

Writing Is Wonderful

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“Writing is the most wonderful and free thing I found! I am going to write down every interesting thing I met, I thought and I did here. This is so exciting!” After searching every corner in my home, I finally found the diary book covered by a gauzy layer of dust on the bottom of my “memory box” in the broom closet. This is the very first sentence I wrote on the first yellowish page of my first diary. I touched my childish handwriting with my fingertips; as if I could truly feel how joyful this was at the moment I wrote this sentence down. I remembered the drastic change in me after a long tough time on writing. It also reminds me that I was so lucky to meet Julia who eliminated my hatred and misunderstanding of writing and encouraged me to take my first step to write joyfully.

About a few years ago, I was such a normal student. Since we started writing short journals in school and as homework, I had hated it for a long time. Most of the time I stared at the plain paper and played with the pen but could not write any words. One day something happened, however, that completely changed my perspective of writing.

It was a rainy and damp day. The day was awful for me not just because of the unpleasant weather but also because it was the first day of the semester, which meant I needed to hand in all my homework for the holiday, including the journal notebook. I would comment my journals were just a combination of words, but were not meaningful and interesting at all.

I missed the time to hand in the notebook in the classroom, so I had to go to the teacher’s office to hand in it directly to my teacher, Mrs. Wang. The corridor from the classroom to the office seemed to be longer. It was raining outside, the sky was dark, and the shaking shadow of leaves from the outside of the windows cast to the floor. I walked slowly, looking down at the floor, and was worried about the reaction of my teacher after seeing those messy journals.

When I directly walked to the table that I expected to be Mrs. Wang’s, I was surprised to see a totally new face there. With the black curly hair falling over her shoulder, she noticed me with her smiling eyes under a pair of vintage grey glasses. She found I was confused and talked first, “Hi, are you looking for Mrs. Wang? She can’t come to school because of an education conference for 2 weeks. I am Julia and will be your substitute teacher in next half month. What can I help you with?” “She looks too young to be a teacher,” I thought. Suddenly the nervousness and worry were gone with the wind. I gave her my notebook and briefly introduced myself.

The next day, the sun shined again after rain. Julia asked me to meet her after class. The nervousness arose again and my hands were even sticky and wet because I assumed it was about my terrible holiday journals. However, I was surprised again because the first sentence said from Julia was: “I read your journals. You really did a lot of interesting things during the holiday, didn’t you?” “Hum... maybe?” I even wondered if she mixed up me and another person at first. “Of course you did! You did voluntary work in the Plant Park.” I made sure Julia did not get the wrong person, but was still confused about why doing voluntary work was interesting? I just planted some saplings into the soil and watered

them.

Julia didn't get a reply from me, so she continued: "I have never been to the Plant Park, it is far? Being a volunteer is so amazing! How can you be a volunteer there? Where did you plant your trees? What kind of trees did you plant?" She asked so many questions but nothing about how awful my journals are. I was convinced that Julia was just interested in the Plant Park, so I relaxed. I told her every detail in my journals she wanted to know.

Afterward, the topics kept changing. I couldn't remember how many things I shared. The words and attitude of Julia made me feel like chatting with a friend but not a teacher. When I realized it was dark outside, I was surprised once again because Julia said: "See! You really did a lot of amazing things, why don't you write them down. Just treat the notebook as your friend! Then you can make your journals be as attractive as your stories!" I realized she wished to help me on my poor writing. At the same time, I realized if I treat writing as sharing stories with friends, writing was wonderful and not a monster for me anymore. I was so excited that I rushed back home, opened a new diary and wrote down the sentence on the first page as I have shown at the beginning.

Ten years passed, and I still kept the habit to write down the "big" moments in my life. I was having fun when I wrote journals because the paper seemed to be a friend who did always quietly and patiently listen to my experience, happy or sad. I could never forget that warm afternoon when such an inspired conversation happened between Julia and me. It totally changed my attitude on writing.