存钱罐变轻的那一天

我和爷爷有个约定：要领他进电影院看一场电影。这约定是暑假定下的。爷爷从乡下来城里，路过人民公园门口的电影院，海报上是一只耍金箍棒的猴子。爷爷看了很久，说他们小时候看露天电影，铺张席子躺在打谷场上。我说，爷爷，我领你进电影院看。爷爷笑：好，我等你。

从那天起我开始攒钱。压岁钱照例交给妈妈保管，我争取到每周两元的零花钱。这两元我一分没花，全塞进存钱罐，一只陶瓷小猪。每晚睡前摇一摇，罐里的声音从稀稀拉拉变得又闷又实，我就喜欢听这个声。周末我还收小区门口的易拉罐，卖了钱跑去小卖部换成纸币，统统喂进猪嘴里。有回同学请我吃冰棍，我摆手说不渴，其实兜里那两元攥出了汗。

秋末存钱罐开了，妈妈帮我数，三十七元五角。我抽出两张纸币，一路跑到电影院。踮着脚站在售票窗口，说今天那场动画片，两张。售票员问第二张给谁。我说给爷爷。票从机器里吐出来还带着温热，我攥着票根跑回家，风灌进领口都不觉得冷。我在楼道里站住，冲家里喊：爷爷，明天下午三点，别忘啦。爷爷在屋里应了一声，拖得长长的。

爷爷看电影那天换了最体面的衬衫，头发用水抿过。影厅里他坐得笔直，像小学生。银幕上猴子抡起金箍棒，他笑得比谁都响；演到小猴子想妈妈，他掏出手绢按眼睛。我装作没看见，把纸巾递过去，就像电影里那个递纸巾的人一样。

出来时爷爷捏着票根，说要带回村给大伙看看。我说，爷爷，下次还领你来。爷爷说，下次我请你。回到家，我看见他把票根夹进装户口本的红包布包里，那是他全屋子最要紧的东西。存钱罐空了，可我心里比什么时候都满。

The Day the Piggy Bank Got Lighter

Grandpa and I have a promise: to take him into a cinema and watch a film together. The promise was made in summer vacation. He came to town from the countryside, and we passed the cinema by the gate of the park of the people. The poster showed a monkey swinging a golden staff. He looked at it for a long time and said that in his boyhood they watched open-air films, lying on mats spread over the threshing ground. I said, Grandpa, I will take you to a cinema. He laughed: good, I will wait for you.

From that day I began to save. My New Year money went to my mother for safekeeping as usual, but I won the right to keep two yuan a week as pocket money. I did not spend a single fen of it; I fed it all into my piggy bank, a little ceramic pig. Every night before bed I shook it, and the sound inside changed from sparse and thin to dull and solid, and I loved that sound. On weekends I also collected cans at the gate of our compound, sold them, ran to the corner shop to change the coins into notes, and put them all into the mouth of the pig. Once a classmate offered me a

popsicle, and I waved him off saying I was not thirsty, while in fact the two yuan in my pocket were being squeezed sweaty in my palm.

In late autumn the piggy bank was opened, and my mother helped me count: thirty-seven yuan and fifty fen. I took out two notes and ran all the way to the cinema. On tiptoe at the ticket window I asked for two tickets for the cartoon showing that day. The clerk asked who the second ticket was for. I said, for my grandpa. The tickets came out of the machine still warm, and I held them close and ran home; the wind poured into my collar and I did not even feel cold. I stopped in the stairwell and shouted toward home: Grandpa, three tomorrow afternoon, do not forget. From inside, Grandpa answered, drawing the sound out long.

On the day we went, Grandpa put on his finest shirt and combed his hair with water. In the hall he sat straight like a schoolboy. When the monkey on the screen swung the golden staff, he laughed louder than anyone; when the film reached the part where the little monkey missed its mother, he took out a handkerchief and pressed it to his eyes. I pretended not to see, and passed him a tissue, just like the person who passes tissues in the films.

Afterwards he held the ticket stub and said he would take it back to the village to show everyone. I said, Grandpa, I will bring you again next time. He said, next time I will treat you. At home I watched him slip the stub into the red cloth bag that held his household register, the most precious things in his whole house. The piggy bank stood empty, yet my heart felt fuller than ever.

