和父亲同场的那两个小时

父亲提出去看电影的那个晚上，我正在写作业。他说得随意，像顺口提起明天的天气：听说有一部讲船长的片子，要不要去看。我愣了几秒，说好。我们已经很久没有一起做过一件与学习无关的事了。

影厅里人不多。灯灭下来，黑暗把父子两个人放在同一排座位上，肩膀离着一个拳头的距离。银幕亮了。海面在光里起伏，船长驾船穿过风暴，镜头扫过他留在岸上的家。光一波一波推过来，明明灭灭，落在父亲脸上。我偏头看了一眼——他的鬓角什么时候白了这么多，光一照，根根分明。他盯着银幕，嘴唇微微动着，像在替船长数浪头。那一刻我没在看电影，我在看我父亲看电影的样子。

最打动我的不是风暴，是船长回不了家的那场戏。他站在甲板上，隔着海望岸上，什么也没说。我听见旁边轻轻吸了一下鼻子，很轻，像怕被人发现。我没有转头。黑暗的好处就在这里：它替大人保守眼泪，就像小时候它替我保守过一样。

散场出来，夜里风凉。我们沿着河堤往前走，谁都不说话。路灯把两个人的影子拉长又缩短。平时这种沉默会让我们各自掏出手机，那晚却没有。我猜我们心里都还装着那片海。走了很远，父亲忽然说，那个船长，家里人都等他，他还在那船上磨蹭。他说得很慢，不像在说电影。我嗯了一声，喉咙有点紧。他是不是也想起，他常常在船上待到很晚才回家。

到家楼下，父亲说明天还有一场，把你妈也带来。我说好。上楼时我回头，他还站在路灯下看我。原来那两个小时改变的东西，要到散场之后沿着河堤走的那段路上才慢慢显出来。电影是别人的人生，散场后我们带着它，回去修我们自己那艘迟迟不进港的船。

The Two Hours I Shared with My Father

The evening my father suggested a movie, I was doing homework. He asked casually, as if mentioning tomorrow's weather: there was a film about a captain, would I like to see it. I froze for a few seconds, then said yes. It had been a long time since we did anything together that had nothing to do with schoolwork.

The hall was not full. When the lights went down, the darkness placed the two of us in the same row, our shoulders a fist's width apart. The screen lit up. The sea heaved in the light; the captain steered his ship through a storm, and the camera swept past the family he had left ashore. Wave after wave of light rolled over us, bright and dim, falling on my father's face. I stole a glance - since when had his temples gone so white, every strand sharp under the light. He stared at the screen, lips moving faintly, as if counting the waves for the captain. In that moment I was not watching the film. I was watching my father watch a film.

What moved me most was not the storm but the scene where the captain could not go home. He stood on deck, looking across the sea to the shore, saying nothing. I heard

a soft sniff beside me, very quiet, as if afraid of being noticed. I did not turn my head. This is the mercy of darkness: it keeps an adult's tears safe, the way it once kept mine safe when I was small.

After the show, the night wind was cool. We walked along the river embankment, neither of us speaking. Street lamps stretched our shadows long, then short. Usually this kind of silence would send each of us to a phone, but not that night. I think we both still carried that sea inside. After a long walk, my father suddenly said, that captain - his whole family waits for him, and he still dawdles on that ship. He spoke slowly, not really talking about the movie. I murmured yes, my throat tight. Had he remembered, too, that he often stays on his own ship until late before coming home.

At the foot of our building, he said there was another show tomorrow, bring your mother along. I said good. Going upstairs, I looked back; he still stood under the street lamp, watching me. What those two hours changed only showed itself slowly, on the walk home along the river after the credits. The film was someone else's life; after it ended, we carried it back to repair our own ship that keeps refusing to enter port.