第三排的那包纸巾

那是我第一次一个人进电影院。妈妈加班，给我买了票，叮嘱我看完了在门口别乱跑。我挑了一场动画片，票在第五排，座位旁边空着，左边第三排坐着一个阿姨，一个人，腿边放着一个买菜的小拉车。

片子演到一半，银幕上的小女孩背着书包走到村口，踮着脚往路的尽头看。电话里奶奶说，妈妈今年又不回来了。小女孩哦了一声，把手机还给奶奶，转身跑回家，跑到一半蹲在草垛边上，肩膀一耸一耸，没哭出声。影厅里静得很，我鼻子一酸，眼泪自己就下来了。我吓一跳，赶紧用手背抹，越抹越多，眼镜都蒙了一层雾。

这时候，一包纸巾从左边递过来，递到我手边就停住了。我扭头，是那个阿姨。她没说话，也没看我，眼睛还盯着银幕，手却把纸巾往我手里塞了塞。我接过来，说了声谢谢，声音哑得不像自己的。她这才转过头，帮我扶正歪掉的眼镜，说：片子好，哭不丢人。

我擤了两下，把纸巾攥在手里。阿姨接着看她的电影，好像刚才什么都没发生。散场时人流往出口走，我把那包纸巾放回她座位扶手上，说了第二声谢谢。她摆摆手：留着擦吧，外面风大。

后来妈妈接我，问我片子好不好看。我说好看，还讲了纸巾的事。妈妈问：那个阿姨长什么样？我想了想，说记不清脸了，只记得她递纸巾的手，指头上有冻疮的疤。妈妈没再问。那包纸巾我后来没用完，一直放在书桌抽屉里。每次看到它我就想起那句话：片子好，哭不丢人。陌生人的善意原来是这样，它不问你叫什么，不问你为什么哭，它只在你最需要的时候递过来，然后像什么都没发生一样，继续看它的电影。

The Tissue Pack in Row Three

That was the first time I walked into a cinema alone. My mother had to work overtime, so she bought me the ticket and told me to wait at the entrance after the film, not to wander off. I picked a cartoon. My seat was in row five, empty beside me, and in row three on my left sat a woman, alone, with a small shopping trolley at her feet.

Halfway through, the little girl on the screen walked to the edge of the village with her schoolbag, rose on her toes, and looked down the empty road. Over the phone, grandma said mother would not come back this year either. The girl said only one syllable, handed the phone back, turned, and ran home; halfway there she squatted beside a stack of straw, shoulders shaking, making no sound. The hall was very quiet. My nose stung, and the tears came on their own. I was startled and wiped with the back of my hand, which only made more come, and the glasses fogged over.

Then a pack of tissues was passed from the left and stopped at my hand. I turned. It was that woman. She said nothing, did not even look at me, her eyes still on the

screen, yet her hand pushed the pack a little deeper into mine. I took it and managed a thank you, my voice hoarse in a way I did not recognize. Only then did she turn, straightened my crooked glasses on my face, and said: It is a good film, and crying is no shame.

I blew my nose twice and kept the tissue in my fist. The woman went back to her film as if nothing had happened. When the crowd moved toward the exit, I set the pack back on the arm of her seat and said thank you a second time. She waved her hand: Keep it. The wind outside is strong.

Later my mother picked me up and asked whether the film was good. I said it was, and told her about the tissues. She asked: What did that woman look like. I thought hard and said I could not remember her face, only the hand that passed the pack, with scars of chilblains on the fingers. My mother asked nothing further. The pack is still in my desk drawer, half full. Every time I see it, I hear that line again: It is a good film, and crying is no shame. Kindness from a stranger is like this: it does not ask your name, does not ask why you cry; it simply reaches over at the moment you need it most, then goes back to watching its own film as if nothing had happened.

