# 小明和歪歪扭扭的车

小明六岁的生日礼物，是一辆蓝色的小自行车，车把上挂着一只铃铛，叮铃铃，响得很。他把车推出门洞，腿就软了——自行车的两个轮子，像两只不听话的小马，东倒西歪。

爸爸扶着后座，让他绕着楼下的空地骑。第一圈，爸爸扶着；第二圈，爸爸扶着；第三圈，小明喊爸爸松手，爸爸的手还偷偷跟在后面半尺。

正说着，前轮踩上一颗小石子，咕咚一声，小明连人带车滚进了花坛，屁股上沾了一整棵草。铃铛被压得闷闷地响了一声。小明坐在花坛里，眼泪在眼眶里打转，抱着车吹气，说车咬他。

爸爸走过来，没笑，也没抱他，只蹲下来把草从他屁股上摘掉，说，车不是咬你，是想跟你交朋友。你摔在它身上，它也吓了一跳。你看，它的铃铛还在跟你道歉呢。说着按了一下铃铛，叮。

小明气得忘了哭。他问爸爸，那车还教不教他骑。爸爸说，教呀，车在等你呢。它今天跟你拉了勾，明天就不躲了。

小明拍拍车座，重新坐上去，跟车说，好吧，我原谅你。从那以后，每天傍晚他都到空地上跟车见面。有时摔，有时不摔；摔了，爸爸远远说一句车在等你，他就爬起来。

空地上还有一只大黄狗，趴在墙根看小明骑车。小明摔的时候，狗尾巴动一下，像是笑他。小明红着脸爬起来，冲狗喊，下圈就不摔了给你看。第二圈，他真的绕着大黄狗骑了半个弯。

第二个星期的星期天，小明绕着空地骑了一整圈，一回也没摔。爸爸站在路口鼓掌，空地上的孩子们也跟着鼓掌。小明按着铃铛，叮铃铃、叮铃铃，骑到爸爸跟前说，爸爸，今天我和车交上朋友了！

现在小明会骑车去小卖部打酱油了。他每次按铃，都会想起花坛里那一天。他说，交朋友不怕摔，摔了爬起来拍拍土，它还在等你。

# Xiao Ming and the Wobbly Little Bicycle

The birthday gift for Xiao Ming on his sixth birthday was a blue little bicycle, with a bell hanging on the handlebar, ding-a-ling, ringing clearly. He wheeled it out of the doorway and his legs went weak, because the two wheels of the bicycle were like two little horses that would not obey orders, tilting this way and that.

Papa held the back seat and let him ride around the empty lot downstairs. The first round, Papa held on. The second round, Papa held on. The third round, Xiao Ming shouted that Papa should let go, while the hand of Papa was still secretly following half a meter behind.

Just then the front wheel stepped on a small pebble. There was a thud, and Xiao

Ming and the bicycle rolled together into the flower bed, with a whole clump of grass stuck on his bottom. The crushed bell gave a muffled ding. Xiao Ming sat in the flower bed with tears gathering in his eyes, holding the bicycle and blowing on it, saying that the bicycle had bitten him.

Papa came over. He did not laugh and did not lift him up. He only squatted down and pulled the grass off the bottom of Xiao Ming, saying, the bicycle did not bite you, it only wanted to make friends with you. You fell on it, and it was frightened too. Look, its bell is still saying sorry to you. While speaking, he pressed the bell, and it went ding.

Xiao Ming was so angry that he forgot to cry. He asked Papa whether the bicycle would still teach him to ride. Papa said, of course it will. The bicycle is waiting for you. It made a promise with you today, and it will not hide tomorrow.

Xiao Ming patted the seat, climbed back on, and told the bicycle that he forgave it. From then on, every evening after school he went to the empty lot to meet the bicycle. Sometimes he fell, sometimes he did not. When he fell, Papa called from far away that the bicycle was waiting for him, and he got up right away.

There was also a big yellow dog in the empty lot, lying at the foot of the wall and watching Xiao Ming ride. When Xiao Ming fell, the tail of the dog moved once, as if laughing at him. Xiao Ming got up with a red face and shouted at the dog, next round I will not fall, just watch. In the second round, he really rode a half turn around the big yellow dog.

On the Sunday of the second week, Xiao Ming rode a full circle around the empty lot without falling once. Papa stood at the street corner and clapped, and the other children in the empty lot clapped too. Xiao Ming rang the bell, ding-a-ling, ding-a-ling, and rode up to Papa, saying, Papa, the bicycle and I became friends today.

Now Xiao Ming can even ride to the shop at the corner to buy soy sauce. Every time the bell rings, he remembers that day in the flower bed. He says that making friends is nothing to be afraid of falling for: if you fall, get up, brush off the dust, and the friend will still be waiting.

