火里冲进去的那个背影

星期二晚上，妈妈给我读了《雪孩子》。读完我把书合上，又打开，把最后两页看了第三遍。雪孩子冲进火里救小白兔，把小白兔抱出来，自己却化成一摊水，后来变成一朵白云，飘在天上看着小白兔。我读到这里，鼻子有点酸。

我最记得的是雪孩子跑进火里那一段。火那么大，兔妈妈都急得直跺脚，别的动物站在外面不敢进去。雪孩子是雪做的呀，他比谁都知道自己怕火。可他一点头就冲进去了。我合上书想：他不怕吗？他肯定怕。雪做的身体，火一舔就没了，他比谁都清楚。可洞里的小白兔还在哭，他就顾不上自己了。

我不由得想起九月开学那天的事。食堂门口，二年级一个小同学端着汤碗摔倒了，汤洒了一地，人坐在地上不敢动。好多同学围过去看，没有人去喊老师，也没有人扶。我也站在人堆里，心里想着快去喊老师吧，可是脚不动。后来是一位值周老师路过，把小同学扶起来的。那天晚上我也像今天一样，翻来覆去睡不着。我站在人堆里的样子，和书里站在火堆外面不敢进去的动物们，一模一样。

雪孩子让我明白一件事：勇敢不是心里不害怕。勇敢是害怕的时候，还是往前迈了一步。雪孩子迈的那一步特别大，从雪地一步就迈进了火里。我迈的那一步可以小一点，比如从人堆里走出来，跑去办公室喊一声老师。这个我下次做得到。

书里还说，雪孩子化成水以后，太阳一晒变成了很轻很轻的水汽，飞上天变成白云。小白兔抬头看，那朵白云长得跟雪孩子一模一样。我想，雪孩子没有真的不见，他只是换了一个样子守着朋友。友情大概就是这样，人不在这儿了，可你抬头就能看见他。

现在那本书立在我的书架上，书角被我翻得有点卷。我跟妈妈说，明年冬天下雪，我也要堆一个雪孩子，站在我们楼下。妈妈问堆了会化的。我说我知道会化，可他救过一次小白兔，也该轮到他站在我们楼下，看我们放学回家一次。

The Figure That Ran Into the Fire

On Tuesday night, Mom read me the story of the Snow Child. When she finished, I closed the book, then opened it again and read the last two pages a third time. The Snow Child ran into the fire to save Little Rabbit, carried her out, but melted into a puddle of water himself, and later became a white cloud floating in the sky, watching over Little Rabbit. When I read that part, my nose stung a little.

What I remember most is the moment he runs into the fire. The fire was so big that Mother Rabbit was stamping her feet in panic, and the other animals stood outside, too afraid to go in. The Snow Child was made of snow — he knew better than anyone that he was afraid of fire. But he nodded once and charged in. I closed the book and wondered: was he not scared? He surely was. A body made of snow vanishes the

moment fire licks it, and he knew that better than anyone. But Little Rabbit was still crying inside the hole, so he forgot about himself.

I could not help thinking of the day school started in September. At the cafeteria gate, a second-grader carrying a bowl of soup fell over. Soup splashed all over the ground, and the child sat there, too scared to move. Lots of classmates gathered around to stare. Nobody went to fetch a teacher, nobody helped him up. I stood in the crowd too, thinking someone should go call a teacher, but my feet would not move. In the end a teacher on duty passed by and lifted the little kid up. That night, just like today, I tossed and turned. Me standing in the crowd was exactly like the animals in the book standing outside the fire, too afraid to go in.

The Snow Child taught me one thing: bravery does not mean having no fear in your heart. Bravery means taking one step forward even while you are afraid. The step the Snow Child took was enormous — one step from the snow straight into the fire. My step can be smaller, for example walking out of the crowd and running to the office to call a teacher. I can manage that next time.

The book also says that after the Snow Child melted into water, the sun turned him into light, light vapor that flew up and became a white cloud. Little Rabbit looked up, and that cloud looked exactly like the Snow Child. I think he never really disappeared; he just changed his shape to keep watch over his friend. Friendship is probably like that: the person is not here anymore, but you can see them whenever you look up.

Now that book stands on my shelf, its corners a little curled from turning. I told Mom that next winter when it snows, I will build a Snow Child too and stand him downstairs at our place. Mom asked: he will melt, you know. I said I know he will melt, but he saved Little Rabbit once, so now it is his turn to stand downstairs at our building and watch us come home from school once.

