

晚自习的脚步声：一个被后门身影陪过的学期

初三那年，教室后门的玻璃上每晚都有一个人影。九点十五分前后出现，站两三分钟，滑走，从不进门。我们背地里给他起了个名字，叫后窗。谁也不确定那是不是班主任，因为只看得见半张脸和眼镜的一点反光。

晚自习第二节最难熬。卷子做到第七面，笔速慢下来，心思开始飘。我坐在靠后门那组，余光里玻璃一暗，就知道后窗来了，笔会条件反射地快起来。同桌说破过一回：你笔速变快不是因为会做，是因为怕。我没反驳。怕本身没什么用，但那几分钟里写下的步骤确实工整。

十一月中旬的一个晚上，我趴在卷子上发呆，题没读进去。走廊的脚步声到了后门，没停，绕到走廊尽头，又从窗边折回来。我假装在检查计算，眼角的余光看见玻璃上的人影停得比平时久。过了几分钟，前门轻轻开了一条缝，班主任进来，谁也没看，走到我这一排靠窗的位置，把开了一半的窗户推上了一半，风停了，然后他从原路出去，脚步很轻。他自始至终没走到我桌边，也没提我的名字。但那之后风不再灌着卷子哗啦哗啦响，我把剩下的两面做完了。

第二天早读，他像什么都没发生。我不确定昨晚窗边的身影和推窗的是不是同一个人，也不打算去问。有些注视确认了反而没意思，它的作用就在不确定里：你不知道他什么时候来，所以每个九点十五分都把自己那摊事收拾整齐。

毕业前最后一节晚自习，九点十五分，玻璃上没有影子。我回头看了两次，第二次被同桌说你有病吧。我说不清为什么，就是想确认一下。后来很多年，我在自习室、办公室、深夜的工位上，都会在某些时刻回头看一眼身后。没有人站在那里，但我学会了把背影当成注视——被陪过的人，散场以后还带着那个节奏。

那扇门的玻璃早换了。听说新玻璃上贴了磨砂膜，看不见人影了。我不知道为什么觉得可惜。

Footsteps in the Evening Study Hall: A Semester Kept Company by a Silhouette in the Back Door

In my ninth-grade year, a silhouette appeared on the glass of the classroom back door every evening. It showed up around nine fifteen, stood two or three minutes, slid away, and never came in. Behind his back we gave it a name: the Rear Window. No one was sure it was our homeroom teacher, since you could only see half a face and a glint of glasses.

The second evening study period was the hardest. By the seventh side of the test paper, my pen slowed and my mind drifted. I sat in the row nearest the back door; whenever the glass in my peripheral vision darkened, I knew the Rear Window had arrived, and my pen sped up like a reflex. My deskmate called it out once: your pen speeds up not because you know the answer but because you are scared. I did not argue. Fear itself is useless, but the steps I wrote in those minutes were indeed neat.

One evening in mid-November, I lay flat on the paper in a daze, the questions sliding off me. The footsteps in the corridor reached the back door, did not stop, went to the end of the hall, and came back along the windows. I pretended to check my arithmetic while the silhouette on the glass, out of the corner of my eye, stayed longer than usual. A few minutes later the front door opened a thin crack. Our homeroom teacher came in, looked at no one, walked to the window seat in my row, pushed the half-open window half shut, and the wind stopped. Then he left the way he came, his steps very light. He never reached my desk and never said my name. But after that the wind stopped flapping my paper, and I finished the last two sides.

Next morning at reading time, he acted as if nothing had happened. I am still not sure whether the figure by the window that night and the man who pushed the window shut were the same person, and I do not plan to ask. Some kinds of watching lose their meaning once confirmed; their power lives in the uncertainty: you never know when he will come, so every nine fifteen you straighten up whatever you are doing.

In the last evening study before graduation, at nine fifteen, there was no shadow on the glass. I looked back twice; the second time my deskmate said, are you sick. I could not explain why; I just wanted to check. For years afterward, in study rooms, offices, and late-night desks, I still glance behind me at certain moments. No one stands there, but I learned to treat a silhouette as a gaze. Someone who was kept company carries that rhythm after the show ends.

The glass in that door has long been replaced. They say the new glass is frosted, and no silhouette can be seen through it. I do not know why I find that a pity.