# 河坝上的勇敢章

暑假里，小明跟着爸爸回乡下。村口的河坝又宽又平，是学骑车最好的地方。小明盯着村里孩子骑过的旧车，眼睛亮得像两盏小灯。爸爸拍拍车座说，想学？今天就开始。

河坝上风大。小明骑上去，车把被风一吹，往河那边一歪。他慌了，捏死后闸，后轮在石板

上跳了两跳，哐当，小明从车边上翻出去，手掌按在一块粗石板上，蹭破了一大片，火辣辣的。

小明看着手掌上的血印子，嘴一瘪，眼泪掉下来。他坐在河坝上说不学了，车欺负人。爸爸没急着拉他，让他哭了一会儿，才指着河说，你看这条河，它小时候也撞石头，撞了一千年，才把河床撞得这么平。男孩子摔一跤，跟它比，小得多。

爸爸又从口袋里掏出一张贴纸，是小明最喜欢的红星贴纸，贴在他没破的那只手掌上，说，这是勇敢章，摔了没跑的人才有。小明吸吸鼻子，问，那我算不算没跑。爸爸说，你坐在这儿生气，生气完了还愿意上车，这比不摔还了不起。

小明把破手掌吹了吹，扶起车。爸爸教他一个新口诀：眼看远处，手轻轻，脚画圆。眼看远处，就不怕河了；手轻轻，车把就听话；脚画圆，轮子就不断。

小明照着念，一遍，两遍，三遍。车居然直了，风再吹，也只是把衣角掀起来。他骑过河坝最宽的那一段，水在右手边亮晃晃地陪着他跑。

骑到坝头，小明跳下车，冲坝下的爸爸喊，爸爸！我会了！我会了！声音把坝上歇凉的鸭子都惊得扑棱棱飞。爸爸仰着脸笑，说，明天让你骑车给奶奶送信，敢不敢？小明把红星手掌举起来，说，敢！

第二天，小明真的骑着车，驮着一封信，叮铃铃地骑过河坝，骑到奶奶门口。奶奶拆开信，他坐在门槛上，给奶奶看手掌上的勇敢章。他说，摔跤不可怕，可怕的是坐在地上不起来。

# The Badge of Courage on the River Dam

During the summer vacation, Xiao Ming went back to the countryside with Papa. The river dam at the village entrance was wide and flat, the best place in the world to learn riding. Xiao Ming stared at the old bicycle the village children had ridden, his eyes bright like two little lamps. Papa patted the seat and said, want to learn? We start today.

The wind on the dam was strong. As soon as Xiao Ming got on, a gust pushed the handlebars toward the river. He panicked and squeezed the rear brake shut. The rear wheel hopped twice on the stone slab, there was a clang, and Xiao Ming rolled off the side of the bike, his palm slapping onto a rough slab, scraped over a wide patch, burning hot.

Xiao Ming stared at the blood marks on his palm, his mouth turned down, and the tears fell. He sat on the dam and said he would not learn anymore, that the bike bullied people. Papa did not hurry to pull him up. He let him cry for a while, then pointed at the river and said, look at this river. When it was little, it also crashed into stones, and it crashed for a thousand years before it made its riverbed this flat. One fall for a boy is much, much smaller than that.

Then Papa took a sticker out of his pocket, the red-star sticker Xiao Ming liked best, and stuck it on the palm that was not scraped, saying, this is the badge of courage, only for those who fall and do not run. Xiao Ming sniffled and asked whether that counted as not running. Papa said, you are sitting here angry, and when you finish being angry you are still willing to get back on the bike. That is more impressive than never falling.

Xiao Ming blew on his scraped palm and lifted the bike up. Papa taught him a new rhyme: eyes on the distance, hands light, feet drawing circles. If your eyes are on the distance, you are not afraid of the river; if your hands are light, the handlebars obey; if your feet draw circles, the wheels never stop.

Xiao Ming repeated it as he rode, once, twice, three times. The bike actually went straight, and when the wind blew again it only lifted the hem of his shirt. He rode across the widest part of the dam, the water shining on his right hand side, running along with him.

Riding to the end of the dam, Xiao Ming jumped off and shouted down to Papa, Papa, I can do it, I can do it. The shout startled the ducks resting on the dam into fluttering flight. Papa looked up with a face full of smile and said, tomorrow I will let you ride across to bring a letter to Grandma, dare you? Xiao Ming raised his red-star palm and said, dare.

The next day, Xiao Ming really rode across the dam with a letter on the bike, ding-a-ling all the way to the door of Grandma. Grandma opened the letter, and he sat on the threshold showing her the badge of courage on his palm. He said that falling is not terrible; what is terrible is sitting on the ground and not getting up.

