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.