班会课上，我抢着说了三句话

六一早上，教室后面的桌子拼成了大马蹄形，气球是昨天放学留下的，挂在窗户框上，被风吹得轻轻碰玻璃。班主任一进教室就说，今天的班会主题是六个字：我的节日我做主。班会全部由我们自己开，谁想讲就上台讲，讲感谢、讲快乐、讲什么都行。教室里安静了两秒钟，然后炸了。我同桌的胳膊肘在我胳膊上撞了三下，意思是推我上去。我自己也不知道哪来的勇气，手举得比谁都高。

老师点了我。我走上讲台，马蹄形的桌子围着我，三十七张脸看着我。我在心里背了一晚上的三句话，从第一句开始。第一句：谢谢老师。我说的是数学老师，上学期我口算总出错，她每天放学留我五分钟，只练五道，练了一个学期，我现在的口算能在四十秒里做完一页。我说老师你从来不说你真笨，你只说再来一遍。数学老师坐在最后一排，用手背按了一下眼睛。

第二句：把快乐分给大家。我讲了我们小组上周干的坏事——不对，是好笑的事。科学课要求种豆子，我们组把八颗豆子全埋在一个杯子里，想让它长出八棵，结果一颗也没出。科学老师说没关系，挖出来看看。挖出来一看，八颗豆子全烂成一团泥，我们组六个人围着那团泥笑了半节课。我讲完，全班都在笑，笑声从马蹄形的一头滚到另一头。

第三句最短，是我妈提醒我必须讲的：安全。我说今天放学早，校门口人多，我们约好两件事，第一，出了校门不在马路上追跑，上周二年级有个男生追皮球冲过马路，差点被电动车碰到；第二，谁约我们去河边玩水，直接回一句不行，大人不去就不去。我说完竖了两根手指，全班跟着竖了两根手指，三十九根手指头在马蹄形里举成一片小树林。

下台的时候我的腿有点抖，但是心里烧着一团小火。班长的发言排在我后面，他讲了他爸爸的六一没有我们的好。散会前班主任说，今天的班会她只干了一件事，就是举手同意。我把那三句话写在作文本第一页，标题写的是：我的节日，我做主了三分钟。

At the Class Meeting, I Volunteered Three Things

On the morning of June First, the desks at the back of the classroom were pushed into a big horseshoe. The balloons left over from yesterday hung on the window frames, tapping the glass softly in the breeze. Our homeroom teacher walked in and announced the theme in six words: my holiday, run by me. The whole class meeting would be ours — anyone who wanted to speak could step up and talk about gratitude, joy, anything. The room went silent for two seconds, then exploded. My deskmate elbowed me three times, meaning get up there. I don't know where the courage came from, but my hand shot higher than anyone's.

The teacher picked me. I walked to the front, the horseshoe of desks around me, thirty-seven faces watching. The three sentences I had recited in my head all night began with the first. One: thank you, teachers. I talked about our math teacher. Last

term my mental arithmetic kept failing, and she kept me five minutes after school every day — only five problems, for one whole term. Now I finish a page of mental math in forty seconds. I said: you never once said I'm stupid, you only said try again. Our math teacher sat in the last row and pressed the back of her hand to her eyes.

Two: share the joy. I told the story of the naughty — no, funny — thing our group did last week. The science class asked us to plant beans; our group buried all eight in one cup, hoping for eight sprouts, and got none. Our science teacher said it's fine, dig them up and see. We dug and found all eight beans rotted into one lump of mud, and the six of us laughed around that mud for half the class. When I finished, the whole class was laughing, the laughter rolling from one end of the horseshoe to the other.

Three was the shortest, and my mom made sure I kept it in: safety. School lets out early today and the gate will be crowded, I said, so we make two promises. First, no chasing across the road outside the gate — last week a second-grader chasing a ball dashed into the street and nearly got hit by a scooter. Second, if anyone asks us to play by the river, answer straight: no. If no grown-up goes, we don't go. I held up two fingers, and the whole class held up two fingers — thirty-nine fingers rising like a little forest around the horseshoe.

My legs shook a little going back to my seat, but a small fire was burning inside me. The class monitor spoke after me and said his dad's Children's Day was not as good as ours. Before we adjourned, our homeroom teacher said she had done exactly one thing today: raising her hand to agree. I wrote my three sentences on the first page of my composition book, under the title: my holiday — I ran it for three minutes.

