

永远的三八线

The Eternal Line

一年级二年级的小男生小女生可以不划三八线，三年级四年级也可以不划，到了五年级便非划不可了。不信，你到我们五年级的四个班去看一看，有哪一个班不划三八线？

From first to fourth grade, boys and girls had never needed to draw lines, but by fifth grade, it had to be done. If you don't believe me, you can check out all four of our fifth grade classes. All of them have lines!

划三八线常常是男生闹着要划的，仿佛这么一划，就可以证明他们已经不是小男生，而是顶天立地的大男生了。

我和肥猫的三八线是用一根又长又宽的尺子隔在课桌中间的。肥猫说，这叫“立体三八线”，只要谁超过一点点，尺子就会倒下来。这表明他要和我划清界线的决心是多么的坚决和彻底。

从我和肥猫同桌的第一天起，我们就签订了《三八线公约》，全文如下：

The boys were the first ones to draw lines across their desks. It was like this sort of line was proof that they weren't boys anymore, but manly men, ready to take on the world. Fat Cat and I used a long, wide

ruler to separate our table. Fat Cat said that this was a three-dimensional line that would fall over if either of us crossed it. It showed how resolved he was about drawing a line between us.

On the very first day that Fat Cat and I were put together, we signed a *No Line Crossing Agreement*, which I've included below:

三八线公约

No Line Crossing Agreement

甲方：鲁云飞

Party A: Lu Yunfei

乙方：夏雪儿

Party B: Summer Snow

甲方鲁云飞与乙方夏雪儿在同桌期间，必须遵守以下公约：

During their time sharing a desk, Party A Lu Yunfei and Party B Summer Snow must adhere to the following agreement:

一、课桌一分为二，用三八线划定，男左女右，甲方在左，乙方在右，不得交换。

I. The desk is split into two sides by the line, with

the boy on the left and girl on the right. Party A is on the left, and Party B is on the right. There will be no trading.

二、男女有别，甲方不能越过三八线到乙方那边去，乙方也不能越过三八线到甲方那边去。

II. Party A may not cross the line onto Party B's side. Party B may not cross the line onto Party A's side.

三、如果甲方有违规现象，赔偿乙方达利雪梅一包；如乙方有违规现象，赔偿甲方品客薯片一筒。

III. If Party A breaks these rules, he must give Party B a pack of dried plums. If Party B breaks these rules, she must give Party A a can of Pringles.

甲方签字：鲁云飞

乙方签字：夏雪儿

Party A: Lu Yunfei

Party B: Summer

Snow

×年×月×日

Date:

“甲方鲁云飞”，就是肥猫，鲁云飞是他的名字。他的脸又宽又短，笑起来特别像猫，加上他最爱发出像猫一样“嗷嗷”的叫声，从一年级起，我们就叫他肥猫。肥猫起码有 60

公斤，我不明白像他这么沉重的人，怎么会取一个像“云飞”这样轻飘飘的名字。

Party A was Fat Cat. His real name was Lu Yunfei. His face was wide and short, and he looked like a cat when he laughed. He also liked to meow like a cat, so we started calling him Fat Cat in first grade. He weighed at least 60 kg. I couldn't understand how someone so heavy could ever move like a cat.

订《三八线公约》是肥猫提出来的，当然是他起草的，但其中有九个错别字，三处不通顺的病句，你现在看到的这份公约，其实是经过我修改的。直到现在，肥猫没有吃到我的品客薯片，我也没吃到他的达利雪梅。是不是甲方他和乙方我都严格遵守了这个“三八线公约”了呢？至于肥猫，我只给你们讲一个真实的片断，你们便知道他是怎样遵守的了。

Fat Cat was the one who brought up the *No Line Crossing Agreement*, so naturally he was the one to write it. But he wrote nine characters wrong, and had three grammar mistakes. The agreement you saw was the one I had edited. To this day, I haven't had to give Fat Cat a single Pringle, and he hasn't had to give me a plum. Does that mean that both parties respected the *No Line Crossing Agreement*? I'll tell you a true

story about Fat Cat that will tell you how he "respected" it.

