选片大战

十一月一日，星期六，天气晴。

我们家的老传统又开张了：每个星期六晚上，全家一起去电影院。这个传统是爸爸定的，他说一家人坐在一起看电影，比什么都难得。可是传统里最麻烦的一关是选片，我们家管它叫选片大战。

晚饭后大战开始。爸爸把手机往桌上一放，说他要看打仗的电影，银幕上炸点一响他浑身舒坦。妈妈立刻反对，说要看一部讲两口子过日子的文艺片，妈妈觉得那种电影有味道。我举双手提议看科幻片，讲一个宇航员在月球上种菜的故事，海报上那棵小绿苗看得我心痒。三个人各说各的，谁也不让谁，最后爸爸拿出我们的老办法，举手表决，少数服从多数，但是每人有一次当导演的机会，轮到谁谁说了算。这个月轮到我，我赢了。爸爸装作很痛心，妈妈笑着说，行，听孩子的。

到了电影院，我挑了中间偏后的一排，位置是我早就研究好的。灯一暗，宇航员在月球上种下第一颗菜，我爸妈坐在我两边，妈妈的头靠在爸爸肩膀上。放到一半，月球上下起了陨石雨，小绿苗差点被砸死，宇航员用身体盖住它。我听见旁边抽鼻子的声音，扭头一看，居然是爸爸。爸爸发现我看他，赶紧清了清嗓子，说眼里进东西了。我忍住笑，没拆穿他。

回家的路上，讨论会正式开始，这是我们家看完电影必有的节目。爸爸说宇航员傻，明明可以躲，非要用身体盖。妈妈说那不是傻，那是人心里最软的地方。轮到我了，我说我觉得那棵苗就是宇航员的家人，在月球上种菜，就是把家搬到了那么远的地方。爸爸想了半天，说这个说法他没想过。妈妈拍拍我的头，说下个月导演换成她，要看那部文艺片，我们都不许哭。

睡前我在日记本上写：选片大战我赢了，可是最输不起的是爸爸，他哭得比谁都响。下个月换妈妈当导演，我已经开始期待了。

The Great Movie Selection War

November first, Saturday, sunny.

The old tradition of our family is open again: every Saturday evening the whole family goes to the cinema together. My father set this tradition. He said a family sitting together watching one film is rarer than anything. But the most troublesome round inside the tradition is choosing the film, and in our family we call it the great selection war.

After dinner the war began. My father put his phone on the table and said he wanted a war film, where the explosions on the screen make his whole body feel relaxed. My mother objected at once. She wanted a quiet film about a married couple living their daily life, which she finds full of flavor. I raised both hands for a

science fiction film, the story of an astronaut growing vegetables on the moon, and the little green sprout on the poster made my heart itch. The three of us argued one by one and nobody gave in. At last my father brought out our old method: a show of hands, the minority follows the majority, but each person gets one turn as the director, and on that turn the director decides. This month it was my turn, and I won. My father pretended his heart was broken. My mother laughed and said fine, we listen to the child.

At the cinema I chose a row in the middle toward the back, a seat I had studied long before. When the lights went down and the astronaut planted the first vegetable on the moon, my parents sat on my two sides, and the head of my mother leaned on the shoulder of my father. Halfway through, a rain of meteor stones fell on the moon, and the little green sprout was almost crushed. The astronaut covered it with his own body. I heard a sniffling sound beside me, turned my head, and it was my father. When he noticed me looking, he quickly cleared his throat and said something had entered his eye. I held back my laughter and did not expose him.

On the way home the discussion meeting officially began, a program that always follows every film in our family. My father said the astronaut was foolish, he could clearly hide, yet he covered the plant with his body. My mother said that is not foolishness, that is the softest place in a human heart. When it was my turn, I said I think that sprout is the family of the astronaut, and growing vegetables on the moon means moving your home to such a far place. My father thought for a long while and said he had never seen it that way. My mother patted my head and said next month the director becomes her, and we are all forbidden to cry during her art film.

Before bed I wrote in my diary: I won the selection war, but the worst loser is my father, who cried louder than anyone. Next month mother directs, and I am already looking forward to it.