主持人卡在我手心里出汗

班会前十分钟，我站在讲台边上，手里捏着主持人卡。卡是我昨天用彩色笔写的，一共三行：第一行，谢谢的人；第二行，好笑的事；第三行，我们的约定。每行后面画了一个小箭头，箭头后面是空白——空白是留给上台的同学的，谁讲完，我就在箭头后面画一个正字的一笔。这个计分法是我发明的，不为比赛，就为看看今天有多少勇气举起了手。

第一个上台的是平时最不爱说话的林小满。她讲谢谢的人，谢谢食堂的张阿姨。她说有次她馒头没吃完就走了，张阿姨追到楼梯口把馒头掰开看了看，说还热着呢，明天给你蒸个甜的。林小满讲得很快，像怕自己改主意。她下去以后，我在第一行的箭头后面画了第一笔。接下来举手的一个接一个，有谢谢门卫爷爷的，有谢谢同桌借他橡皮刀的，还有谢谢他们家那只猫不咬新沙发的——全班笑，班主任也笑。

第二行好笑的事，是全班抢着讲的环节。有个男生讲他爸放风筝，风筝挂到电线杆上，他爸拽着线在杆子底下转了三圈，像跟电线杆跳舞。有个女生讲她家煮粽子，粽子没绑紧，煮完一锅米粥里漂着粽叶，她管那锅叫粽子粥。我们班的快乐原来有这么多，平时藏在课间十分钟里，今天全被班会倒出来了，倒得教室屋顶都快装不下。

第三行我们的约定，是班长带着全班一起讲的。他站在中间，念一条，全班跟一条：不在马路上追跑；没有大人不去水边；放学结伴出校门；玩闹不推不搡，楼梯靠右。跟到第三条，声音开始不齐，跟到第四条，又齐了，因为第四条是班长自己加的：谁心情不好，我们陪他走一圈操场。这一条没人喊口号，全班是安安静静跟完的。我在第三行的箭头后面画完最后一笔，数了数，今天一共十九笔，也就是十九个人举过手。

散会的时候，主持人卡背面已经写满了正字。我把它夹进字典，跟字典里那张旧书签放一起。放学我在楼梯口看见林小满，她冲我喊了一句：明天张阿姨真的给我蒸了甜的。她跑下楼梯，马尾一甩一甩。我站在原地想，这张主持人卡最了不起的地方，不是我主持了班会，是它今天几乎没起作用——节日自己开了起来，我们只是站在旁边，看着它开。

Sweat in My Palm from the Host Card

Ten minutes before the class meeting, I stood at the edge of the podium clutching my host card. I had written it yesterday in colored markers, three lines in all: line one, the people we thank; line two, the funny things; line three, our promises. After each line I drew a small arrow, and after each arrow lay blank space — space left for whoever came up. When a speaker finished, I added one stroke of the tally character beside the arrow. I invented this counting method not for a contest but to see how much courage raised its hand today.

The first to stand was Lin Xiaoman, usually the quietest girl in class. Her thank-you went to Auntie Zhang from the canteen. Once she left a steamed bun half-eaten and walked off, and Auntie Zhang chased her to the stairwell, broke the bun open, looked inside, and said it's still warm — I'll steam you a sweet one tomorrow. Xiaoman spoke fast, as if afraid she'd change her mind. When she sat down, I drew the first stroke beside line one's arrow. Then hands went up one after another: someone thanked the gate guard, someone thanked their deskmate for a pencil-sharpener, one even thanked the family cat for not shredding the new sofa — the class laughed, and so did our homeroom teacher.

Line two, the funny things, was the segment everyone fought for. One boy told how his father flew a kite that snagged on a utility pole, and his father tugging the string spun three times around the pole, like he was dancing with it. One girl told how her family boiled zongzi without tying them tight, so by the end a pot of rice porridge had bamboo leaves floating in it — she called it zongzi porridge. Turns out

our class held this much joy, usually hiding in the ten-minute breaks; today the class meeting poured it all out, nearly overflowing the roof.

Line three, our promises, the class monitor led the whole class in saying. He stood in the middle, reciting one line, the class echoing after each: no chasing on the road; no water edges without grown-ups; leave the school gate in pairs; no shoving in play, keep right on stairs. By the third line the voices went ragged; by the fourth they synced again, because the fourth was the monitor's own addition: if someone feels low, we walk one lap of the playground with them. Nobody shouted that one. The class echoed it quietly to the end. I finished the last stroke beside line three's arrow and counted: nineteen strokes today, meaning nineteen hands had gone up.

When we adjourned, the back of my host card was full of tally marks. I tucked it into my dictionary, next to the old bookmark already inside. At the stairwell after school I saw Lin Xiaoman, and she called out to me: Auntie Zhang really did steam me a sweet one. She ran down the stairs, her ponytail swinging. Standing there I thought: the greatest thing about this host card is that it barely did anything today — the holiday opened itself up, and we just stood beside it, watching it bloom.