老头子的两张票

我到儿子家带孙子，是六月的事。路过电影院，那孩子指着海报上的猴子，又指指我，说：爷爷，我领你看电影。我笑着应了，心里没当真。小孩的话，说过就忘。可我没想到，他把这话当了真，一当就是一个学期。

先发现不对的是他妈妈。她说，爸，咱家这娃邪门，两块钱的辣条舍不得买，钱不知道往哪儿藏。我其实知道。夜里孩子摇存钱罐，咕噜咕噜，我在隔壁听得清楚。周末他拎着袋子收易拉罐，脸晒得黑，回来先把毛票捋平，再塞进猪嘴。我装作没看见，转过身去抹了把眼睛。

我在村里看了一辈子露天电影。布一场幕布，扛条长凳，为占地方跟老伙计抢过位置。散场星星满天，走黑路回家，嘴里还学着戏里的词。进城这些年，我路过那电影院十几回，一次也没进去过。不是不想，是觉得那地方不是给我这号人开的。

秋末那天孩子放学没直接回来。他进门时气喘吁吁，从兜里掏出两张票，双手递到我面前，说：爷爷，明天下午三点，我买好了，两张。票在他手里焐得起了毛边。我接过来，手抖，只好

背过身去看那票上的字，看了三遍。我说好。声音哑了，我赶紧咳嗽两声盖过去。

当晚我翻出压箱底的白衬衫，领子硬硬的那种，又拿热水抿了头发。孩子妈妈笑我：看个动画片，至于吗。我说，你不懂。那孩子躺在床上还念叨明天别迟到。我在门外听着，心里又满又疼。他攒了一学期的钱，就为领我进一趟电影院。这份心，比什么都重。

电影演什么我记不全，只记得那孩子全程坐得笔直，笑得响。演到小猴子想妈妈，我掏手绢按眼睛，他装作没看见，把纸巾递过来。我接了，没说话。散场出来他把票要回去一张，说要夹进他的存钱罐留纪念。我那张，贴身放进装户口本的红包布包里。有人问我那是什么，我就说：这是我孙子给我挣的体面。

Two Tickets in an Old Coat Pocket

I came to the home of my son to look after my grandson in June. Passing the cinema, the boy pointed at the monkey on the poster, then pointed at me, and said: Grandpa, I will take you to a film. I laughed and agreed, and did not take it to heart. The words of children are said and forgotten. But I did not expect that he took it seriously, and kept taking it seriously for a whole school term.

His mother noticed first. She said, look, this child of ours is strange, he will not spend five yuan on spicy strips, and who knows where he hides his money. I actually knew. At night the boy shook his piggy bank, gurgle gurgle, and I heard it clearly through the wall. On weekends he collected cans with a bag, his face tanned, and came home to smooth the small notes flat before feeding them into the mouth of the pig. I pretended not to see, turned away, and wiped my eyes.

In the village I watched open-air films all my life. A cloth screen was hung, a long bench carried, and we once fought an old friend for a good spot. After the show the sky was full of stars, we walked the dark road home, still acting out the lines from the play. These years in the city I passed that cinema more than a dozen times and never went in. Not that I did not want to. I felt that place was not opened for the likes of me.

Late in autumn the boy did not come straight home after school. He came in out of breath, took two tickets from his pocket, and held them out to me with both hands: Grandpa, tomorrow three in the afternoon, I have bought them, two tickets. The tickets had gone fuzzy at the edges from being warmed in his palm. I took them, my hands shook, so I turned my back to read the printing, three times over. I said good. My voice went hoarse, and I covered it with two coughs.

That night I brought out the white shirt at the bottom of my chest, the kind with a stiff collar, and combed my hair with hot water. The mother of the boy laughed at

me: it is only a cartoon, is it worth it. I said, you do not understand. The boy lay in bed still muttering about not being late tomorrow. Listening outside his door, my heart felt both full and aching. He saved money a whole term just to take me into a cinema. Such a heart is heavier than anything.

I cannot recall the whole film. I only remember the boy sitting ramrod straight the entire time, laughing out loud. When the little monkey missed its mother, I took out my handkerchief and pressed my eyes, and he pretended not to see and passed me a tissue. I took it and said nothing. Coming out he asked one ticket back, saying he would keep it in his piggy bank as a memory. My ticket went into the red cloth bag with the household register, close to my things that mattered most. When people ask what it is, I say: this is the dignity my grandson earned for me.

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.