那颗光头，和我的大板牙

班级读书分享会，轮到我上台，我开口第一句是：我读《草房子》，读进去的不是故事，是我自己。台下有人小声笑，我攥紧了书角，接着往下讲。

书里的秃鹤，从一年级起就得不到安静。他生下来头发就掉光，一颗头在太阳底下亮得晃眼。孩子们给他起外号，大人背后叹气，他自己试过所有办法：生发药抹了半瓶，帽子戴了一夏天，头发剃了留、留了剃。他故意在会操里乱动，想让人哪怕恨他，也别当他不存在。读到这里时我喉咙发紧，因为五年级之前，我就是另一个秃鹤。

我门牙突出，外号叫大板牙，一喊全班回头。我学会了捂嘴笑，发言时侧过脸，合影永远站边边。那种日子过久了，人会真的相信自己低人一头。书里写秃鹤夜里一个人对着水缸照自己的头，我夜里也对着镜子掰开嘴唇看过我的牙。我们都在问同一句话：凭什么是我。

可《草房子》最了不起的地方，是它没让秃鹤的头发长出来，也没让他的嘲笑消失。它让汇操那天来了。全校会操，秃鹤演一个光头伪军，他跳得比谁都用力，每一个动作都砸在地上。全场忽然静了，静得能听见风。那阵安静不是施舍，是他一寸一寸挣来的敬意。我在台下读这一段，忽然坐直了：原来对付嘲笑，最好的办法不是求它停，是把自己做成一件让人没法笑的事。

六年级上学期，学校合唱比赛缺报幕的，我举了手。排练时我一开口，台下还是有人憋笑。我没停，把词一句一句砸清楚，比排练任何一遍都用力。正式演出那晚，我报完最后一个节目，礼堂安静了两秒，然后掌声起来。那两秒的安静，和秃鹤挣来的那阵安静，是同一个东西。下台时我腿在抖，可我的背是直的。

分享会最后，我把《草房子》举起来给大家看封面：这本书告诉我，有些东西生下来就改不掉，光头改不掉，门牙也改不掉。但怎么带着它活，是自己定的。油麻地的秃鹤把那颗头抬起来了，我的牙还突出，可我再没在合影时站去过边边。

That Bald Head, and My Big Front Teeth

At our class reading-sharing session, when it was my turn to go up, my first sentence was: reading The Straw House, what I read into myself was not a story but myself. Someone below whispered a laugh, and I gripped the corner of the book and kept going.

Touhe in the book has never had a moment of peace since first grade. He was born without hair, his head shining dazzlingly in the sun. The children gave him nicknames, the grown-ups sighed behind his back, and he tried every remedy himself: half a bottle of hair tonic rubbed on, a hat worn all summer, his head shaved and regrown and shaved again. He deliberately messed up during the drill formations, wanting people to at least hate him rather than pretend he did not exist. My throat tightened reading this, because before fifth grade I was another Touhe.

My front teeth protruded, my nickname was Big Board Teeth, and one shout of it

turned the whole class around. I learned to laugh behind my hand, to turn my face sideways when speaking, to stand at the very edge in every group photo. Live like that long enough and a person truly believes he is a head shorter than others. The book writes Touhe alone at night, bending over a water jar to study his own head; at night I too pried my lips apart in the mirror to look at my teeth. We were both asking the same question: why me.

But the greatest thing about The Straw House is that it never lets Touhe's hair grow back, and never lets the mockery disappear. It lets the gymnastics show come instead. At the whole-school drill, Touhe plays a bald puppet soldier, and he dances harder than anyone, every movement hammered into the ground. The whole field went suddenly silent, silent enough to hear the wind. That silence was not charity; it was respect he earned inch by inch. Reading this in my seat, I straightened up all at once: so the best answer to mockery is not to beg it to stop, but to make yourself into something no one can laugh at.

In the first term of sixth grade, our school choir contest lacked an announcer, and I raised my hand. During rehearsal, the moment I opened my mouth, someone below still choked back a laugh. I did not stop. I hammered each line out clearly, harder than in any rehearsal. On the night of the real performance, after I announced the last program, the hall was quiet for two seconds, and then the applause rose. Those two seconds of silence and the silence Touhe earned are the same thing. My legs were shaking when I stepped down, but my back was straight.

At the end of the sharing session, I held The Straw House up to show everyone its cover: this book tells me that some things cannot be changed from the day you are born — a bald head cannot be changed, and neither can buck teeth. But how you live carrying it is your own decision. Touhe of Oil Grain Village lifted his head up high; my teeth still protrude, yet I have never once stood at the edge of a group photo since.