讲台上的空椅子

六一那节班会课，我做了一个从教十一年没做过的决定：不进讲台。上课铃响之前，我把讲台边那把椅子搬到教室最后一排，坐下，对孩子们说，今天这节课归你们，主题是我的节日我做主，我只提三个要求——要谢谢一个帮过你的人，要讲一件让你笑过的事，要自己定一条安全约定。说完我就坐下，把课本合上，像坐在家长会最后一排的家长那样。

主持人是个扎羊角辫的女生，手里捏着彩色笔写的卡片。她报的第一个名字让我心里咯噔一下：林小满。这个孩子一学期主动发言不超过三次，声音小得像怕吵到谁。她真的走上去了，站在马蹄形桌子中间，讲食堂的张阿姨追到楼梯口，把没吃完的馒头掰开说还热着。她讲得快，像怕自己反悔。我坐在最后一排，把这一句记在备课本的空白处。当老师这些年，我习惯了替孩子把话说完整，今天才发现，他们自己的话本来就完整。

好笑的事那个环节，教室的屋顶像要被笑声顶开。种豆烂成泥的、风筝缠上电线杆的、粽子煮成粥的，一个接一个。我环顾教室，三十九个孩子，有二十几个在笑的时候看向同桌或好朋友，笑是要分给具体的人的。我数了数举手的人，十九个。有个我一直担心插不进去的男孩也举了手，讲他爷爷钓鱼钓上来一只靴子，讲完自己先笑弯了腰。他在座位上讲完就坐下了，没上台，主持人也允许了——规则是他们自己的，规则也是活的。

安全约定环节，班长领读。不在马路上追跑，没有大人不去水边，放学结伴出校门，这三条是我教他们喊了两年的口号，今天从他们嘴里领出来，调子都不一样了。第四条我愣住了，是班

长自己加的：谁心情不好，我们陪他走一圈操场。这一条全班安安静静跟完。我在备课本上写下这一条的时候，笔停了一下。我教了他们两年安全，他们今天教了我一样我没教过的东西。

下课铃响，主持人跑到最后一排问我：老师，今天算不算开完了。我说算，而且是开得最好的一次。她把主持人卡举起来给我看背面的正字，十九笔。放学时林小满在楼梯口喊张阿姨给她蒸了甜馒头，声音大得整层楼都听见。我站在原地，把备课本上那几行字又看了一遍。空了一节课的讲台，原来不是空，是让。

The Empty Chair at the Podium

During the class meeting on Children's Day, I made a decision I hadn't made in eleven years of teaching: I would not go near the podium. Before the bell, I carried the chair from beside the podium to the very back row, sat down, and told the children: this period belongs to you. The theme is my holiday, run by me. I have only three requirements — thank one person who helped you, tell one thing that made you laugh, and set one safety promise yourselves. Then I sat, closed my textbook, and became something like a parent sitting at the back of a parents' meeting.

The host was a girl with two pigtails, clutching a card written in colored markers. The first name she called made my heart skip: Lin Xiaoman. This child volunteered fewer than three times all term, her voice small as if afraid of disturbing someone. She actually walked up, stood in the middle of the horseshoe of desks, and told how Auntie Zhang from the canteen chased her to the stairwell, broke open her unfinished bun, and said it's still warm. She spoke fast, as if afraid she'd back out. In the back row I wrote that sentence in the margin of my lesson book. All these years as a teacher I had gotten used to finishing children's sentences for them. Today I discovered their own words were already whole.

During the funny-things segment, the ceiling looked ready to lift off under the laughter. Beans rotted to mud in a cup, a kite tangled on a utility pole, zongzi boiled into porridge — one after another. I looked around the room: thirty-nine children, and more than twenty of them laughed while looking at their deskmate or best friend. Laughter, it turns out, is meant to be shared with specific people. I counted the raised hands: nineteen. A boy I had worried would never fit in also raised his hand and told how his grandfather once fished up a boot, then doubled over laughing at his own story. He told it from his seat without coming up, and the host allowed it — the rules were theirs, and their rules were alive.

For the safety promises, the class monitor led the reciting. No chasing on the road; no water edges without grown-ups; leave the school gate in pairs — three slogans I had drilled for two years, and today led out of their own mouths, they

sounded different in tune. The fourth line stopped me cold: it was the monitor's own addition — if someone feels low, we walk one lap of the playground with them. The class echoed that one quietly to the end. When I wrote it into my lesson book, my pen paused. I had taught them safety for two years; today they taught me something I had never taught.

When the bell rang, the host ran to the back row and asked: teacher, did we finish today? I said yes — and it was the best class meeting we ever held. She held up her host card to show the tally marks on the back: nineteen strokes. After school, Lin Xiaoman shouted from the stairwell that Auntie Zhang had steamed her a sweet bun, loud enough for the whole floor to hear. I stood there and read those few lines in my lesson book again. The podium, empty for a whole period, was not empty. It was yielded.

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