雪的一夜

科学老师让我们观察一种自然现象，写连续观察日记。我本来想观察豆芽，结果这个周末，雪替我选了题目。

睡前那会儿，初雪刚开始。我趴在窗台上刷牙，看见对面楼的灯光里飘着几个白点，一开始只有两三片，斜着飘过来，贴在窗玻璃上，化成一个小水印。我数了数，一分钟落下来十一片。我对妈妈说，要下雪了。妈妈说，就那几片，下不成的。我不说话，继续刷牙。我想，雪下不下成，得再等等看。

夜里两点多，我忽然醒了。不是被声音吵醒的，是被光。窗帘没拉严，缝里透进来的光比平时亮，白亮白亮的，照在被子上。我光着脚下床，把窗帘拉开一条缝。外面的雪正下得密，路灯把雪照成金色，一片挨着一片，往下坠，坠得又慢又稳，没有一片是横着飞的。地上已经白了，白得很平整，像有人趁我睡觉的时候，把整条街重新铺了一遍。窗玻璃的下半截结了冰花，一片一片像蕨草，像鹿角，我用手哈了口气，冰花上化出一个圆圆的小窗，透过小窗看出去，雪还在下，一点声音都没有。我看了很久，久到脚都凉了，才回床上。躺下之前我在心里记了一笔：半夜两点，雪下得密，无声，地面积雪约一寸。

早晨我是被鸟叫醒的。拉开窗帘——雪停了。天是干净的浅蓝色，云退到很远很远的地方。楼下的雪地白得晃眼，平整，完整，一个脚印都没有，一辆车的轮印都没有。对面楼的屋顶像盖了一条厚棉被，被沿整整齐齐。单元门口那辆自行车，车筐里积了满满一筐雪，边沿还鼓出来一点。我趴在窗上数，对面楼道的台阶，一级一级全白了，数到第七级才看见铁台阶的颜色。

八点多，楼下终于有了第一个下楼的人。是个穿红棉袄的阿姨，走到雪地里，停了一下，大概舍不得踩。然后她抬起脚，踩下去，咯吱一声——我在五楼都听见了。她身后跟出来一个小男孩，专踩她刚踩出来的脚印，一步一个，踩得认认真真。再后来，电动车、汽车、送奶的车，一条一条把路压出印子。到中午，那条平整的白就再也找不出来了。

我在观察日记上写：初雪在睡前，落得试探；半夜下得密而静；早晨停，留下完整的一夜，然后被人间一点一点踩走。雪下了一夜，我醒着三个时段，全看见了。科学老师说，观察要连续。我这一篇，从睡前两点到早晨八点，一分钟都没断。

One Night of Snow

Our science teacher asked us to observe a natural phenomenon and keep a continuous observation diary. I had planned to observe bean sprouts, but this weekend the snow chose the topic for me.

Just before bed, the first flakes began. I was brushing my teeth at the windowsill when I saw a few white specks drifting in the light of the building opposite. At first there were only two or three, slanting over, sticking to the window glass, melting into little water marks. I counted: eleven flakes fell in one minute. I told Mom, it's going to snow. Mom said, just those few, it won't make it. I

said nothing and kept brushing. Whether it makes it, I thought, we'll have to wait and see.

A little after two in the morning I suddenly woke up. Not from sound - from light. The curtain was not pulled tight, and the light through the gap was brighter than usual, a white brightness lying on the quilt. I got out of bed barefoot and opened a crack in the curtain. Outside, the snow was falling thick, lit gold by the street lamp, flake after flake coming down slowly and steadily, not one of them flying sideways. The ground was already white, white and smooth, as if someone while I slept had relaid the whole street. The lower half of the window glass had grown ice flowers, frond like ferns, branching like antlers. I breathed on them, and a round little window melted in the ice; through it the snow was still falling, without a sound. I watched so long my feet went cold, then I went back to bed. Before lying down I noted in my mind: two a.m., snow falling thick, silent, about an inch accumulated.

In the morning birds woke me. I pulled the curtain - the snow had stopped. The sky was a clean pale blue, the clouds retreated very, very far away. The snow below was dazzling white, smooth, whole, without a single footprint, without a single tire track. The roof of the building opposite lay under a thick quilt, its hem neat. The bicycle by the building entrance had a basket brimful of snow, mounded slightly above the rim. I lay on the window and counted the steps of the opposite stairway: white, every one, until the seventh where I finally saw the iron's color.

After eight, at last the first person came downstairs. It was an auntie in a red padded coat. She walked to the edge of the snow, paused, reluctant to step, it seemed. Then she lifted her foot and pressed down - crunch. I heard it on the fifth floor. Behind her came a little boy stepping exactly into her fresh footprints, one by one, very earnest. After that electric bikes, cars, the milk truck laid their tracks one by one. By noon that smooth white could no longer be found.

In my diary I wrote: the first snow came before bed, falling tentatively; at midnight it fell thick and silent; it stopped in the morning, leaving one whole night intact, which the human world then trod away bit by bit. The snow fell one night, and I was awake in three time slots and saw it all. Our teacher says observation must be continuous. My entry, from two o'clock before bed to eight in the morning, did not miss a minute.