他问我，狼爸爸为什么要走

选片是儿子定的。他在商场大屏前看了一段预告片，回回都要看那部讲狼家庭的片子。我有点犹豫，预告片里有个捕兽夹的镜头，怕他夜里睡不好。他补了一句，我可以在害怕的时候抓你的手。这句话把我说服了。买票的时候他还照顾我，说要是我觉得吓人，可以闭眼。结果进场以后，闭眼的人一直是我旁边的他。

片子演到狼爸爸离群去找食物，踩进捕兽夹，在雪地里挣。儿子没哭，就是身子往我这边挪，手攥住我的衣角，凑到我耳朵边上，用很小很小的声音问：大人为什么非要走？我一下子没准备好。我想说为了找吃的，又觉得太干；想说不会死的，又觉得敷衍。最后只说了一句：因为家里有小狼在等。他想了想，没再问，手一直没松开。过了几秒他又小声补了一句，那我们也不走散。我说好，他这才把身子坐正，继续看银幕。

散场往停车场走，他还在想这件事。等电梯的时候他忽然说，狼爸爸其实没迷路，它记得回来的路，因为它有家要回。我说对，它一路都在记路。他又补了一句，那它下次出去，小狼可以在山头上看它回来。电梯到了，他先出去，回头等我，那个样子像他也在负责带我回家。停车场离家不远，他一路踢着小石子，忽然说，他长大要养一只狗，放学第一件事就是回家陪它。我顺着他的话往下问，他说，因为它在家等我，就像小狼等狼爸爸。

晚上给他刷牙，他含含糊糊又说，明天还想知道狼妈妈去哪了。我忽然明白，孩子看一部电影，接住的东西跟大人完全不同。我盯着剧情有没有危险，他盯着离别和回家。陪孩子看电影，我得蹲下来，从他那个高度再看一遍。他问出口的那些问题，不是麻烦，是他把电影里最要紧的地方指给我看。

He Asked Me Why the Father Wolf Had to Leave

My son decided the film. He watched a trailer on the big screen in the mall and insisted on the one about a wolf family. I hesitated, because the trailer held a shot of a steel trap, and I feared he would sleep badly. He added that he could grab my hand whenever he was scared. That convinced me. While buying tickets he looked after me too, saying I could close my eyes if I found it frightening. Once inside, the one closing his eyes was him, beside me.

The film reached the part where the father wolf left the pack for food and stepped into a trap, struggling in the snow. My son did not cry. He just shifted toward me, gripped the hem of my coat, leaned to my ear, and asked in a very small voice: why do grown-ups have to leave? I was not ready. I wanted to say it was for food, but that felt dry; I wanted to say he would not die, but that felt careless. In the end I said only: because little wolves are waiting at home. He thought about it, asked nothing more, and never let go. A few seconds later he added in a whisper: then we will not get separated either. I said all right, and only then did he sit up straight and keep watching the screen.

After the film, walking to the parking lot, he was still on it. Waiting for the elevator he suddenly said: the father wolf did not get lost after all; he remembered the road back, because he had a home to return to. I agreed, saying he had been marking the road the whole way. He added that next time, the little wolf could watch from the hilltop for his return. The elevator arrived, he stepped out first, and looked back to wait for me, looking as if he too were responsible for taking me home. The parking lot was not far from home. Kicking small stones along the way, he suddenly said that when he grew up he would keep a dog, and the first thing after school would be to go home and stay with it. I followed his thought and asked why. He said, because it waits for me at home, like the little wolf waiting for the father wolf.

At night, brushing his teeth, he mumbled that tomorrow he wanted to know where the mother wolf had gone. It struck me then that what a child catches from a film is completely different from what adults watch for. I scan the plot for danger; he watches parting and coming home. To watch a film with a child I have to crouch down and see it again from his height. The questions he asks are not trouble; they are him pointing out the most important places in the film.