一张票根的旅行

我是一张电影票，印着明天下午三点，座位六排八座。生我的地方是售票机，那天机器把我吐出来，落进一只汗乎乎的小手。小手把我攥紧，一路狂奔，风把我吹得哗啦响。买我的钱，攒了整整一学期：每周的零花钱，一罐一罐的易拉罐，还有一枚枚捋平的毛票。攒我的孩子不知道，我值的不止两块钱。

第二天下午，小手把我递给检票员，撕开我，把另一半塞回口袋。坐我身旁的是个老头，白衬衫，头发抿得服帖，腰板笔直。银幕亮起来，他比孩子还看得入神。猴子抡棒他笑，小猴子想妈妈，他从兜里掏出手绢按眼睛。孩子装作没看见，递过去一张纸巾。我躺在口袋里，听见老头哑着嗓子说，好看，真好看。

散场时孩子把我从口袋掏出来，对着灯光看。他说，爷爷，这一半我夹进存钱罐，留个纪念。老头捏着自己那一半，半天没说话，末了说，好。当晚我就住进了陶瓷小猪的肚子，里面黑，铺着一层硬币，我睡得踏实。我以为我的一生到此为止，票根嘛，都是这个命。

没想到寒假，老头把我从抽屉里讨了回去，说带回落叶归根。他坐了三小时大巴，把我贴身放在棉袄内兜，贴着胸口，焐了一路。回村他逢人就掏出来：孙子领我看的电影，攒了一学期的钱。村口的老伙计围过来看，他把我的齿边指给人看，说这是售票机咬的，城里的机器。人人笑他，他笑得比谁都大声。

如今我夹在装户口本的红包布包里，和一张结婚证、一张老房契躺在一起。我皱了，字也淡了，可老头每月把它打开晒一次太阳，像看望一个亲戚。我是一张票根，两块钱。可世上再没有第二张票根，像我这样被人当成宝贝。

The Journey of a Ticket Stub

I am a cinema ticket, printed with tomorrow, three in the afternoon, row six seat eight. The place that bore me was the ticket machine. That day it spat me out into a small sweaty hand. The hand gripped me tight and ran all the way, and the wind made me flutter. The money that bought me was saved over a whole school term: weekly pocket money, can after can, and small notes smoothed flat one by one. The boy who saved me did not know that I was worth more than two yuan.

The next afternoon the small hand passed me to the ticket checker, who tore me open and put the other half back into the pocket. Beside him sat an old man in a white shirt, hair combed flat, back ramrod straight. When the screen lit up he watched harder than the child. He laughed when the monkey swung the staff; when the little monkey missed its mother he took out a handkerchief and pressed his eyes. The child pretended not to see and passed over a tissue. I lay in the pocket and heard the old man say in a hoarse voice, good, truly good.

After the show the boy took me out and held me to the light. He said, Grandpa, I

will press this half into my piggy bank, as a keepsake. The old man held his half and said nothing for a long while, then said, good. That night I moved into the belly of the ceramic pig, dark inside, with a layer of coins beneath me, and I slept well. I thought my life ended there. A ticket stub, after all, is born to this fate.

But in winter vacation the old man asked for me back from the drawer, saying he would take me home where roots return to leaves. He sat three hours on a bus, keeping me in the inner pocket of his padded coat against his chest, warmed the whole way. Back in the village he showed me to everyone he met: my grandson took me to a film, saved a whole term for it. Old friends gathered at the village gate, and he pointed to my serrated edge, saying the machine in the city bit this. Everyone laughed at him, and he laughed louder than anyone.

Now I lie pressed inside the red cloth bag with the household register, a marriage certificate, and an old house deed. I am wrinkled and my printing has faded, yet once a month the old man opens the bag to let me see the sun, as if visiting a relative. I am a ticket stub, worth two yuan. But nowhere in the world is there a second stub treasured like a treasure the way I am.