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.

8月1日，星期五，晴：戴护膝的那一天

8月1日，星期五，晴。

今天上午，妈妈买菜回来，手里拎着一个塑料袋，里面是一副粉色的护膝，边上还有一圈花边。我说不戴这个，谁学车戴花边护膝，小区里的男生要笑话的。妈妈说，让他们笑话，或者你摔破了膝盖让他们看，你自己挑。我接过来，下楼时塞在口袋里，到了小区花园才拿出来戴上。

下午花园里没什么人，只有槐树的影子在地上晃。我骑着车沿小道走，第一次摔是在拐角，拐得太急，后轮一滑，我直接坐了下去，护膝替我挨了一下，膝盖只有点酸。我有点意外，摔下去的时候心里咯噔一下，结果不疼。

第二次摔是为了躲遛狗的老奶奶。老奶奶牵着一只小白狗迎面走，我不会捏闸，慌得往旁边一歪车把，摔进草地里。小白狗跑过来对着我的护膝闻了两下，又跑了。老奶奶问我有没有事，我说没事，声音比平时大，因为摔得不重，护膝还端端正正戴在膝盖上。

第三次摔是我自己大意。我觉得自己会骑了，松开一只手去冲远处放风筝的小孩喊话，车马上扭起来倒了。这回落在一块水泥棱上，护膝滑歪了半边，膝盖压在护膝边上，疼，但是没破。我坐在地上想，要是没戴护膝，这一下膝盖非磕破不可。我自己爬起来，把护膝上的土拍掉，重新戴正，拉紧了搭扣。

歇下来的时候，花园凉亭里有两位老爷爷在下棋。其中一个抬头问我摔疼了没有，我说没疼，护膝软。老爷爷说，那就好，骑车跟下棋一样，输了再来一盘。我在心里把这句话念了一遍，输了再来一盘，那我就再来三盘。

后来我再没松开过车把。我绕着槐树骑，一圈，两圈，一直骑到十圈，树影在我身上晃过来晃过去。回家我跟妈妈说，护膝今天替我挨了三回。妈妈问，那还觉得它丢人不？我说不了，明天我还戴着它去花园。

睡前我在日记里写：护膝上的花边是有点丢人，可是摔了三回之后，丢人就不叫丢人了。这副粉色护膝我要一直留着，等表妹长大了也不给她。

August 1, Friday, Sunny: The Day I Put On Knee Pads

August 1, Friday, Sunny.

This morning Mom came back from the market carrying a plastic bag, and inside was a pair of pink knee pads with a ring of lace around them. I said I would not wear these, who wears lace knee pads to learn a bicycle, the boys in the community would laugh. Mom said, let them laugh, or let them watch you scrape your knee open, you choose. I took them, stuffed them in my pocket on the way down, and only put them on when I reached the community garden.

The garden was nearly empty in the afternoon, only the shade of the scholar tree swaying on the ground. I rode along the path, and the first fall was at the corner. I turned too fast, the rear wheel slid, and I sat straight down. The knee pad took the hit for me, and my knee only felt a little sore. I was surprised. My heart jumped when I went down, but it did not hurt.

The second fall was while avoiding an old lady walking her dog. She came toward me with a little white dog, I did not know how to squeeze the brake, panicked and jerked the handle aside, and fell into the grass. The little dog ran over, sniffed my knee pad twice, and ran off. The old lady asked whether I was all right, and I said I was, louder than usual, because the fall was not bad and the knee pad was still sitting neat on my knee.

The third fall was my own carelessness. I thought I could ride, and let go of one hand to shout at a child flying a kite in the distance. The bicycle twisted and tipped at once. This time I landed on a cement edge, the knee pad slid half aside, and my knee pressed against the edge of the pad. It hurt, but nothing broke open. Sitting on the ground I thought, without the knee pads my knee would have been scraped bloody this time. I got up by myself, patted the dust off the pads, put them straight, and pulled the straps tight.

During the break, two old grandpas in the garden pavilion were playing chess. One of them looked up and asked whether the fall hurt. I said it did not, the pads are soft. The old grandpa said, good then, riding a bicycle is like chess, if you lose you start another round. I repeated this sentence in my heart, if you lose you start another round, then I will start three more rounds.

After that I never let go of the handle again. I rode around the scholar tree, one circle, two circles, all the way to ten, the tree shade swinging across me. At home I told Mom the knee pads took three falls for me today. She asked whether they still seemed embarrassing. I said no, tomorrow I will wear them to the garden again.

Before bed I wrote in my diary: the lace on the knee pads is a little embarrassing, but after three falls embarrassment is no longer embarrassment. I will keep this pair of pink knee pads forever, and not even give them to my cousin when she grows up.

