一个雪人的自述

我是一场雪留下来的。夜里我落在操场上，本来铺得平平的，谁也没注意我。天一亮，学校的大门开了，我的命运就变了。

先是鞋底。一双双鞋底踩在我身上，咯吱咯吱，把我平整的脸踩出一串坑。有个穿红棉袄的女孩蹲下来，把我身上的一块雪攥成拳头大的圆球，滚了一圈又一圈。我眼看着那个圆球越长越胖，白得发亮，滚到我旁边时已经像个西瓜。接着第二个、第三个雪球也滚起来了。有人把最大的那个摞起来，我的肚子就成了；又有一个稍小的摞在肚子上，那是我的脑袋。一个男孩用两根小树枝在我身侧一插，我就有了胳膊；一个女孩把她自己的旧围巾解下来，绕在我脖子上，打了个结。她拍拍手说：这下你不冷了。其实我本来不冷，可是听见这句话，心里热了一下。

我的眼睛是两颗红色的冬青果，鼻子不知是谁按上去的一小截橘皮。我站直了，第一次看清这所雪后的学校：操场白得晃眼，跑道边上的铁栏杆顶着一溜雪，像排着队；梧桐树的枝丫上挂着一团一团的白，远处教学楼的屋顶像刚出炉撒了糖霜。真好看。我心想，难怪他们把我堆在这里，让我看这个。

孩子们围着我跳，给我起名字，这个喊我大白，那个喊我校长。正热闹，铃声响了，叮铃铃，清亮得很。他们呼啦一下跑了，鞋底在我身上踩出最后一片乱糟糟的印子，然后操场安静下来，只剩我。

我替他们守着操场。太阳出来了，把我照得浑身亮晶晶，每一粒雪都在闪光。风来了，把我肩膀上的雪吹掉一小片。我有点想化，可我不着急。我听见教学楼里传来读书声，一句一句，整整齐齐；下课铃一响，窗户里探出几十张脸，冲我挥手。

我知道我站不了几天。化了不要紧，我会变成水，渗进操场边冬青的根里。明年冬天，雪再落下来的时候，说不定还有一双手把我滚圆，再围一条围巾。到那时候我会说：我认识这所学校，我听过他们的读书声。

Confessions of a Snowman

I am something a snowfall left behind. At night I fell onto the playground and lay spread out flat, unnoticed by anyone. When day broke and the school gate opened, my fate changed.

First came the shoe soles. Sole after sole stepped across me, crunching, dapping my smooth face full of pits. A girl in a red padded jacket crouched down, scooped a fist-sized ball from my body, and rolled it round and round. I watched that ball grow fatter and fatter, white and gleaming; by the time it rolled up beside me it was the size of a watermelon. Then a second ball, a third. Someone stacked the biggest one up - that became my belly; a slightly smaller one went on top, and that was my head. A boy stuck two little twigs at my sides, and I had arms; a girl unwound her own old scarf, wound it around my neck and tied a knot. She clapped her hands and said: now

you won't be cold. I wasn't cold to begin with, but hearing that, something inside me warmed.

My eyes are two red holly berries, and my nose is a little piece of tangerine peel someone pressed on me. Standing straight, I saw this snowy school clearly for the first time: the playground white and dazzling; the iron railing by the track wearing a ridge of snow along its top, like a row standing in line; the plane tree branches hung with lump after lump of white; the roof of the school building in the distance dusted with sugar frost, as if just out of the oven. Truly beautiful, I thought - no wonder they built me here and let me watch this.

The children danced around me and gave me names: one shouted Big White, another called me Principal. Just as things got lively, the bell rang, ding-ling-ling, clear and bright. They ran off in a whoosh; their soles stamped one last mess of prints across me, and then the playground went quiet, with only me left.

I keep watch over the playground for them. The sun came out and made me glitter all over, every grain of snow shining. The wind came and blew a small patch off my shoulder. I half wanted to melt, but I am in no hurry. From the school building I hear them reading aloud, line by line, neat and steady; when the break bell rings, dozens of faces pop out of the windows and wave at me.

I know I cannot stand here for many days. It does not matter if I melt - I will turn into water and seep down into the roots of the holly by the playground. Next winter, when the snow falls again, maybe a pair of hands will roll me round once more and tie on another scarf. By then I will say: I know this school. I have listened to them reading aloud.