递纸巾的那只手

我本来是去躲清净的。家里吵了一晚上，我拿了票就出门，随便进了一场动画片，想着看看小孩怎么笑，自己也松快松快。坐下才发现旁边是个小学生，一个人，座位号第五排七座，他坐七座，我坐三排，隔着一排空座，斜对着他。

片子演到小女孩在村口等妈妈，等来一句今年又不回来。我听见身后有吸鼻子的声音，越来越响。我斜眼看，是那孩子，眼泪顺着眼镜的边往下淌，他越抹越多，眼镜歪在鼻梁上，人往座位里缩，恨不得把自己藏进椅背。

我手边正好有一包纸巾，超市打折买的，塑料壳都还没拆。我捏着那包纸巾，忽然犹豫起来：给不给？现在的家长都教孩子别理陌生人，我要是搭话，孩子会不会吓着。银幕上小女孩跑过草垛，那孩子的哭声压不住了，闷闷的，像怕被人听见。

我把纸巾递过去，停在他手边，不多说一句。他扭头接了，哑着嗓子说谢谢。我这才转头看他，帮他把眼镜扶正，说了句：片子好，哭不丢人。他擤了鼻子，攥着纸巾，肩膀松下来，重新看向银幕。

后半段我看不太进去，总斜着眼看他。他哭完那一小阵，居然笑了，银幕上小女孩的妈妈提前回了家，站在院子门口。他笑的时候露出豁了的门牙。

散场时他把那包纸巾放回我座位扶手上，说了第二声谢谢。我摆手让他留着，外面风大。走

出影院，我在台阶上站了一会儿。家里那点吵，忽然不算什么了。我想起他放回纸巾时认真的样子，像在完成一件顶顶要紧的事。原来被需要是这样的：一包没拆封的纸巾，一句不丢人，就能把一个孩子的晚上接住。我把手插进口袋，往家走，脚步比来时轻。

The Hand That Passed the Tissues

I had gone out to escape the noise. The family had argued all evening, so I bought a ticket and left, dropping into a cartoon at random, thinking I would watch children laugh and loosen something in myself. Only after sitting down did I notice a schoolboy nearby, alone, seat seven in row five, while I sat in row three, one empty row between us, angled toward him.

The film reached the part where the little girl waits at the edge of the village for her mother and receives the news that she is not coming this year either. I heard sniffling behind me, growing louder. I glanced sideways. It was the boy, tears running down the rim of his glasses, wiping and making it worse, the glasses sliding crooked on his nose, his body shrinking into the seat as if he wanted to hide inside the chair back.

There happened to be a pack of tissues beside me, bought on sale at the supermarket, the plastic still unopened. I held it and suddenly hesitated: pass it or not. Parents these days teach children to ignore strangers. If I spoke, would the boy be frightened. On the screen the girl ran past the straw stacks, and the muffled crying behind me could no longer be held down, quiet because he feared being heard.

I passed the pack and let it stop at his hand, saying nothing extra. He turned, took it, and managed a hoarse thank you. Only then did I look at him, straightened the glasses on his face, and said: It is a good film, and crying is no shame. He blew his nose, kept the tissue in his fist, his shoulders dropped, and he faced the screen again.

I hardly saw the second half, glancing sideways the whole time. After the crying passed, he actually laughed, when the mother on the screen came home early and stood at the gate of the yard. His laugh showed a chipped front tooth.

At the end he placed the pack back on the arm of my seat and said thank you a second time. I waved him off, telling him to keep it, the wind outside being strong. I stood on the cinema steps for a while afterward. The quarrel at home suddenly did not weigh so much. I kept seeing the solemn way he set the pack down, like completing a matter of great importance. So this is what it means to be needed: one unopened pack of tissues and one line about no shame can catch an evening for a child. I put my hands in my pockets and walked home, my steps lighter than on the way here.

