我看见杜小康的摊子摆到了我们巷口

班级读书会轮到我说《草房子》。老师要求讲一个最打动自己的段落，我选了杜小康。我讲他家那扇红门，讲他从前穿皮袄、戴白手套，讲油麻地的孩子怎样围着他转。讲到货船翻了，教室里安静下来。

我讲芦苇荡。放鸭的爷俩住在芦席窝棚里，芦苇浪一层压一层地响，鸭子受惊飞了，杜小康一个人追进荡深处，脚划破了，鞋陷在泥里。我背这一段的时候，眼前总浮现书里那句：他忽然觉得自己长大了。可我不知道怎么把下一段讲下去，就是校门口摆摊那一段，我卡住了。

我卡住，是因为我一想到那个摊子，就先想起我爸。我爸在巷口开修车铺，去年铺子租期到了，房东涨了一半的租。我爸连着半个月夜里不睡，坐在铺子里抽烟。我妈劝他关了吧，他把烟摁灭，说再撑撑。那阵子我放学绕开巷口走，怕看见我爸蹲在车轮后头的背影。

书里的杜小康，从红门少爷变成看摊的人，全校人背后笑他，他把头抬着，把货摆齐。我爸不是少爷，可他一样是在把日子往起撑的人。我绕开巷口那一个多月，跟我从前嫌练琴难、嫌跑步累，是同一种跑。杜小康连学都失掉了还在摆摊，我爸不过是多撑一把，我凭什么躲。

我把卡住的那一段接着讲完。我讲杜小康的摊子上有橡皮、有尺子，讲他给来买东西的同学多抓一把瓜子，讲他一边看摊一边借同学的课本认字。讲完我问全班：如果摊子摆到你家门口，你会不会绕路走。没人说话。后排有个男生小声说，可能会。老师说，会绕路不丢人，绕完还肯走回来，才要紧。

那天放学我没绕路。我爸正给一辆自行车上链条，手上有油。我书包都没放，蹲过去帮他扶轮子。他愣了一下，说今天怎么没绕远。我说，我看了本书，书里有个看摊的人，看摊不丢人。我爸没接话，可我看见他嘴角动了一下。

后来我爸的铺子没关，房东看我们一家天天早早开门，最后让了两百块。这事书里没写，书里只写杜小康的摊子一直摆着。我现在路过摊子都会进去站一会儿，不买什么，就陪我爸坐两分钟。杜小康教会我的事，我在我爸的修车铺里又学了一遍：撑住，日子是自己扶起来的。

I Saw the Stall of Du Xiaokang Move Into Our Alley

It was my turn to talk about Grass House at the class reading circle. The teacher asked each of us to present the passage that moved us most, and I chose Du Xiaokang. I talked about the red gate of his family, about the fur coat and white gloves he used to wear, about how the children of Youma Village once orbited around him. When I reached the capsized cargo boat, the classroom fell quiet.

I talked about the reed marsh. The father and son herding ducks lived in a hut of reed mats; wave upon wave of reeds bent down with a roaring sound; the startled ducks flew off, and Du Xiaokang chased them alone deep into the marsh, his feet cut, his shoes swallowed by the mud. Reciting that passage, the line from the book kept rising before my eyes: he suddenly felt he had grown up. But I could not find a way into the

next part, the one about the stall before the school gate. I stalled.

I stalled because the moment I thought of that stall, I thought first of my father. My father runs a bicycle repair shop at the mouth of our alley, and last year the lease ran out with the rent raised by half. For half a month he sat up late in the shop smoking, unable to sleep. My mother urged him to close it; he stubbed out his cigarette and said, hold on a little longer. During those weeks I walked home by a detour around the alley, afraid to see the back of my father crouching behind a wheel.

The Du Xiaokang in the book turns from the young master of the red gate into a man minding a stall; the whole school giggles behind his back, and he keeps his head up and his goods in rows. My father is no young master, yet he too is a man propping his days back up. My detour around the alley for over a month was the same running as my old excuses that piano practice was hard and running was tiring. Du Xiaokang keeps his stall even after losing school; my father only has to hold on one more push, and what right have I to hide.

I finished the passage that had stuck me. I talked about the erasers and rulers on the stall of Du Xiaokang, about the extra handful of seeds he slips to classmates who come to buy, about how he minds the stall while borrowing textbooks to learn characters. When I finished I asked the class: if the stall stood at your door, would you take a detour. Nobody spoke. A boy in the back row whispered, probably. The teacher said, taking a detour is no shame; what matters is walking back afterward.

That afternoon I did not detour. My father was putting a chain back on a bicycle, his hands greasy. I dropped nothing, just crouched over to hold the wheel steady for him. He froze for a second and asked why I had not taken the long way today. I said, I read a book, and there is a man minding a stall in it, and minding a stall is no shame. My father did not answer, but I saw the corner of his mouth move.

In the end the shop did not close. Seeing our family open the door early day after day, the landlord finally took two hundred yuan off the rent. The book does not tell this part; the book only says that the stall of Du Xiaokang stayed set up all along. Now whenever I pass the shop I go in and stand a while, buying nothing, just keeping my father company for two minutes. What Du Xiaokang taught me, I learned once more inside the repair shop of my father: hold on, and your days get stood back up by your own hands.