# 挂在枕头底下的纸奖牌

学校运动会上，同桌小虎脖子上挂了一枚跳绳比赛的铜奖牌，亮晃晃地晃了小明一整个星期。小明回家往沙发上一坐，说，爸爸，我也要奖牌。爸爸说，奖牌是比赛赢来的，不是要来的。小明眼珠一转，说，那我去比赛骑车！可他连自行车都不会骑。

爸爸没拆穿他，从杂物间推出家里那辆旧车，气有点足，链条油亮。父子俩来到小区后面的水泥小路上。小路旁边有个沙坑，是小孩子玩沙的地方，沙子晒得暖暖的。

练车的第一日，爸爸扶着后座，小明蹬得歪歪扭扭，像一条喝醉的小鸭子。到了第二日，爸爸的手偷偷松了半格，小明骑出了五米，正得意，车头一歪，哐当，连人带车栽进沙坑，嘴里灌进一口沙，咸的。

小明趴在沙坑里，半天没动。他吐着沙子，带着哭腔喊，爸爸，我的奖牌没了。爸爸走过来，蹲

在沙坑边上，说，谁说的。摔跤的地方，就是练本领的地方。你看沙坑亲了你一口，是想记住你。

小明从沙坑里爬出来，头发里、耳朵里都是沙。爸爸给他拍沙，一边拍一边说，明天还来不来。小明把嘴里的沙子呸呸吐干净，说明天来，后天也来。

第三日，小明能骑到沙坑边上停住。第四日，他绕着沙坑骑了半圈。第五日的傍晚，他一口气从小路这头骑到那头，风在耳朵边呼呼地鼓掌。爸爸站在小路尽头，手里拿着一样东西，举得高高的。

走近了才看清，是一枚纸做的奖牌，红色的纸，剪成圆圆的，中间画着一颗五角星，底下用笔写着：骑车小能手，小明。绳子是爸爸用红毛线拧的。爸爸说，比赛还没开始，先发预赛奖牌。真正的铜奖牌，等你骑得够快，去跟小虎比，自己赢回来。

小明把纸奖牌挂在脖子上，骑在车上叮铃铃地绕沙坑转了三圈，每圈都冲爸爸喊一声。晚上他把纸奖牌压在枕头底下，怕它被妈妈洗掉。他跟爸爸说，等真的铜奖牌来了，就让这个纸的当爷爷。

后来小明真的在校运会骑车比赛里跑了第三名，领回一枚铜奖牌。他把纸奖牌和铜奖牌挂在一起，纸的挂在上面。他说，这是爷爷，爷爷最早。

# The Paper Medal Under the Pillow

At the school sports meet, the copper medal of the rope-jumping contest hung on the neck of desk-mate Xiao Hu, and it dangled in front of the eyes of Xiao Ming for a whole week. When Xiao Ming got home he plopped onto the sofa and said, Papa, I want a medal too. Papa said medals are won in contests, not asked for. The eyes of Xiao Ming rolled, and he said, then I will enter a bicycle race. But he could not even ride a bicycle.

Papa did not expose him. He pushed the old family bicycle out of the storage room, its tires a little full, its chain shiny with oil. Father and son came to the cement path behind the compound. Beside the path was a sand pit, where the little children played with sand, and the sand was warm from the sun.

On the first day of practice Papa held the back seat, and Xiao Ming pedaled crookedly, like a little drunk duck. On the second day the hand of Papa secretly loosened half a notch, and Xiao Ming rode five meters out. Just as he was pleased, the front of the bike tilted, there was a clang, and he and the bicycle fell into the sand pit, and a mouthful of sand poured into him. It was salty.

Xiao Ming lay prone in the sand pit and did not move for a long time. He spat out sand and shouted through his sobs, Papa, my medal is gone. Papa walked over and squatted at the edge of the pit, saying, who said that. The place where you fall is

the place where you train your skill. Look, the sand pit kissed you once because it wants to remember you.

Xiao Ming crawled out of the sand pit, with sand in his hair and in his ears. Papa patted the sand off him, and while patting asked whether he would come tomorrow. Xiao Ming spat the sand out of his mouth clean and said, tomorrow I will come, and the day after tomorrow too.

On the third day, Xiao Ming could ride to the edge of the sand pit and stop. On the fourth day, he rode half a circle around the pit. On the evening of the fifth day, he rode the whole length of the path in one breath, and the wind clapped and clapped beside his ears. Papa stood at the end of the path, holding something in his hand, raised high.

Only when he came close could Xiao Ming see it clearly: a medal made of paper, red paper cut into a round shape, with a five-pointed star drawn in the middle, and under it written in pen, expert little cyclist, Xiao Ming. The string was twisted by Papa out of red wool yarn. Papa said, the race has not started yet, so here is the qualifying-round medal first. The real copper medal, when you ride fast enough, go race Xiao Hu and win it back yourself.

Xiao Ming hung the paper medal on his neck and rang the bell as he circled the sand pit three times on the bike, shouting one shout at Papa each round. At night he put the paper medal under his pillow, afraid his mother would wash it away. He told Papa that when the real copper medal comes, this paper one will be promoted to grandpa.

Later Xiao Ming really finished third in the bicycle race at the school sports meet and brought home a copper medal. He hung the paper medal and the copper medal together, the paper one on top. He said, this is Grandpa, and Grandpa came first.