有一天，肥猫忘记带语文书，我好心地把语文书摊开，放在“三八线”上，尺子倒下来。肥猫硬说我犯了规，真是“狗咬吕洞宾，不识好人心”，我把书收过来。没想到严老师提问题时，他第一个站起来回答，而且全部回答正确。原来他还是看了我的书，是把目光斜到我这边来看的。

One day, Fat Cat forgot to bring his Chinese book, so I opened mine up and put it on the line so he could see it. Fat Cat insisted that I'd broken the rule. I brought my book back to my side of the table, saying he had bitten the hand that fed him. But when Mrs. Yan asked questions, he was the first one to stand up and answer them, and he got them all right! I noticed he was still looking at *my* book on *my* side of the table.

下课的时候，肥猫说我犯了规，要我赔偿他一盒品客薯片；我说他犯规了，要他赔偿我一袋达利雪梅。他说是我弄倒了尺子，他又没弄倒尺子。我说他的目光已经越过了三八线。我们就这样吵来吵去，吵来吵去，最终没有吵出一个结果来。当然，我没吃到肥猫的达利雪梅，肥猫也没吃到我的品客薯片。

When we left class, Fat Cat said that I had broken

the rule, and that I owed him a can of Pringles. I told him *he* had broken the rule, and owed me a bag of dried plums. He said I had crossed the line, but he hadn't. I told him that his eyes had crossed the line. We argued back and forth, but didn't reach a conclusion. Naturally, neither of us gave the other anything to eat.

我很想知道，兴划“三八线”的历史应该追溯到什么时候？问爸爸，爸爸说不知道，反正他读小学的时候就划的。他划“三八线”划得最起劲，因为“三八线”是“导火线”，这样他就有理由找他同桌的女生吵架了，他就喜欢跟她吵来吵去，喜欢看她生气的样子，喜欢看她用手绢儿抹眼泪的动作。妈妈读小学的时候也划“三八线”的。她说现在想起来挺好玩儿的。她还说如果不划“三八线”，她的童年不知少了多少有趣的回忆。看来这“三八线”是过去划，现在划，将来还会划，是一条永远的“三八线”。

I wanted to know how far back drawing lines like this could be traced to. I asked Dad, and he said he didn't know, but that he had drawn lines in elementary school. His line had been more like a fuse though, a fuse which had led to arguments with his female deskmate. He had liked to argue with her and

see her get angry, or see her wipe tears away with a handkerchief. Mom had drawn lines too. She said that she remembered it being fun. She also said that without lines, she was sure that her childhood wouldn't have been as fun. It seemed that there would always be some sort of line. People had drawn them in the past, people were drawing them now, and people would draw them in the future.

同桌冤家

The Wronged Deskmate

今天又换座位了，许多人都换了同桌，豆芽儿换去跟王巧巧同桌，米老鼠换去跟欧亚菲同桌，兔巴哥换去跟萧依依同桌，我呢？没有换，还是跟肥猫同桌。

“唉！唉！”肥猫摇晃着他胖胖的圆脑袋，“我的命怎么就这么苦啊？”

“你说什么？”我的肺都气炸了，“你以为我想跟你同桌啊？”

We switched seats again today. Lots of people switched desks. Bean Sprout switched desks to sit with Wang Qiaoqiao, Mickey switched desks to sit with Ou Yafei. Bugs switched desks to sit with Xiao Yiyi. And me? I didn't get to switch. I was stuck with Fat Cat.

"Oh... no...," Fat Cat said, shaking his pudgy head back and forth. "Why is my life so hard?"

"What did you say?!" I demanded, furious. "You think I *want* to sit with you?"

肥猫拖长了声音，一副痛心疾首的样子：“何时能苦尽甘来，拨开乌云见太阳？”

“严老师!”我不知哪来的勇气,从来没有这么大声地说过话,“我不想跟鲁云飞同桌!”

严加厉老师的目光,像两柄寒光闪闪的利剑,射在我的脸上,然后又射在肥猫的脸上。

活该肥猫要倒霉了。不管严老师有多么的严厉,对女生,她总还是有一点点偏心的。特别是在今天这样的情况下,她不拿肥猫开涮才怪呢。

Fat Cat let out a sigh and looked pained, "Why can't we all just... get along?" he said.

