同桌的榴莲便当

林小东的书包一打开，教室后排就炸开了。那是星期三的午休，他像往常一样掏出饭盒，盖子刚掀开一条缝，一股冲鼻的味道就漫了出来。前排的陈晨第一个反应过来，夸张地捂住鼻子喊，谁把臭豆腐打翻了。几个同学呼啦一下站起来，椅子在地上刮出刺耳的响声，连过道那侧的人都伸头来看。林小东的脸腾地红了，手忙脚乱地去压饭盒盖，压到一半又停住，小声说不是臭豆腐，是榴莲。

榴莲是什么味道，班里一半人没吃过，另一半吃过的人立刻分成两派。吃过又喜欢的李冉挤过来，眼睛发亮，说让我尝一口。怕臭的那几桌则把窗户开得更大，还有人把课本扇成一面小风墙。林小东低着头，把饭盒往桌肚里塞，耳朵尖红红的。他奶奶每天早上给他装两块榴莲当点心，他本来觉得这是家里的好东西，没想到在班里成了公敌。

李冉尝了一口，咂咂嘴，把饭盒往林小东桌上一放，说真甜，你奶奶手艺好。林小东愣了愣，说了声谢谢。坐在林小东旁边的我，其实心里痒了一上午。那股味道闻着冲，可李冉咂嘴的样子太馋人了。我憋到下午第二节课下课，终于小声开口，问能不能也尝一小块。林小东看了我一眼，眼神里有防备，但还是从书包里摸出一个保鲜盒，打开，用牙签插了一块递过来。那块果肉黄澄澄的，我屏住呼吸，飞快咬了一小口，然后整个人定住了。又绵又甜，凉丝丝的，像含了一勺化开的奶油。我抬起头看林小东，他正紧张地盯着我的脸。我说了句真好吃，他脸上的紧绷一下子松了，笑出来的时候露出两颗虎牙。

第二天，林小东的饭盒还是那个饭盒，味道还是那个味道，可围上去的人变成了四个。怕臭的人依然怕臭，只是不再喊怪物了，改成捂着鼻子说离我远点吃。林小东也不恼，大大方方地坐在原位吃，吃完把盒子收好，再去窗边透透气。班主任路过闻见了，也停下来尝了一小块，皱着眉想了半天，说味道怪，但不难吃，全班笑成一团。

后来班里开过一次分享会，有人带橘子，有人带山楂，林小东带了一小盒榴莲，摆在桌子正中间。标签是他自己写的：闻着臭，吃着香，欢迎挑战。第一个伸手的是当初喊臭豆腐的陈晨。林小东站在旁边看着，腰挺得直直的，像守护一件了不得的宝贝。有些东西就是这样，大家一开始都躲，直到有人先尝一口，躲的人群就松动了一角。

My Deskmate's Durian Lunch Box

The moment Lin Xiaodong opened his schoolbag, the back rows of the classroom erupted. It was Wednesday lunch break. He took out his lunch box as usual, and when the lid cracked open just a little, a strong smell spread out. Chen Chen in the front row reacted first, covering his nose with exaggerated horror and shouting that someone had knocked over a plate of stinky tofu. Half a dozen classmates jumped up, chairs scraping loudly across the floor, and even students on the other side of the aisle craned their necks to look. Lin Xiaodong's face turned bright red. He fumbled to press the lid shut, stopped halfway, and said quietly that it was not stinky tofu, it was durian.

Half the class had never tasted durian, and the other half immediately split into two camps. Li Ran, who loved it, pushed her way over with shining eyes and asked for a bite. The desks that feared the smell threw their windows wide open, and someone waved a textbook like a small wind wall. Lin Xiaodong lowered his head and shoved the lunch box into his desk, the tips of his ears glowing red. His grandmother packed two pieces of durian for his snack every morning. He had always thought it was a treasure of home. He never imagined it could make him a public enemy in class.

Li Ran took a bite, smacked her lips, and set the box back on Lin Xiaodong's desk, saying it was truly sweet and his grandmother did a great job. Lin Xiaodong froze for a second and managed a thank you. I sit right next to him, and honestly my heart had been itching all morning. The smell was fierce, but the way Li Ran smacked her lips was tempting. I held out until the break after the second afternoon class, then finally asked in a small voice whether I could try a small piece too. Lin Xiaodong glanced at me with a guarded look, but still fished a plastic container from his bag, opened it, and offered a piece on a toothpick. The flesh was bright yellow. I held my breath and took one quick tiny bite, then froze completely. Soft and sweet and cool, like holding a spoonful of melted cream. I looked up at Lin Xiaodong. He was watching my face with visible tension. When I said it was delicious, the tightness in his face melted at once, and his smile showed two pointed teeth.

The next day, his lunch box was still that lunch box, the smell still that smell, but now four people gathered around him. The smell-afraid ones were still smell-afraid, only they no longer shouted monster. They covered their noses and asked him to eat farther away. Lin Xiaodong did not mind. He sat in his seat and ate openly, packed the box away when finished, then went to the window for some fresh air. The homeroom teacher passed by, caught the smell, stopped, and tried one small piece too. She frowned and thought for a long while, then said it was strange but not bad, and the whole class burst into laughter.

Later the class held a sharing party. Someone brought tangerines, someone brought hawthorn, and Lin Xiaodong brought a small box of durian, placed right in the middle of the table. The label was written by him: smells strong, tastes sweet, challengers welcome. The first hand to reach in belonged to Chen Chen, the very one who had shouted stinky tofu. Lin Xiaodong stood beside the table watching, his back straight, like a guard protecting a precious treasure. Some things are like that. Everyone dodges at first, until one person takes a bite, and the crowd of dodgers loosens just a little.