把最大的那瓣递给谁

《苹果树上的外婆》里，安迪先有一个想象中的外婆，会钻苹果树、会带他上天入地；后来他又有一个真的邻居外婆，库丝克老外婆，耳朵有点背，围裙上有面粉，烤的饼有时糊边。两个外婆，安迪都爱。但最打动我的不是想象中的外婆，是邻居这一段：安迪一开始嫌库丝克家烦，后来替她拎菜篮，听她讲孙子，陪她那两个爱抢东西的孙子玩，慢慢地，他家苹果树上的苹果，成了他送给库丝克老外婆的第一样东西。

书里分苹果的地方我读了三遍。安迪把苹果递给老外婆，自己留一个小的，他心里有过一秒钟的不情愿，脸上没露出来。老外婆把苹果掰成两瓣，最大的那瓣推回给他。那一瓣苹果在桌上放着，谁也没急着吃。我读到这里把书扣在腿上，因为我想起了我们同桌。上学期我忘带水果，她把她那个苹果在课桌底下掰成两半，大的那半推过来，嘴上说的是我不爱吃苹果。她明明爱吃，每天书包侧兜都插一个。当时我只说了声谢谢，现在想起来，那瓣苹果跟书里那瓣一模一样，推过来的时候谁都没客气，也没人觉得自己了不起。

安迪还教库丝克老外婆的孙子们玩苹果树下的游戏，一人一个苹果，咬之前要转三圈。书里写他们玩得满头汗，苹果最后没吃完，互相交换着咬。我合上书想，分享原来不是老师讲的那种大道理，是转三圈、是换一口咬、是把大的那瓣推回去。这些动作小得看不见，可它们让安迪从没有外婆变成有两个外婆。

隔天我在水果袋里放了两个苹果。课间我把大的那个递给同桌，她愣了一下。我说我今天的苹果不爱吃。她笑了，接过去在课桌底下掰成两半，还是把大的那半推给我。我们俩谁也没说谢谢。书里说得对，分享这件事，说破就没意思了，苹果树不谢风，风也不谢苹果树。

Who Gets the Biggest Slice

In Grandma on the Apple Tree, Andy first has an imaginary grandma who can dive into an apple tree and take him anywhere under the sky; then he gets a real neighbor grandmother, old Mrs. Kusk, a little deaf, flour on her apron, her baked cakes sometimes burnt at the edge. Andy loves both grandmothers. But what moved me most was not the imagined one; it was the neighbor chapters. At first Andy finds the Kusk household a nuisance. Then he carries their grocery basket, listens to her talk about her grandchildren, plays with her two grabby grandsons, and little by little the apples on his family's tree become the first thing he gives to old Mrs. Kusk.

I read the apple-sharing scene three times. Andy hands an apple to the old woman and keeps a small one for himself; for one second he is unwilling inside, and it never shows on his face. She breaks her apple into two halves and pushes the bigger half back to him. That half sits on the table, and neither of them hurries to eat it. I closed the book over my lap there, because I thought of my deskmate. Last term I forgot my fruit, and under the desk she broke her apple in two and slid the bigger half over, saying out loud that she does not like apples. She does like them; every day one sticks out of her bag's side pocket. All I said then was thanks. Now I see

that half was exactly like the half in the book: pushed over without ceremony, and nobody thought they had done anything great.

Andy also teaches the old woman's grandsons a game under the apple tree: one apple each, and you must spin around three times before the first bite. They play until their heads steam, the apples never get finished, and they trade bites of each other's fruit. Closing the book I thought: sharing is not the big lesson teachers talk about. It is the three spins, the swapped bite, the bigger half pushed back. These gestures are too small to see, yet they turn Andy from a boy with no grandmother into a boy with two.

The next day I put two apples in my fruit bag. At break I handed the bigger one to my deskmate, and she froze for a second. I said I do not like today's apples. She laughed, took it, broke it in two under the desk, and pushed the bigger half back to me. Neither of us said thanks. The book is right: say sharing out loud and it loses its meaning. The apple tree does not thank the wind, and the wind does not thank the apple tree.