韩笑的那套纸牌魔术

韩笑为了联欢会练了两周纸牌魔术。他从家里拿来一副旧扑克，牌角都磨圆了。他在家里对着沙发练，他爸坐在沙发上当观众，他妈在厨房隔着门喊：别对着你爸练，你爸什么都不知道，你练给碗筷看。他不管，照练。两周里他把同一张红桃六从牌堆顶上变到牌堆底下，变了三百多回，闭着眼都能摸到那张牌的毛边。

联欢会那天，教室后墙的黑板上画着彩旗和六个大字：六一快乐。韩笑第三个上场。他穿了一件不太合身的西装外套，是他爸的，袖口长出来一截，他把袖口挽成三道。报幕员念完他的名字，他抱着扑克从座位上站起来，过道太窄，他的书包带挂住了同桌的笔袋，笔袋哗啦掉在地上，全班笑，他也笑，捡起来塞进桌肚接着往前走。

第一个节目顺利。他让观众随便抽一张，记住，插回牌堆，洗牌，切牌，然后把牌一张张摊开在桌面上——红桃六在最左边，抽的牌在最右边，他翻出最右边那张，全班哦了一声。第二个节目也顺利，他把牌扣在帽子里，说变，帽子里的牌变成了一张画着笑脸的硬纸片，是他提前藏在袖口的。这个节目他练得最多，所以做得最快，快得像赶时间。

第三个节目出事了。他要把红桃六从左手变到右手，左手攥紧，右手拍一下，摊开左手——红桃六不在。他右手摊开，红桃六也不在。那张牌在他攥牌的时候滑到了桌上，没人看见，他自己也没看见。他站在讲台上，两只手都摊着，讲台下安静下来。那几秒他听见自己的心跳，还听见后排有人小声说：失败啦。他喉咙发干，把两只手合上，又打开，还是什么都没有。

然后韩笑做了一件谁也没想到的事。他弯下腰，把西装下摆一撩，从裤兜里摸出那张红桃六——其实不在裤兜里，是他弯腰时眼角扫到桌上的牌，顺手捞的——举到头顶，喊：它在我裤兜里躲着呢！全班笑倒一片，连班主任都在后面拍桌子。他趁笑声把牌塞回牌堆，重新来了一遍，这一遍顺得像水，翻出红桃六的时候掌声和笑声一起炸开。

鞠躬下台的时候，他袖口挽的三道袖口散了一道，帽子里掉出一颗水果糖，是他变魔术用的道具糖，滚了两下停在过道。前排一个女生捡起来，剥开吃了，说：这个魔术变出糖来了。韩笑在过道那头听见了，摆手说那是赠品。

散会以后，没人记得那张滑到桌上的牌，大家记得的是裤兜里的红桃六、帽子里的糖、挽了三道的袖口。韩笑回家跟他妈说，魔术失败了。他妈问那观众怎么都笑了。他说，笑就是成功了呗。他妈说，那你这魔术还会变糖，比他爸那副牌强。他把那副磨圆了角的扑克收进抽屉，红桃六放在最上面。

Han Xiao's Card Trick

Han Xiao practiced his card trick for two weeks for the class party. He brought an old deck from home, its corners worn round. He rehearsed facing the living-room sofa with his dad as the audience, while his mom shouted from the kitchen through the door: Don't perform to your dad - he knows nothing; perform to the dishes. He ignored her and kept practicing. In two weeks he moved the same six of hearts from the top of

the deck to the bottom over three hundred times; with his eyes shut he could feel that card's fuzzy edge.

On party day, the blackboard on the back wall carried painted pennants and six big characters: Happy Children's Day. Han Xiao went on third. He wore a suit jacket that didn't fit - his father's - sleeves hanging a good inch too long, which he rolled up into three bands. When the host read his name, he stood up clutching the deck. The aisle was narrow; his bag strap snagged his deskmate's pencil case, which crashed to the floor. The class laughed, he laughed, stuffed it back under the desk, and walked on.

The first trick went smoothly. A spectator picked a card freely, memorized it, pushed it back into the deck; he shuffled, cut, then spread the cards face-up across the desk - the six of hearts at the far left, the chosen card at the far right. He flipped the far-right card, and the class went oh. The second trick also worked: he placed cards into his hat, said abracadabra, and the cards inside turned into a stiff paper square with a smiley face - palmed in his sleeve beforehand. He had drilled that one the most, so he did it fastest, fast as if racing a clock.

The third trick fell apart. He was supposed to move the six of hearts from his left hand to his right. Left hand clenched, right hand slapped it, he opened the left hand - no six of hearts. He opened the right hand - no six of hearts either. The card had slid onto the desk while he gripped the deck; nobody saw it, least of all him. He stood on the platform with both hands open. The classroom went quiet. In those seconds he heard his own heartbeat, and heard someone in the back row whisper: It failed. His throat went dry. He closed his hands, opened them again - still nothing.

Then Han Xiao did something nobody expected. He bent down, flipped his jacket hem, and fishing out the six of hearts from his trouser pocket - actually it wasn't in his pocket; bending, his eye caught the card on the desk and he snatched it up - held it over his head and shouted: It was hiding in my pocket! The class collapsed laughing; even the homeroom teacher was pounding the desk at the back. Riding the wave of laughter he slid the card back into the deck and ran the trick again, this time smooth as water; when the six of hearts surfaced, applause and laughter burst together.

Bowing on his way off, one of his three sleeve rolls came undone, and a fruit drop fell out of his hat - a prop from the trick - rolling twice before stopping in the aisle. A girl in the front row picked it up, unwrapped it, ate it, and said: This trick produced candy. Han Xiao heard him from down the aisle and waved: That's a freebie.

After the party nobody remembered the card that slid onto the desk. Everyone remembered the six of hearts in the pocket, the candy in the hat, the three rolled-up

sleeves. Going home, Han Xiao told his mom the trick had failed. She asked why the audience was laughing then. He said: laughing means it worked. She said: well, your trick even produces candy - better than your dad's deck. He put the worn-cornered deck into a drawer, the six of hearts on top.