散场时那盏突然亮起的灯

灯是在片尾字幕走完的那一刻亮起来的。毫无预备，唰一下，整个影厅亮得像教室的日光灯。我眯起眼，看见周围的人都还坐在原位，脸上挂着没来得及收的表情，被这灯光照得无所遁形。前排的男生用手背快速抹了一下眼睛，旁边女生假装找包，把纸巾捏成一团。大家都一样，刚从同一个故事里被拽出来，还没站稳。

我坐在那里没动，脑子里全是那个送信的少年。电影里他十六岁，替受伤的老交通员送一封要命的信，翻过两座雪山，雪埋到膝盖。最后一场戏，他把信送到，回头想找那个一路上给他烤红薯的同伴，同伴已经留在了第二座山上。少年站在山口，风把他的衣角吹得直抖，他没有哭出声，只是把那个没吃完的半块红薯从怀里掏出来，捧着，像捧着一样很重的东西。灯一亮，那半块红薯从我脑子里退走了，可它压过的地方还沉。

走出影院，商场里人声轰一下涌过来，音乐轻快得刺耳。我顺着扶梯往下走，忽然想起阿远。上学期他转学去外地，走的前一天我们在球场边坐了一下午，谁都没说舍不得，放学他还把水壶留给了我，说借你用。我连一句再见都没好好说。电影里那个少年至少还能捧着半块红薯站在山口，我连一个站着的地方都没有。

到家我摊开信纸。写给阿远的，写那个水壶还在我的书架上，写我们坐过的那条球场边长凳今年刷了新漆，写我看了一部电影，里面有个少年没能跟同伴好好告别，我不想学他。写了三页，不打算写得多好，只把该说的说出来。

有些电影散场了，人却走不出来，因为银幕上的故事替你说破了自己那件没说出口的事。灯光亮起的那一刻不是结束，它把影院里的事押到你回家的路上，逼你接着往下演。我封好信，明天去寄。散场之后，我自己的那一幕，才刚开始。

The Light That Flipped On at the End

The lights flipped on the moment the end credits finished. No warning - whoosh - the whole hall bright as the fluorescent tubes in a classroom. I squinted and saw everyone still in their seats, faces wearing expressions they had not had time to fold away, exposed under the light. A boy in the front row wiped his eyes quickly with the back of his hand; the girl beside him pretended to search her bag, crumpling a tissue. We were all the same: just dragged out of the same story, not yet steady on our feet.

I sat without moving, my head full of the boy who carried the letter. In the film he was sixteen, carrying a life-or-death message for the wounded old courier, over two snow mountains, snow up to his knees. In the last scene he delivered the letter, turned to find the companion who had roasted sweet potatoes for him along the way, and learned that companion was already buried on the second mountain. The boy stood at the pass, wind whipping his coat hem. He did not cry out loud; he only took the half-eaten roasted sweet potato from his bosom and held it with both hands, as if

holding something very heavy. When the lights came on, that half potato retreated from my mind, but the place it had pressed on was still heavy.

Walking out of the cinema, the roar of the shopping mall surged in, the piped music unbearably cheerful. I rode the escalator down and suddenly thought of Ayuan. Last term he transferred to a city far away. The day before he left, we sat by the court all afternoon, neither saying we would miss each other; at dismissal he left me his water bottle, saying, borrow it to you. I never even said goodbye properly. The boy in the film could at least stand at the mountain pass holding half a sweet potato; I did not even have a place to stand.

Home, I spread out letter paper. A letter to Ayuan: the bottle is still on my shelf; the bench by the court where we sat got a coat of new paint this year; I saw a film where a boy failed to say a proper goodbye to his companion, and I do not want to imitate him. Three pages long, not written well, only saying what needed saying.

Some films end yet you cannot leave them, because the story on the screen says aloud the thing you never said. The instant the lights rise is not the end; it escorts what happened in the hall onto your way home and makes you keep acting. I sealed the letter; tomorrow I mail it. After the show let out, my own scene has only just begun.