没送出去的那张贺卡

北北是这学期刚转来的同学，坐在靠窗的位置。六一前老师说要交换手工贺卡，北北在家做了一张，卡纸上画了两只小船，一只大船一只小船，并排漂着。他把贺卡放进书包最里面的口袋，拉链拉了两遍，又在口袋上压了一本字典，怕它自己跑出来，又怕它一直不出来。

第一个课间，交换开始了。教室里到处是贺卡，同学们互相递，递完就凑在一起看谁画得好。北北把手伸进书包，碰到那个口袋，又抽回来。他想，我还没想好先给谁。其实他想给同桌南南，可是南南正在跟后排的同学说话，他不知道该怎么插进去。

南南发现了。她没问北北为什么不换，只是从自己书包里拿出一张贺卡，走到北北桌前，说，我这张画的是窗台上的绿萝，送给你，因为你每天帮我给绿萝浇水。说完她把贺卡塞进北北书包外面的口袋，没等他接话，就回去继续浇花了。

北北看着书包外面那张贺卡，看了很久。绿萝画得圆圆的，每片叶子都涂得很满，像怕哪一片叶子不够绿。他在心里把那张贺卡读了三遍，然后拉开里面那个口袋，把两只小船的贺卡拿出来，捏在手里。

第二个课间，北北等到南南一个人坐在座位上，就走过去，把贺卡放在她桌上，说，给你。声音很小，可是南南听见了。南南打开贺卡，看到两只小船，问，哪只是你。北北想了想，说，我也不知道，两只都在互相看着。

南南把两张贺卡并排贴在教室后面的展示板上，跟北北说，这样全班都能看见你的小船。展示板上贴了几十张贺卡，北北找了一会儿才找到自己和南南的那两张，它们挨在一起，跟画里一样并排漂着。

放学时北北收拾书包，发现里面口袋的拉链不知什么时候拉好了，字典也挪回了书堆里。他把书包背好，走到门口又回头看了一眼展示板。两张小船还在那儿，下课的铃声响了，它们不用动，也一直在往前漂。

第二天早上，北北的书包外面多了一个新的小口袋，是他自己缝上去的，蓝布做的。南南问那是干什么的。北北说，装贺卡的，下次课间，直接用这个。

The Card That Was Never Given

Beibei transferred in at the start of the term and sits by the window. Before June 1st the teacher announced a handmade card exchange. Beibei made one at home, drawing two boats on the card, a big one and a small one, floating side by side. He put the card in the innermost pocket of his backpack, pulled the zipper twice, then pressed a dictionary on top of the pocket, afraid the card might slip out by itself, and also afraid it would never come out.

During the first break the exchange began. Cards were everywhere, children handing them over and huddling to compare drawings. Beibei reached into his backpack,

touched the pocket, and pulled his hand back. He told himself he had not decided whom to give it to first. Really he wanted to give it to his deskmate Nannan, but she was talking to the class behind, and he did not know how to join in.

Nannan noticed. She did not ask why he was not exchanging. She simply took a card from her own backpack, walked to his desk and said, this one is the pothos on our windowsill, for you, because you water it for me every day. She slipped it into the outer pocket of his backpack and went back to watering the plant without waiting for an answer.

Beibei looked at the card in the outer pocket for a long time. The pothos leaves were drawn round and filled in solidly, as if she feared any leaf might not be green enough. He read the card three times in his head, then opened the inner pocket and took out his two little boats and held them.

In the second break, Beibei waited until Nannan sat alone, then walked over, placed the card on her desk and said, for you. His voice was tiny, but she heard. Nannan opened the card, saw the two boats and asked, which one is you. Beibei thought a while and said, I do not know, the two are looking at each other.

Nannan stuck both cards side by side on the display board at the back of the classroom, saying, now the whole class can see your boats. Dozens of cards covered the board. Beibei searched a while before finding theirs, next to each other, floating side by side just like in the drawing.

At dismissal Beibei packed his bag and found the inner zipper somehow closed and the dictionary moved back into his book pile. He shouldered his backpack, walked to the door, and looked back at the board. The two boats were still there. The bell rang for the next break, and without moving at all, they kept drifting forward.

Next morning Beibei's backpack had a new small pocket sewn on, blue cloth, by his own hand. Nannan asked what it was for. Beibei said, for cards. Next break, I will use this one straight away.