修钟的人不看钟

电影里那座火车站的大钟停了三十年。站长着急，旅客着急，所有人都围着钟面打转，催师傅赶在通车日前把它修好。可那位白发老钟匠从头到尾没有抬头看过那座钟一眼。他把大钟拆成上千个零件，摊在一张旧绒布上，每天只摆弄其中几个，给齿轮上油，给游丝整形，跟每一个零件讲道理。

站长拍着桌子问他到底哪天能修好。老钟匠只回答了一句：钟是修好的，不是催好的。他干活的时候不看进度，不看日历，甚至不看表。徒弟替他上发条试走，他先听声音，再摸摆轮的幅度，差一丝一毫都要拆回去重来。电影放到大半，我几乎忘了那座钟什么时候能走，只记得他的手，稳得像在修一件传家的东西。

银幕灯光亮起来的时候，我第一个想到的却是我自己。

上学期期末，我给自己定了个吓人的目标：前十天把数学错题全过一遍，再背完两本英语词汇。计划表贴得比书桌还大，每天睡前都要盯着表划勾。头三天我还算稳，从第四天起就乱了：错题只来得及看一半，词汇背了后面忘前面。我开始熬夜，熬到十一点半，第二天上课打晃，错得更多。越急越错，越错越急，那几天我做作业的手都是浮的，像有人在我背后不停按快进。

后来数学老师把我叫到办公室，只问了一句：你到底是想学完，还是想划完勾？我愣了半天，答不上来。那句话和电影里老钟匠的话撞在一起——钟是修好的，不是催好的。我一直在盯着自己的钟面：还剩多少天，还剩多少页，却从没低头看过手底下的零件：这道题我到底懂没懂，这个词我到底记牢没有。

老钟匠不是不关心结果。他比谁都希望钟走起来，只是他明白，大钟的准时，藏在每一个小齿轮的转速里。我现在也试着这样安排：把期末的大目标拆成每天的小齿轮，数学每天只吃透两道错题，英语每天只记十五个词，完成就把绒布上的零件归位，不去数还剩多少。头两个星期，做题的速度慢下来，错误率却实实在在往下掉，晚上十点半能睡，白天眼睛是亮的。

电影结尾，那座停了三十年的大钟当当地敲响，全站的人仰头看钟面。老钟匠没有看钟，他低头在收工具，像收摊一样平常。我喜欢这个结尾。它让我相信，把每一个零件修顺的人，迟早会听见自己的钟响。我要做的，就是低下头，跟今天这两个齿轮讲道理。

The Clock Repairman Never Looks at the Clock

In the film, the great clock of the railway station had stood still for thirty years. The station master was anxious, the passengers were anxious, and everybody circled the dial, urging the repairman to finish before the reopening day. But the white-haired old clockmaker never once raised his eyes to look at that clock. He took it apart into more than a thousand pieces, laid them out on an old velvet cloth, worked on only a few of them each day, oiled the gears, straightened the hairspring, and reasoned with every single part.

The station master banged the table and demanded a date. The old man answered

with one line: a clock is repaired, not hurried. While working he watched no progress, no calendar, not even his own watch. When his apprentice wound it for a test run, the old man listened to the sound first, then measured the swing of the balance wheel, and sent anything off by a hair back to the bench for another round. For most of the film I almost forgot when the clock would ever run again; all I remember are his hands, steady as if he were mending an heirloom.

When the lights came up, the first thought that found me was my own.

Last term I set myself a frightening goal: finish all my math mistakes in ten days and memorize two vocabulary books besides. The plan sheet was bigger than my desk, and every night I stared at it to tick the boxes. The first three days held; from the fourth everything slipped. I stayed up until half past eleven, swayed through classes the next day, and made more mistakes. The more anxious I grew, the more errors I made; the more errors I made, the more anxious I grew. My hand floated over the homework like someone behind me pressing fast-forward.

Then my math teacher asked me only one question: do you want to learn it, or do you want to finish ticking boxes? I had no answer. That question collided with the words of the old clockmaker: a clock is repaired, not hurried. I had been staring at my own dial, counting the days and pages left, and never looked down at the parts in my hands: whether I truly understood this problem, whether that word truly stayed.

The old man cared about the result more than anyone; he simply knew that the accuracy of a great clock hides in the turning speed of every small gear. I now split my big goal into daily gears: two math mistakes fully understood a day, fifteen English words a day. When they are done, the parts go back on the cloth, and I do not count what remains. In the first two weeks my pace slowed, yet my error rate fell for real, and I could sleep by ten thirty with bright eyes next morning.

At the end of the film the clock that had slept for thirty years struck, and the whole station looked up at its face. The old clockmaker did not look. He bent over his tools, packing them away like a street vendor closing shop. I love that ending. It makes me believe that the one who keeps every gear smooth will hear his own clock strike in time. My task is simple: bend down and reason with the two gears of today.