笑过之后，全班安静了

上个星期，语文老师用两节课，把《草房子》里秃鹤的故事念给我们全班听。老师念书的声音很好听，念到秃鹤没有头发、全校都笑他、排着队喊他外号的时候，我们班有人先笑了，接着半个班都笑了。我坐在座位上，嘴角也翘着，因为老师念得实在太好玩了。

老师念到帽子那段：杜小康抢走秃鹤的帽子，扔上旗杆，帽子在风里飘，全校仰着头看。我们班笑得更响了，有个男生还学帽子飘的样子晃胳膊。只有靠窗的小晗没有笑。小晗的胳膊上有一块小时候烫的疤，她夏天从来不穿短袖。她把头低下去，盯着自己的课桌。

老师停下来，没有批评笑的同学，接着往下念。她念秃鹤摘下帽子，念笑声反而更大，念汇操演出缺一个光头的兵，秃鹤去演，一遍一遍练，练到动作比谁都标准。念到演出那天全场鼓掌、学校拿了奖、大家喊秃鹤的名字，我们班忽然安静了。

教室里静了几秒，然后不知是谁先拍了一下手，全班都拍起来。老师把书合上，问了我们一个问题：刚才你们笑的时候，是觉得好笑，还是看懂了？没有人回答。那个学帽子飘的男生，把手放到了桌子底下。

下课以后，我看见小晗还低着头。她小声问同桌，我胳膊上的疤，是不是很像秃鹤的头。同桌说，才不像，而且就算像又怎么样，秃鹤后来全校都为他鼓掌。我在旁边听见了，假装整理书包，其实耳朵热得很。

第二天课间，小晗的袖子滑上去，露出了那块疤。有个一年级的小孩盯着看，我刚要开口，是那个男生先转过头，把那个小孩的眼睛拨开了。谁也没说什么，小晗把袖子拉好，可我看见她走路比平时轻快。

读书作业要写读后感，我在本子上写：秃鹤站在舞台上，他其实也给我们全班上了一课。笑别人的人，和鼓掌的人，可以是同一群人。我希望我们班的掌声，以后都用在值得用的地方，用在别人难受的时候忍住的那一下笑上。

After the Laughter, the Whole Class Went Silent

Last week our Chinese teacher spent two class periods reading the story of Bald Crane from Grass House aloud to the whole class. Her reading voice is lovely. When she read how Bald Crane has no hair, how the whole school laughs at him and lines up shouting his nickname, someone in our class laughed first, and then half the class laughed. Sitting at my desk, the corner of my mouth curled up too, because the teacher made it sound so funny.

Then the teacher read the part about the cap: Dou Xiaojun snatched the cap of Bald Crane and threw it onto the flagpole, the cap fluttering in the wind, the whole school looking up. Our class laughed even louder, and one boy even swung his arm to imitate a fluttering cap. Only Xiao Han by the window did not laugh. Xiao Han has a burn scar on her arm from when she was little, and in summer she never wears short

sleeves. She lowered her head and stared at her desk.

The teacher paused, did not scold the laughing students, and went on. She read how Bald Crane took the cap off and the laughter grew louder, how the school play lacked a soldier with a shaved head, how Bald Crane took the role and drilled again and again until his movements were the steadiest of all. When she read how the whole hall applauded on the day of the show, how the school won a prize and everyone shouted the name Bald Crane, our class suddenly went silent.

The room stayed quiet for a few seconds, then someone started clapping and the whole class clapped with them. The teacher closed the book and asked us one question: when you laughed just now, did you think it was funny, or did you understand? Nobody answered. The boy who had imitated the fluttering cap put his hands under his desk.

After class I saw Xiao Han still with her head down. She whispered to her deskmate, does the scar on my arm look a lot like the head of Bald Crane. The deskmate said, not at all, and even if it did, so what, Bald Crane ended up with the whole school applauding him. I heard it from beside them, pretended to tidy my schoolbag, while my ears burned.

The next day at break, The sleeve of Xiao Han slid up and the scar showed. A first grader stared at it. I was about to speak when that same boy turned first and gently pushed the gaze of the little one away. Nobody said anything, and Xiao Han pulled her sleeve down, but I could see her steps were lighter than usual.

The reading homework asked for a response essay, and in my notebook I wrote: Bald Crane standing on the stage actually gave our whole class a lesson too. The people who laugh and the people who applaud can be the same crowd. I hope the applause of our class will from now on go where it is worth giving, and into the laughter one holds back when someone else is hurting.