"Mrs. Yan!" I said loudly, somehow feeling brave. "I don't want to sit with Lu Yunfei!"

Mrs. Yan Jiali's gaze shot towards me as sharp as daggers, then she glared at Fat Cat.

Fat Cat was in trouble now. No matter how strict Mrs. Yan was, she always went a bit easier on the girls. Especially today, she would definitely take my side.

“鲁云飞,你不想跟夏雪儿同桌,你想跟谁同桌?”

肥猫嘴里嘀嘀咕咕的,但谁都听不清他到底在说些什么。

“你说大声点!”严老师已走到了肥猫跟前,“你想跟谁同桌?”

肥猫嘴里还是嘀嘀咕咕的。

“你说什么?”

"Lu Yunfei, if you don't want to sit with Summer, who do you want to sit with?"

Fat Cat muttered something under his breath, but nobody could hear what he was saying.

"Speak up!" Mrs. Yan said, walking towards Fat Cat. "Who would you like to sit with?"

Fat Cat was still muttering.

"What did you say?"

严老师把声音压低了一些，我们知道她生气了。严老师生气跟别的老师不一样，别的老师生气的时候是把声音提高。而她生气的时候是把声音压低，气生得越大，声音压得越低，到最后一点声音都没有的时候，那就是严老师已经气得说不出话来了。

When Mrs. Yan lowered her voice like that, we knew she was angry. Mrs. Yan wasn't like the other teachers when she got angry. When other teachers got angry, they raised their voices. But when *she* got angry, she lowered her voice. The angrier she was, the lower her voice was, and when she didn't say anything, that meant Mrs. Yan was so upset she was speechless.

严老师的声音又压低了一些：“你说什么？”

我紧张起来，全班同学都紧张起来，因为我们都怕严老师生气。

“严老师，我知道鲁云飞想跟谁同桌。”坐在我们前排的豆芽儿突然站起来说，“他想跟艾薇同桌！”

“哈哈！哈哈！”

男生们张开大嘴，仰头大笑！

“嘻嘻！嘻嘻！”

女生们抿嘴偷着乐。

Mrs. Yan's voice got quieter. "What did you say?"

I started getting nervous, along with the entire class, because we were scared of Mrs. Yan getting angry.

"Mrs. Yan, I know who Lu Yunfei wants to sit with," Bean Sprout said, suddenly standing up in front of us. "He wants to sit with Ai Wei!"

"Haha! Haha!" the boys all threw their heads back and guffawed.

"Heehee, heehee!" the girls chuckled.

艾薇是我们班的班花，真是爱美之心，人皆有之啊！

“他乱讲，他才想跟艾薇同桌呢！”肥猫涨红了脸，有口难辩，向豆芽儿挥舞着他肉乎乎的拳头，“我饶不了你！”

“鲁云飞，你太不像话了，下课到我办公室去！”

下课了，肥猫迈着鸭子步，嘴里嘀嘀咕咕地跟着严老师到办公室去。过了一会儿，他迈着鸭子步，嘴里嘀嘀咕咕又回来了。

Ai Wei was the prettiest girl in our class. It seemed like everyone loved her beauty!

"No way, *he's* the one who wants to sit with her!" Fat Cat blushed and stammered. He waved a meaty fist at Bean Sprout. "I won't let you get away with this!"

"Lu Yunfei that is no way to act! See me in my office after class!"

After class, Fat Cat waddled after Mrs. Yan to her office, muttering all the way. After a while, he came back, still muttering.

“怎么样？怎么样？”豆芽儿嬉皮笑脸地凑上去，“罚你抄几遍词语？”

对于豆芽儿这种有多动症状的学生，严老师的惩罚手段一般是抄词语，抄多少遍，根据犯错误的情节轻重来定。

肥猫哭丧着脸，说：“罚抄词语倒好了。”

“那罚你什么？”

“跑步，六圈。”

"So? So?" Bean Sprout brought his jeering face

closer. "How many lines do you have to write?"

