那本折了角的小册子

《学会骑车》是上周从图书馆借的小册子里的一篇。册子只有二十几页，讲一个孩子在一个暑假学会骑车的事。我那天一口气读完，晚上睡觉前又读了一遍。第二天是星期六，我做的第一件事，是把阳台角落那辆落了灰的自行车推了出来。

那辆车搁了半年。三年级下学期我学过一阵，摔过两回，一次蹭破小腿，一次车把撞在花坛沿上，歪了。后来车就一直在阳台上，链条生了锈，坐垫上落满灰。册子里的男孩也想过放弃，他在石渣路上第四次摔倒以后，把车扔在路边，自己走回了家。他走了半路，回头看见车还立在那儿，孤零零的，忽然就跑回去把车推起来了。

我读到他跑回去那一段，脸上有点热。因为我连走回那半路都没有。我把车扔在阳台上，一扔就是半年，连看都不看它。册子里写，他后来才明白，摔在路上的不是车，是人心里那点胆子，胆子捡起来，车就还能骑。

星期六上午，我推着车下楼，在小区后面的空地上重新练。锈链条蹬起来哗啦哗啦响。头一圈还是歪的，脚还是忙。可这一次，摔了我没有停下来想「算了」。我扶起车，擦擦手，接着上去。练到中午，我能绕着空地骑一整圈了。风从车把上过去的时候，我忽然想起册子里那句「胆子捡起来」。

下午我把册子放回书桌，翻开到有折角的那一页，又读了一遍结尾。男孩骑车的背影被夕阳拉得很长。我在心里把他的话和我的事排在一起：他摔了四次，我摔了两次；他走回半路又跑回来，我在阳台上搁了半年。他比我勇敢，可我比他幸运——我读到了他的故事，等于借了他的胆子用了一次。

星期一上学，我骑车去的。车筐里放着那本小册子，它颠了一路。到教室我把它塞进书包最里层，想着还书那天，要在借书卡旁边的小本子上写一句：这本书帮我把没学完的事学完了。

The Booklet with a Folded Corner

Learning to Ride was one piece in a booklet I borrowed from the library last week. The booklet had barely twenty pages, telling how a boy learned to bike over one summer vacation. I read it in one sitting that day, then read it again before bed. The next morning, a Saturday, the first thing I did was wheel the dusty bicycle out of its corner on the balcony.

That bike had sat there half a year. I took a few lessons in the spring of third grade, fell twice, scraped my shin once, and once slammed the handlebars into the flower bed's edge, bending them. After that the bike stayed on the balcony, chain rusting, seat covered in dust. The boy in the booklet thought of quitting too. After his fourth fall on the gravel road, he left the bike by the roadside and walked home. Halfway, he looked back and saw it standing there alone, and suddenly ran back to fetch it.

When I read the part where he ran back, my face went warm. I had not even walked halfway back. I abandoned my bike on the balcony for six months and refused to look at it. The booklet says he understood later that what lay fallen on the road was not the bike but the small courage inside a person; pick the courage up, and the bike can still be ridden.

Saturday morning I wheeled the bike downstairs and practiced again on the open ground behind our buildings. The rusty chain clattered as I pedaled. The first lap still wobbled, my feet still scrambled. But this time, when I fell, I did not stop to think, forget it. I lifted the bike, wiped my hands, and got back on. By noon I could ride a full lap around the ground. As the wind ran over the handlebars, that line from the booklet came back: pick the courage up.

In the afternoon I put the booklet back on my desk, opened it to the folded page, and read the ending again: the boy riding away, his shadow stretched long by the sunset. I lined his story up against mine in my head. He fell four times, I fell twice. He walked halfway and ran back; I left my bike on a balcony for half a year. He was braver than me. But I was luckier, because I read his story, which is like borrowing his courage for one use.

On Monday I biked to school. The booklet rode in the basket, bouncing the whole way. In the classroom I tucked it into the innermost pocket of my schoolbag, thinking that on the day I return it, I will write one line in the little notebook beside the lending card: this book helped me finish what I had left unfinished.