爸爸妈妈一起笑的那两个小时

十一月八日，星期六，天气多云。

先说一句心里话：最近我们家有点冷。爸爸妈妈好像吵了一架，谁也不理谁，吃饭的时候只有筷子碰碗的声音。我想了三天，决定用我们家的老办法，看电影。我拿攒了半年的零花钱买了三张票，晚饭的时候把三张票摆在桌子中间，说，星期六晚上，电影，必须去，票不退。妈妈看了我一眼，又看了一眼爸爸，先点了头。

选片的时候三个人都没意见，看一部喜剧片，讲一个糊涂爸爸把女儿的家长会搞成一团糟的故事。进场的时候爸爸妈妈隔着一个我坐下，中间像隔着一道河。电影一开始，糊涂爸爸穿着拖

鞋冲进学校，把校长的车开进了花坛，影厅里笑成一片，我听见爸爸妈妈都在笑，可是他们不一起笑，各笑各的。直到那一段：糊涂爸爸扮成老师上台讲话，把女儿的名字念成了自己小时候的外号，全场大笑，妈妈笑出了声，扭头看爸爸，爸爸也正好看过来，两个人对视着笑，谁也没躲开。我在中间数了数，整场电影，他们一起笑了七次。

电影后半段，糊涂爸爸蹲在校门口跟女儿道歉，说自己小时候没有爸爸，所以不知道怎么当爸爸。影厅安静下来。我感觉到左边有纸巾的声音，是妈妈。妈妈的眼睛看向银幕，手却轻轻碰了碰我的手背，像是在跟我说什么，又像是在说给爸爸听。

回家的路上，讨论会没有开，气氛跟平时不一样。我先开口，说那个糊涂爸爸真让人生气。妈妈还没说话，爸爸先接了，他说，生气归生气，那个人心里是爱孩子的。妈妈沉默了一会儿，说，回家煮汤圆吧，三个人一起煮。我在旁边偷偷在心里给自己鼓掌。路过路灯的时候，我看见妈妈挽着爸爸的胳膊，爸爸的耳朵红了。

睡前我写日记，写得很慢。我在最后写：电影是别人拍的，笑是银幕给的，可是回家路上那一句一起煮汤圆，是我们自己挣回来的。这个零花钱，花得值。

The Two Hours Mom and Dad Laughed Together

November eighth, Saturday, cloudy.

First, an honest word: our home has been cold lately. My parents seem to have had a quarrel, and neither speaks to the other. At dinner the only sound was chopsticks touching bowls. I thought for three days and decided to use the old method of our family, going to the cinema. I bought three tickets with the pocket money I had saved for half a year, and at dinner I placed them in the middle of the table and said, Saturday evening, the film, attendance is compulsory, tickets are nonrefundable. My mother looked at me, then at my father, and nodded first.

Choosing the film took no argument at all, a comedy about a muddled father who turns the parent meeting of his daughter into a disaster. When we entered the hall, my parents sat with me between them, as if a river ran between the two of them. As the film began, the muddled father rushed into the school wearing slippers and drove the car of the principal into a flower bed, and the whole hall laughed. I heard both of my parents laughing, but not together, each on their own. Then came the part where the muddled father dressed up as a teacher and read the name of his daughter as the childhood nickname of himself. The hall exploded. My mother laughed out loud and turned toward my father, and my father was already looking at her. They laughed face to face, and neither looked away. I counted in the middle: in the whole film, they laughed together seven times.

In the second half, the muddled father squatted at the school gate and apologized

to his daughter, saying he had no father when he was small, so he did not know how to be one. The hall went quiet. On my left I heard the sound of a tissue. It was my mother. Her eyes stayed on the screen, but her hand lightly touched the back of my hand, as if saying something to me, or perhaps saying it for my father to hear.

On the way home there was no discussion meeting, and the air was different from usual. I spoke first and said the muddled father was really annoying. Before my mother answered, my father picked it up, saying angry as he was, that man loves his child from the bottom of his heart. My mother was silent for a while, then said, let us go home and cook rice balls, the three of us together. Beside them I clapped for myself in my heart. Under a streetlight I saw my mother holding the arm of my father, and the ears of my father turned red.

Before bed I wrote this diary very slowly. My last line read: the film was made by others, the laughter came from the screen, but that one sentence on the way home, cooking rice balls together, was earned by us ourselves. Every coin of that pocket money was worth it.