一包纸巾的自述

我是一包纸巾，塑料壳的，十二抽。我在超市打折区躺了半个月，标签从八块降到五块五，最后被一个买菜的女人拿起来，扔进她的小拉车。我以为我的一生就是在厨房里擦灶台，没想到那天晚上，她带我进了电影院。

影院黑下来之前，她把我放在座位扶手上。她看银幕，我看前排的椅背。银幕上有个小女孩，在村口踮脚看路，等一个不回来的人。我听见斜对面传来吸鼻子的声音。是一个戴眼镜的小学生，眼泪把眼镜弄得起雾，他用手背抹，抹得满脸都是，人越缩越小。

我想帮忙。一包纸巾多想帮忙啊。可我躺在扶手上，动不了。女人斜眼看他，手伸过来，捏住我，又缩回去。我懂她的心思：给不给？孩子会不会怕陌生人？她在座位上犹豫的那十几秒，我觉得比一场电影还长。银幕上小女孩蹲在草垛边，孩子的哭声压不住了，女人终于把我递了过去，停在他手边。

他扭头接住我，哑着嗓子说谢谢。女人帮他把眼镜扶正，说了句我听过最体面的话：片子好，哭不丢人。他把我攥在手心里，热得我的塑料壳都发烫。他抽出一张擤了鼻子，又把我握回去。那一刻我觉得，躺半个月打折区值了。

散场时，他把我放回女人的扶手，放得很正，像交还一件宝贝，又说了第二声谢谢。女人让他留着，外面风大。我以为我又要回厨房了。结果那天夜里，他把我揣在棉袄兜里带回了家，放进书桌抽屉，和几支铅笔、一块橡皮挤在一起。抽屉里黑，可我不难过。我剩下的九张纸，一张也没用过。他舍不得用我。他留着的是那晚的事：一场电影，一个陌生阿姨，一句不丢人。

后来每次他拉开抽屉做功课，看见我，都会停一下，笑一下。我是一包纸巾，十二抽，用掉三张。剩下的九张，是九句没说出口的：别怕哭，别怕陌生人，别怕那个需要被接住的晚上。

Confessions of a Tissue Pack

I am a pack of tissues, plastic shell, twelve sheets. I lay in the discount corner of a supermarket for half a month, my price tag dropping from eight yuan to five and a half, until a woman with a shopping trolley picked me up and dropped me in. I thought my life would be spent wiping kitchen stoves. That evening, she carried me into a cinema instead.

Before the hall went dark, she set me on the arm of her seat. She watched the screen; I watched the chair backs ahead. On the screen stood a little girl at the edge of the village, rising on her toes to watch an empty road, waiting for someone who would not come. From diagonally across came the sound of sniffling. It was a schoolboy in glasses, his lenses fogged by tears, wiping with the back of his hand and smearing his whole face, shrinking smaller and smaller in his seat.

I wanted to help. How a pack of tissues wants to help. But I lay on the armrest, unable to move. The woman glanced at the boy, reached over, gripped me, then drew her hand back. I understood her mind: pass or not. Would the child fear a stranger. Those dozen seconds of her hesitation felt longer than the whole film. On the screen the girl squatted beside the straw, the crying could no longer be contained, and at last the woman passed me over, letting me stop at his hand.

He turned and took me, saying thank you in a hoarse voice. The woman straightened his glasses and said the finest line I have ever heard: It is a good film, and crying is no shame. He held me in his palm, so warm my plastic shell grew hot. He pulled one sheet out for his nose, then closed his fist around me again. In that moment I decided that half a month in the discount corner had been worth it.

At the end, he set me back on the armrest of the woman, squarely, like returning a treasure, and said thank you a second time. She told him to keep me, the wind outside being strong. I thought I was going back to the kitchen. Instead, that night he carried me home in the pocket of his padded jacket and placed me in a desk drawer, squeezed among pencils and an eraser. The drawer is dark, but I am not sad. My remaining nine sheets have never been used. He cannot bear to. What he keeps is that evening: one film, one stranger, one line about no shame.

Later, whenever he opens the drawer to do homework and sees me, he pauses and smiles. I am a pack of tissues, twelve sheets, three used. The nine left are nine unspoken sentences: do not fear crying, do not fear strangers, do not fear the evening when someone needs to be caught.