9月16日，星期六，晴转多云：花园里的三跤记

9月16日，星期六，晴转多云。

今天我又去小区花园学骑车。上回摔了两跤，今天摔了三跤。我把三跤都记进日记，等我学会了，翻出来看看自己是怎么摔的。

出门前爸爸给我戴护膝，是去年那副旧的，魔术贴有点松，爸爸用一根绳子又绑了一道。我说爸爸，我都三年级了，戴护膝有点那个。爸爸说，等你摔了就知道谁那个了。

第一跤是回头摔的。爸爸在后头喊了一声他撒手了，我扭头去看，车把跟着我的头一起歪，我摔进花园草皮的边上。第一跤我马上爬起来，因为爸爸在旁边看着。

第二跤是躲篮球摔的。花园里有个大哥哥在拍球，球滚到我前轮跟前，我往旁边一让，连人带车摔在小道上。这跤我坐在地上好一会儿，膝盖隔着护膝发疼，心里说，学骑车真难，我是不是学不会。可我想起学校里停在学校楼前的那些自行车，想起我也想过有一天骑车上学，就爬起来了。

歇第二跤的时候，花园的喷泉开了，水柱一跳一跳的。我坐在石凳上揉膝盖，看一个比我小的弟弟骑四轮车，他摔了一下，爬起来接着蹬，谁也没扶他。我心想，他都不怕，我怕什么。歇了没一会儿，我就又上车了。

第三跤是最后一跤。我自以为骑得不错了，想从花园门口那个小坡上溜下去，坡底前轮一栽，我往前扑出去，两个护膝都杵在地上，我跪在了地上。这一下我在草地上趴了好一会儿，差点哭出来。我想，一天摔三跤，摔三跤还敢往上骑的人，才是勇敢的人。我也想当勇敢的人。于是我爬起来，把车从地上扶起来，重新坐上去。

天慢慢暗下来，快要下雨了，爸爸说回家吧。回去的路上我骑得很慢，贴着小道走，爸爸在后头跟着，我们谁也没说话。可是进楼道的时候，爸爸伸手拍了拍我的脑袋。

我在日记里写：摔了三跤，三跤我都爬起来了。第三跤我起得最慢，可我还是起来了。护膝我放在门后头，下星期六还要去花园。

September 16, Saturday, Sunny then Cloudy: Three Falls at the Garden

September 16, Saturday, Sunny then Cloudy.

Today I went to the community garden to learn the bicycle again. Last time I fell twice, today I fell three times. I wrote all three falls into my diary, so that when I have learned, I can look back and see how I fell.

Before going out Dad put the knee pads on me, the old pair from last year, the velcro a bit loose, so Dad tied one more string around them. I said, Dad, I am already in Grade Three, knee pads are a bit something. Dad said, after you fall we will see who is something.

The first fall came from looking back. Dad shouted behind me that he had let go, I turned my head to check, the handle turned along with my head, and I fell at the edge of the garden grass. I got up right away from the first fall, because Dad was watching.

The second fall was about a basketball. A big brother in the garden was bouncing a ball, and the ball rolled up to my front wheel. I swerved to give way and fell with the bicycle onto the path. From this one I sat on the ground for a while. My knee ached through the pad, and my heart said, learning a bicycle is really hard, maybe I cannot learn it. But I thought of the bicycles parked in front of the school building, and of how I had wished to ride one to school one day, and I got up.

While resting after the second fall, the fountain in the garden turned on, its water column jumping up and down. I sat on the stone bench rubbing my knee, and watched a little brother younger than me riding a four-wheeled scooter. He fell once, got up, and kept pushing along, and nobody helped him. I thought, if he is not afraid, what am I afraid of. After a short rest I got back on the bicycle.

The third fall was the last one. I thought I was riding well, and wanted to coast down the small slope at the garden gate. At the bottom the front wheel dipped, I pitched forward, both knee pads stabbed into the ground, and I landed on my knees. This time I lay on the grass for a long while and nearly cried. I thought, falling three times in one day, and still getting back on after three falls, that is what a brave person does. I want to be a brave person too. So I got up, lifted the bicycle off the ground, and sat on it again.

The sky slowly darkened, about to rain, and Dad said let us go home. On the way back I rode very slowly, hugging the path, Dad following behind, and neither of us said a word. But when we walked into the stairway, Dad reached out and patted my head.

I wrote in my diary: three falls, and I got up from all three. From the third fall I stood up the slowest, but I still stood up. I put the knee pads behind the door, and next Saturday I am going to the garden again.