爷爷坚持看那部黑白电影

十一月十五日，星期六，天气小雨。

这个月轮到我爷爷当我们家的电影导演。爷爷今年七十三岁，眼睛花，耳朵倒灵。他宣布选片结果的时候我差点跳起来，他居然选了一部黑白老电影，讲一个老铁路扳道工守着一座小站等一班车的故事。海报都发黄了，人物走路慢，说话也慢。我心里想，这有什么好看的，还不如看赛车。

进了影院我才发现，看这部片子的不只有我们一家，前排坐着两个白头发的老奶奶，后排还有一个戴帽子的老爷爷。灯一暗，银幕上雪花一样的旧胶片转起来。开头我果然坐不住，扭来扭去，打了三个哈欠。可是放到中间，老扳道工每天给小站那棵老槐树浇水，浇了三十年，最后那班车终于进站了，车门打开，下来的人却是一张照片。老扳道工把照片抱在怀里，站在原地，雪落了他一身。我的眼泪不知道为什么自己下来了，擦都擦不赢。我偷偷看爷爷，爷爷坐得笔直，眼睛一眨不眨，帽檐压得很低。

回家的路上，讨论会是爷爷主持的。我问他，那班车为什么下来一张照片。爷爷没有马上回答，他把伞往我这边偏了偏，才开口讲了一件我从来没听过的事。他十六岁那年，在生产队看的就是这部电影，是全村人围着一块白布看的。那年他爷爷，也就是我的太爷爷，出远门没有回来。爷爷说，那时候他不懂，为什么有人抱着照片不撒手，如今他懂了。雨打在伞上，我和妈妈都不说话。爷爷又说，今天再看，他还是哭，同一个电影，隔五十年，还能跟同一个人说话，这就是好电影。

我在回家路上一直在想那棵浇了三十年的槐树。以前我觉得慢吞吞的东西都没意思，现在我有点不好意思了。我跟爷爷说，下个月我还陪他看，他挑的片子我都看。爷爷的耳朵很灵，他听见了，装作没听见，脚步轻快了很多。

睡前我写日记，把太爷爷的事也写进去了。写完我加了一句：今天影院里我哭得最凶，爷爷哭得最轻，可是爷爷哭了五十年。

Grandpa Insisted on the Black and White Film

November fifteenth, Saturday, light rain.

This month it is the turn of my grandpa to be the film director of our family. My grandpa is seventy-three this year, his eyes are weak, but his ears are sharp. When he announced his choice I almost jumped up. He had chosen an old black and white film, the story of an old railway switchman guarding a small station while waiting for one train. The poster has turned yellow, the characters walk slowly, and they speak slowly too. In my heart I thought, what is there to enjoy in this, it is worse than a racing film.

Only after entering the hall did I notice that our family was not the only one there. Two white-haired grandmas sat in the front row, and in the back sat one grandpa wearing a cap. When the lights went down, the old film, speckled like snow, began to turn on the screen. At the start I truly could not sit still, twisting and turning, yawning three times. But halfway through, the old switchman waters an old locust tree at his small station every day, and has watered it for thirty years. At last that train finally arrives, the door opens, and the person stepping down is a photograph. The old switchman holds the photograph against his chest and stands where he is, while snow covers his whole body. My tears came down on their own and I could not wipe them fast enough. I stole a look at my grandpa. He sat straight, his eyes not blinking once, the brim of his cap pulled low.

On the way home the discussion meeting was hosted by my grandpa. I asked him why a photograph stepped down from that train. He did not answer right away. He tilted his umbrella toward my side first, then began to tell me something I had never heard. When he was sixteen, the film he watched in the production team was exactly this one, shown to the whole village on a piece of white cloth. That year his own grandpa, my great-grandfather, went on a long journey and never came back. My grandpa said that back then he did not understand why someone would hold a photograph and refuse to let go, and now he understands. Rain beat on the umbrella, and neither my mother nor I spoke. My grandpa added that watching it again today he still cries, and that one film, fifty years apart, can still speak to the same person, and that is what a good

film is.

All the way home I kept thinking of that locust tree watered for thirty years. I used to think anything slow was boring, and now I feel a little ashamed. I told my grandpa that next month I will still keep him company, and every film he chooses I will watch. The ears of my grandpa are sharp. He heard me, pretended he did not, and his steps grew much lighter.

Before bed I wrote this diary, and I wrote the story of my great-grandfather into it too. At the end I added one line: today in the cinema I cried the loudest, and my grandpa cried the softest, but my grandpa has been crying for fifty years.