雪孩子变成云的那一页

《雪孩子》这本书，我最爱读前面，最不敢读后面。前面雪孩子跟小白兔一块儿玩，拿扫帚扫出一条路，围着火堆跳舞，读起来暖洋洋的。后面火起来了，雪孩子往火里一抱，出来时怀里是小兔，自己一路走一路小，最后往地上一躺，成了一摊水。妈妈读那几页读得很慢，我抓着书边，指头都捏白了。

书里写，太阳出来，那摊水变成很轻很轻的东西往上飞，飞到天上，变成一朵美丽的白云。小白兔望着天喊：雪孩子，雪孩子！那朵白云挨着小白兔，像又回来了一样。我第一遍读到这里哭了，第二遍读到这里没哭，改成一直盯着那朵云看。我猜小白兔也不哭了，因为朋友没有不见，

只是从地上搬到了天上。

我想起我的好朋友阿泰。二年级我们一块儿接水、一块儿跳绳，他总把酸奶盖舔干净再扔。三年级开学他没来，妈妈说他跟着家里去了别的城市。那阵子我总往他常站的水池边看，看了一个礼拜，什么也没看到。后来我不看了，可我也没把他忘了。读《雪孩子》我忽然想明白一点：阿泰就像雪孩子换了个地方，他在别的城市跳绳，我在我们这儿跳绳，抬头看的是同一朵云。这么一想，心里那块空的地方没那么空了。

书里我还琢磨一件事：雪孩子明明知道自己一碰火就要没，为什么还进去？我想了很久，想到一个词，惦记。他惦记洞里的小兔，惦记得顾不上自己。妈妈说这就叫勇敢，也叫对朋友的心。我记住了这个词。以后我要是惦记谁，我也要像雪孩子那样，先顾别人，再顾自己。

上礼拜我们这儿下了入冬第一场雪，我在小区花坛边堆了个小小的雪人，没堆大，怕它化得太快。我给它按上两颗石子眼睛，跟它说了会儿话才回家。第二天它矮了一截，我一点也不难过。雪孩子教过我：雪的东西会化，可化掉的那部分会飞上天，变成云，回来接着看你。

现在班里图书角那本《雪孩子》被好多人翻过，封皮都毛了。我在读后感卡片上写：这本书我读了三遍，第一遍为雪孩子哭，第二遍为小白兔哭，第三遍我不哭了，我抬头看了看天。窗外正好有一朵白云，慢慢地走，像谁在散步。

The Page Where the Snow Child Became a Cloud

Of the book about the Snow Child, I love the front part most and dread the ending most. In the front, the Snow Child plays with Little Rabbit: he sweeps a path, dances around the bonfire, and reading it feels warm. In the ending, the fire rises, the Snow Child rushes in and carries out Little Rabbit, but shrinks with every step along the way, and at last lies down and becomes a puddle of water. Mom read those pages very slowly, and I gripped the edge of the book until my fingers turned white.

The book writes that when the sun came out, the puddle turned into something very, very light and flew upward, up into the sky, becoming a beautiful white cloud. Little Rabbit called up at the sky: Snow Child, Snow Child! That cloud drifted close to Little Rabbit, as if he had come back. The first time I read this I cried; the second time I did not cry — instead I just kept staring at that cloud. I think Little Rabbit stopped crying too, because his friend never disappeared; he only moved from the ground up into the sky.

It reminded me of my good friend A-Tai. In second grade we fetched water together and jumped rope together; he always licked his yogurt lid clean before tossing it. When second grade ended he did not come back; Mom said he moved to another city with his family. For a week I kept glancing at the water basin where he used to stand, and saw nothing. Later I stopped looking, but I did not forget him either. Reading the

Snow Child, I suddenly understood a little: A-Tai is like the Snow Child in a new place. He jumps rope in his city, I jump rope in mine, and we look up at the same cloud. Thinking of it that way, the empty place in my heart is not so empty anymore.

One thing I kept turning over in my mind: the Snow Child knew perfectly well that touching fire would destroy him — why did he go in anyway? I thought about it for a long time and found one word: caring. He cared about the little rabbit in the hole, cared so much he forgot himself. Mom says that is what bravery is, and also what a heart for a friend means. I have kept that word. If I ever care about someone, I want to be like the Snow Child: think of the other person first, then myself.

Last week we had the first snow of winter. By the flower bed in our compound I built a small snowman, not a big one, afraid it would melt too fast. I pressed two pebble eyes onto it and talked with it for a while before going home. The next day it had sunk a bit shorter, and I was not sad at all. The Snow Child taught me: things made of snow will melt, but the melted part flies up into the sky, becomes a cloud, and comes back to keep watching you.

Now the copy of this book in our class reading corner has been flipped through by so many hands that its cover has gone fuzzy. On my reading response card I wrote: I have read this book three times. The first time I cried for the Snow Child, the second time for Little Rabbit, and the third time I did not cry — I looked up at the sky instead. Outside the window there happened to be a white cloud, moving slowly, as if someone were out for a walk.

