雪天的体育课

第三节课是体育课。铃响的时候天上还飘着雪，李老师却在体育馆门口说：今天不进馆，操场上课！

全班一阵欢呼。操场铺着厚厚一层雪，白白的，平平的，像一张刚摊开的大面饼，还没有人踩上去。李老师说：先热身，绕跑道跑两圈，不许抄近道。

雪地上跑步跟跑塑胶跑道不一样。脚踩下去咯吱咯吱响，像有人在耳朵边上咬薯片。冷空气往口鼻里钻，呼出来的气全是白烟，一排人跑过去，像一列突突冒烟的小火车。有人提议比谁跑得快，队伍一下子全加速，李老师也不拦，只在边上喊：别滑！

两圈跑完，外套敞开了，额头上冒热气，头发梢上挂着的小冰碴亮晶晶的。李老师拍拍手，宣布今天的主项：堆雪人比赛，四人一组，时间一节课，最后全班投票。

操场立刻变成热热闹闹的工地。有人滚雪球，有人拍底座，有人满操场找树枝和落叶。我们组决定堆一个三层高的雪人，最大的雪球坐在最底下。那个雪球太重，四个人推不上底座，脚底打滑，撞在一起两次，谁也没笑谁，弯下腰接着推。

隔壁组借给我们一根胡萝卜，还是他们组从食堂顺来的。有人解下自己的红围巾，给雪人围上。我们的雪人胡萝卜鼻子、煤渣眼睛、红围巾，站在操场正中间，威风极了。我们给它取了个名字，叫胖墩。

投票前还要检查。胖墩的胳膊是两根枯树枝，插得不牢，风一吹掉了一根，我们赶紧补插回去，还用雪把接口糊结实。旁边几组有的雪人脑袋歪了，有的肚子裂了缝，都手忙脚乱地修补，操场上一片蹲着跪着的身影。

快下课，李老师掏出手机：都集合，跟自己的雪人合影！我们挤在胖墩旁边，脸上沾着雪的也不抹了，手背上的雪水顺着指头滴。第一张，后排有人打喷嚏；第二张，胖墩的胡萝卜鼻子歪了。李老师说：来，第三张，都憋住气。咔嚓一声，定格了，连笑声都定格了。

回教室的路上，人人还在争论谁的雪人最可爱，都说自己的组该得第一。手是红的，指尖被雪泡得发白，可谁也不觉得冷。我望着窗外操场，胖墩还站在正中间，等着下课再去看看它。

下雪的体育课，比哪一节课都短，也比哪一节课都好玩。我把照片存进心里，把雪水留在鞋里，把这一节课记了很久很久。

The Snowy P.E. Class

Third period was P.E. class. When the bell rang, snow was still drifting from the sky, and Mr. Li said at the door of the gym: today we do not go inside, class on the playground!

The whole class cheered. The playground lay under a thick layer of snow, white and flat, like a giant sheet of dough with no footprints on it yet. Mr. Li said:

first the warm-up, two laps around the track, and no cutting corners.

Running on snow is different from running on the rubber track. Each step crunches, like someone biting a potato chip right beside your ear. Cold air rushes in through mouth and nose, and every breath turns into white smoke, so that when a row of us run past, we look like a little train puffing along. Someone suggested a race, and the whole line sped up at once. Mr. Li did not stop us; he only ran at the side shouting: do not slip!

Two laps done, coats opened, foreheads steaming, and the little ice crystals hanging on our hair tips glittered. Mr. Li clapped his hands and announced the main event: a snowman-building contest, four per group, one class period, and a whole-class vote at the end.

The playground became a bustling construction site at once. Some rolled snowballs, some packed bases, some roamed the whole field hunting for twigs and fallen leaves. Our group decided on a three-tiered snowman, the biggest snowball at the bottom. That ball was too heavy for four of us to push onto the base; our feet slipped, we bumped into each other twice, and nobody laughed at anybody. We just bent down and pushed again.

The group next to us lent us a carrot, which they had smuggled from the cafeteria. Someone unwound his own red scarf and wrapped it around the snowman neck. Our snowman had a carrot nose, coal-splinter eyes, and a red scarf, standing in the middle of the playground, looking very important. We gave it a name: Fatty.

Before the vote came the inspection. The arms of Fatty were two dry twigs, not pushed in deep, and one fell off when the wind blew. We jammed it back in at once and sealed the joint firmly with snow. In other groups one snowman head had tilted, another belly had cracked open, and everyone was scrambling to make repairs, the field full of crouching and kneeling figures.

Just before the bell, Mr. Li took out his phone: everyone gather, group photos with your snowman! We crowded in beside Fatty, and those with snow on their faces did not bother wiping it off; snowmelt dripped from our fingers. In the first shot someone in the back row sneezed; in the second shot the carrot nose of Fatty tilted. Mr. Li said: come on, third shot, everybody hold your breath. Click. The moment was fixed, and even the laughter was fixed with it.

On the way back to the classroom, everyone kept arguing about whose snowman was the cutest, each group sure it should win first place. Our hands were red, our fingertips whitened from the snow, yet nobody felt cold. I looked out at the playground, where Fatty still stood in the middle, waiting for us to come back and visit after class.

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This snowy P.E. class was shorter than any other class, and more fun than any other. I kept the photo in my heart, left the snowmelt in my shoes, and remembered that class for a very long time.