7月8日，星期二，多云：花园里的三跤

7月8日，星期二，多云。

今天，爸爸终于把自行车从家里搬下来了，搬到我们小区的小花园里。车是隔壁王爷爷家借来的旧车，链条有点锈，骑起来哗啦哗啦响。爸爸给我套上一副护膝，蓝色的，上面印着小汽车。我说不戴，戴护膝多不好意思，不戴才神气。爸爸说，神气可以，摔破了膝盖你看你明天体育课还跑不跑。我别别扭扭地戴上了。

第一次摔是一开始就摔的。爸爸在后头扶着后座，我蹬了两圈，觉得自己挺行，车把往左一歪，前轮一扭，我整个人歪到花园小道的砖地上。手掌蹭破了一点皮，不重。我爬起来，爸爸说，接着骑。

第二次摔是花坛闹的。花坛边沿不高，我以为能绕过去，前轮磕在边沿上，车一斜，我摔进花坛的草地里，一只瓢虫爬到我护膝上。草绿的印子带回家还在，妈妈笑说这护膝见过世面了。

第三次摔最疼。脚蹬子从我脚底滑脱，磕在小腿肚上，车压在我身上。我坐在地上，眼泪在眼眶里打转，心里说，别骑了，骑车这么难，干嘛非要学。我想起同桌李小羽，她去年就骑车上学了，我要是不学，就得天天走路。我又想，摔第四次就摔第四次，摔三回算什么。我扶着车把站起来，把护膝上的土抹了抹，重新坐上车。

后来爸爸什么时候撒的手我都不知道，我一路骑到了花园那头，绕着石凳拐了个弯，又骑回来。停下的时候，爸爸站在起点那儿拍手。我骑了整整一圈！我高兴得想跳，可是小腿还疼，就单脚跳了两下。

歇息的时候我坐在石凳上，看天上有一架飞机拖着一条白线，从花园这头一直画到那头。王爷爷来取自行车，夸我摔了三跤没哭，还骑了一整圈。他一边擦链条一边说，他小时候学车摔的跤比这多多了，学骑车哪有不摔跤的。

睡前我看护膝，上面有三个土印子，左边膝盖一个，右边一个，侧面蹭的一个。我把护膝塞到床底下，明天学车一伸手就能拿出来。妈妈在门外喊我睡觉，我答应着，说明天还要去花园摔。

July 8, Tuesday, Cloudy: Three Falls in the Community Garden

July 8, Tuesday, Cloudy.

Today Dad finally carried the bicycle down from our flat, to the small garden inside our community. It was an old bicycle borrowed from Grandpa Wang next door, with a slightly rusty chain that clattered while riding. Dad put a pair of knee pads on me, blue ones printed with small cars. I said I did not want them, that riding without knee pads looks smarter. Dad said, being smart is fine, but if you scrape your knee, see whether you can still run in PE class tomorrow. I put them on unwillingly.

The first fall happened at the very start. Dad held the rear seat behind me, I pedalled two rounds and felt fine, then turned the handle a little left, the front wheel wobbled, and I fell sideways onto the stones of the garden path. My palm lost a bit of skin, not badly. I got up, and Dad said, keep riding.

The second fall was about the flower bed. The edge of the flower bed was low, I thought I could pass it, but the front wheel hit the edge, the bicycle tilted, and I fell into the grass, with a ladybug crawling onto my knee pad. The green grass stains were still on the pad when I got home, and Mom joked that this knee pad has seen the world.

The third fall hurt the most. The pedal slipped off my foot and hit my shin, and the bicycle fell on me. I sat on the ground, tears stinging my eyes, and my heart said, stop riding, learning a bicycle is so hard, why must I learn it. I thought of my deskmate Li Xiaoyu, who rode her bicycle to school last year, and that if I do not learn, I must walk to school every day. I thought, a fourth fall is just a fourth fall, three falls are nothing. I held the handle, stood up, wiped the dirt off the knee pads, and sat back on the seat.

Dad let go at some point without my knowing. I rode all the way to the far end of the garden, turned a corner around the stone bench, and rode back. When I stopped, Dad was standing at the start, clapping. I had ridden a whole circle! I was so glad I wanted to jump, but my shin still hurt, so I jumped on one foot twice instead.

During the rest I sat on the stone bench and watched an airplane in the sky dragging a white line, drawing it from one end of the garden to the other. Grandpa Wang came to take the bicycle back and praised me for not crying after three falls and riding a whole circle. While wiping the chain he said that when he was small he fell far more often learning a bicycle, and that no one learns to ride without falling.

Before bed I looked at the knee pads. There were three dirt marks, one on the left knee, one on the right, one on the side where I scraped. I pushed them under the bed so I can grab them at once tomorrow. Mom called from outside the door for me to sleep, and I said, coming, tomorrow I will still go to the garden to fall.