我也堆过一个不怕火的朋友

语文课上老师带我们读《雪孩子》。老师问谁敢讲一讲故事，我把手举得最高，因为这本书我幼儿园就听过，现在又读了一遍，故事里的每个地方我都熟。雪孩子是小兔妈妈堆的，会走路会跳舞，跟小白兔在林子里玩。房子起火了，小白兔在屋里出不来，雪孩子从火里把她抱出来。他自己呢，化在地上，晒晒太阳变成水汽，飞上天成了白云。

老师又问：雪孩子最后不见了，你们难过吗？教室里静了一会儿，后排的董小川说难过，声音有点闷。我说我第一遍读难过，现在不难过了，因为他变成云了。老师点点头，说这就是故事留给人的东西：难过是真的，不难过也是真的。

放寒假前那礼拜，我们这儿下了一场雪。我跟爸爸在楼下堆雪人，堆到一半我停下来，跟爸爸说我要堆一个雪孩子。爸爸问堆成什么样。我说就照书里那样，胳膊是两根树枝，眼睛是石子，还要给他围条旧围巾。爸爸把他那条灰围巾扯下来给了雪人。雪人不戴围巾的时候看着有点凶，戴上以后一下子就温和了，像会跟人点头的样子。

堆好那天晚上我趴在窗台看了它很久。我忽然有点担心：要是我们楼下也起火了，雪孩子会不会又往火里冲？我知道这是瞎想，可我就是这么想的。我跟爸爸说，明天给它挪到楼道口，别让它守着柴堆。爸爸笑我，说雪人又不是真的人。我说我知道，可是书里那个也不是真的呀，我读的时候心是真的疼了一下。爸爸不笑了，过一会儿说，那你给它挪个稳妥地方。

雪人站了四天，第五天早上只剩一堆雪加一条灰围巾。围巾我收回来洗了。我没有哭，我抬头看了看天，天是灰的，没有云，我猜他还没飞上去，或者飞上去的当天阴天看不见。书上说雪孩子变成白云，那他就得等一个晴天。

开学后老师收读后感，我写的是：雪孩子教会我两件事。一件是勇敢，害怕还要往前去。另一件是友情，朋友不一定陪你很久，但他救过你、陪过你，这部分化不掉。我把这两句念给同桌听，她说写得太正经了。我说这是真的，我那个雪人替我证明过。

现在我把那条灰围巾叠好放在抽屉里。爸爸说等明年第一场雪，我们还去堆。我想好了，还堆在楼道口，还围这条围巾。雪孩子要是看见，应该会跟小白兔一样，绕着它跳一圈舞。

I Once Built a Friend Who Was Not Afraid of Fire

In Chinese class our teacher read the story of the Snow Child with us. She asked who dared to retell it, and I raised my hand highest, because I had heard this story back in kindergarten, and now I had read it again — every part of it was familiar. The Snow Child was built by Mother Rabbit; he could walk and dance, and played with Little Rabbit in the woods. The house caught fire, Little Rabbit could not get out, and the Snow Child carried her out of the flames. As for himself, he melted onto the ground, was warmed by the sun into vapor, flew up, and became a white cloud.

The teacher asked again: the Snow Child disappeared in the end — are you sad? The classroom went quiet for a moment. Dong Xiaochuan in the back row said he was sad, his voice a little muffled. I said I was sad the first time I read it, but not anymore, because he became a cloud. The teacher nodded and said this is what a story leaves behind for people: the sadness is real, and the not-being-sad is real too.

The week before winter break, we got a snowfall. Dad and I built a snowman downstairs. Halfway through I stopped and told Dad I was building a Snow Child. Dad asked what shape. I said just like in the book: arms of two branches, eyes of pebbles, and an old scarf around his neck. Dad pulled off his gray scarf and gave it to the snowman. Without the scarf the snowman looked a little fierce; with it on, he instantly looked gentle, like someone who would nod at you.

That night after building him, I leaned at the windowsill and watched him for a long time. Suddenly I felt a little worried: if a fire broke out in our building, would the Snow Child charge into it again? I knew this was silly, but that is exactly

what I thought. I told Dad we should move him to the stairway entrance tomorrow, away from the firewood pile. Dad laughed at me, saying a snowman is not a real person. I said I know, but the one in the book isn't real either, yet when I read it my heart really ached for a second. Dad stopped laughing, and after a while said: then move him somewhere safe.

The snowman stood for four days. On the fifth morning only a heap of snow and a gray scarf were left. I took the scarf home and washed it. I did not cry. I looked up at the sky; it was gray, no clouds. I guess he had not flown up yet, or the day he flew up was overcast and I could not see him. The book says he became a white cloud, so he has to wait for a sunny day.

After school started, the teacher collected our reading responses. I wrote: the Snow Child taught me two things. One is bravery — going forward even while afraid. The other is friendship — a friend may not stay with you long, but the part where he saved you and kept you company never melts away. I read those two lines to my deskmate, and she said they sounded too serious. I said they are true; my snowman testified for me.

Now I keep that gray scarf folded in my drawer. Dad says when the first snow of next year comes, we will go build one again. I have decided: still at the stairway entrance, still with this scarf. If the Snow Child sees it, he will probably dance a circle around it, just like Little Rabbit did.