心的热气隔着雪传进来，一小团一小团；那个给我围围巾的男孩临走拍了拍我的身子，他的手掌贴在我胸口，那一块地方先化了。还有中午，太阳出来，我身上开始往下淌水，一滴一滴落回地上。我知道我在变小。我不怕。我胸口那块被拍过的地方化得最快，我想，那是热的地方化得快，跟怕不怕没有关系。

下午放学，操场空了。夕阳把影子拉得很长，我的影子也长，斜斜地搭在雪地上，影子的雪化得慢，能多站一会儿。最后一批孩子跑过，隔得老远冲我喊，大白，明天见。我知道明天见不到了。太阳出来我就塌了，明天操场上的我，大概只剩一小堆认不出的雪。可我一点也不难过。我活了一天，看见过满操场的红黄蓝，听见过一整节课间的响动，领过一条带热气的围巾，挨过一记邦实的雪球。我这一辈子短，可一场雪里的事，我全记住了。明天他们还会滚出新的雪人，那个新家伙没挨过打，没围过围巾，它什么都不记得。我替它记得。

Confessions of a Snowman

I was born this morning during the first break after first period, at the southeast corner of the playground. You may not believe it, but my birth was not a single moment - it was rolled out bit by bit. Two children in blue uniforms packed a handful of snow into a ball, and the ball grew bigger as they rolled it, until at last four of them had to push it along. They stacked me up, three layers, and the top layer went crooked, so a girl reached out and straightened me. That is how I came into this world.

My look was decided by negotiation. My eyes are two carrots borrowed from the

duty student's vegetable basket; my nose was later changed to a pebble; my hat is an old red tin bucket, banged onto my head, its rim pressing my forehead. One boy unwound his own scarf and wound it around my neck - gray-blue, still holding the warmth of his body. They named me Big White. I stand at the edge of the playground and see a whole white world: the flagpole is white, the tops of the basketball rims are white, the windowsills of the teaching building carry a row of white trim, and only the children's coats on the playground are red and yellow and blue, moving in blobs through the white. These are all the colors I have ever seen.

My ears are good too. I heard the break bell explode, and then the whole playground roared to life. I heard snow crunching under shoe soles, heard snowballs thumping into padded coats, heard someone shout, aim left of Big White, don't hit the head. One child packed his snowball too tight and it banged into my shoulder, knocking a piece off my left side, and they scrambled to patch me with fresh snow. The new snow is a different white from the old, a rawer white. I heard a girl laugh and say, Big White is wearing a patch today. I stood there unable to move, but inside I was proud.

I also know what cold tastes like - because I myself am cold. But warm things come near me. When the children built me, the heat of their palms came through the snow in small clouds; the boy who gave me the scarf patted my body as he left, his palm flat on my chest, and that spot melted first. And at noon, when the sun came out, water began running down my body, drop by drop back to the ground. I knew I was shrinking. I am not afraid. The spot on my chest that he patted melts fastest, and I think that is because warm spots melt first, fear or no fear.

In the afternoon school let out and the playground emptied. The setting sun stretched the shadows long; my shadow was long too, lying slantwise across the snow, and the snow under the shadow melts slowly and can stand a while longer. The last batch of children ran past and shouted at me from far off, Big White, see you tomorrow. I know there is no tomorrow for me. When the sun rises I will collapse, and tomorrow's me on the playground will probably be just a small heap of unrecognizable snow. But I am not sad at all. I lived one day: I saw a playground full of red and yellow and blue, heard a whole break-time of noise, wore a scarf that held warmth, took one solid snowball hit. My life is short, but everything inside one snowfall, I remember it all. Tomorrow they will roll out a new snowman, and that new fellow has never been hit, never worn a scarf, remembers nothing. I will remember for him.