For a student with ADHD like Bean Sprout, Mrs. Yan usually punished him by making lines, based on how badly he had screwed up.

"I *wish* I was writing lines," Fat Cat said glumly.

"What is the punishment, then?" he asked.

"Running. Six laps."

豆芽儿开心死了，我也开心死了。肥猫的“坐功”特别好，他不怕抄词语，但严老师偏偏不罚他抄词语，却罚他跑步。肥猫最怕的就是跑步，而且是绕着操场跑六圈，不把他跑趴下才怪呢。

但是我高兴得太早了。肥猫向我传达了严老师的指示，严老师是要肥猫在我的监督下跑六圈，也就是我要陪着肥猫跑六圈。

放学后，我和肥猫来到操场上。

Bean Sprout thought this was hilarious, and I did too. Fat Cat was great at writing lines, but Mrs. Yan wouldn't punish him with writing lines, she was forcing him to run. Fat Cat hated running the most, and six laps around the track would be enough to make him collapse.

But I had gotten ahead of myself. Fat Cat said

that Mrs. Yan had told him he would have to run six laps around the track while I was watching him. In other words, I would have to run six laps with him..

After school got out, Fat Cat and I went to the track.

肥猫“哼”一声，恨恨地瞪了我一眼。我也“哼”一声，恨恨地瞪他一眼。

跑第一圈，肥猫还勉强能对付。跑第二圈时，他已经开始喘粗气了，对我的态度也有所好转，有点巴结的样子：“夏雪儿，你看再跑一圈就 OK……怎么样？”

我不理他。

Fat Cat huffed and glared at me. I huffed and glared back at him.

Fat Cat handled the first lap okay. During the second lap, he began breathing heavily, and started acting nicer towards me.

"Summer, how about... we... we do one more lap?" he asked hesitantly.

I ignored him.

跑第三圈时，肥猫已经上气不接下气了：“夏——夏雪儿，饶——饶命——”

“不行！”我冷冷地公事公办，“严老师说跑六圈，就得

跑六圈。”

三圈跑下来，鲁云飞完全是拖着步子在一点一点地挪，恨不得立刻倒在地上：“夏雪儿，我——我嘴上说不想跟你同桌，其实心里是想跟你同桌的……真的，特别想……”

我一不小心，笑出声来：“肥猫，如果在战争年代，你被敌人抓去了，你一定会做叛徒的。”

When we began the third lap, Fat Cat was already running out of breath. "Sum... Summer Snow... Please... Let me go..." he pleaded.

"No!" I snapped coldly. "Mrs. Yan said six laps, so you have to run six laps."

After the third lap was finished, Fat Cat was dragging his feet, and looked like he wanted to fall over. "Summer, I... I said I don't want to sit with you, but actually I really do, deep down inside. Really! I really do!"

I couldn't help but burst out laughing. "Fat Cat, if this was a war and you got captured, I'm sure you'd sell out your country."

“别小瞧我，在敌人面前我宁死不屈。你是谁呀？你不是我的敌人，你是我的同桌——亲爱的同桌——求求你……”

现在，肥猫有求于我，什么甜蜜的话都说得出来，你还

能拿他怎么样呢？

唉，我总是心太软。

我带着肥猫向操场中央跑去，大圈也是圈，小圈还是圈，严老师并没有规定是跑六小圈还是六大圈，我们已经跑了三大圈、三小圈，一共是六圈，我可以向严老师交差了。

"You think I'm that much of a wimp? I'd stand tall in the face of any enemy! But you're not my enemy, you're my deskmate! My dearest deskmate... Please, I'm begging you..."

Now Fat Cat was begging me, and he'd say anything to get what he wanted. What could I do?

I guess sometimes I'm just too much of a softy.

I ran towards the center of the track with Fat Cat. A small lap still counted as a lap, and Mrs. Yan hadn't said that he had to run six laps around the whole track. We ran three big laps, and three small laps, so technically he *did* run six laps. I could report back to Mrs. Yan and tell her he had run all six laps.