爸爸，杜小康为什么不哭

睡前共读《草房子》读到第三十章，杜小康家的红门上了锁，白胡子的父亲一夜之间老了。我合上书准备关灯，女儿忽然问：爸爸，他家都没了，他为什么不哭？

我愣了几秒。按书里写，他其实哭过，在芦荡的夜里。可女儿记得的是他回来摆摊、招呼客人、第二天照常上学的那几段。她眼里的杜小康确实没哭。

我说，他可能把难过收起来了。女儿问，收起来去哪儿了？我说，收进干活的手里了。你看他数毛票、摆课本、天不亮就去进货，难过没地方待，就被赶走了。女儿想了想说，那大人真笨，我们小孩早就哭了。我说，不是大人笨，是大人有时候也得学杜小康。女儿打了个哈欠，半睡半醒地说，那我们家谁最需要学杜小康。我替她掖好被角，没接这句话。她第二天早上却自己接上了，背着书包出门前说，爸爸你上班别生气，难过就收进手里。

女儿没再问，睡了。我以为这事就过去了。三周后班干部竞选，她落选了，回家把书包一放，我以为她要哭。她没有。她搬了凳子擦柜子，把书一本一本码整齐，然后跟我说，爸，我把难过收进手里了。

那天晚上她睡得早。我坐在客厅，想起她问的那个问题，忽然明白读书到底给了孩子什么。书没有教她不难过，书让她提前见过一个难过的孩子怎样把日子接住。她后来还问我，杜小康后来还当班长吗。我说书里没写。她说，那他肯定在自己心里当。

共读的好处，大概就是孩子的问题比书先到家。她那句在自己心里当，我到现在还记着。杜小康为什么不哭，我到现在也没给出标准答案，可女儿已经有了她自己的。

Dad, Why Doesn't Du Xiaokang Cry

Our bedtime reading of Grass House had reached the chapter where the Red Gate of Du Xiaokang's home got locked and his white-bearded father grew old overnight. I closed the book to turn off the light, and my daughter suddenly asked: Dad, his family lost everything - why doesn't Du Xiaokang cry?

I froze for a few seconds. According to the book he had cried, in the night in the reed marsh. But what my daughter remembered were the passages where he came back, set up his stall, greeted customers, and went to school as usual. The Du Xiaokang in her eyes truly had not cried.

I said, maybe he put his sadness away. She asked, where does it go when you put it away? I said, into his working hands. Watch him count small bills, stack textbooks, leave out to buy goods before dawn - sadness has nowhere to sit, so it gets chased off. She thought a moment and said, grown-ups are silly then; we children would have cried long ago. I said, it's not that grown-ups are silly; sometimes

grown-ups have to learn from Du Xiaokang too. She yawned, half asleep, and asked who in our family most needed to learn from Du Xiaokang. I tucked the quilt around her and did not answer. The next morning, though, she answered it herself: before going out with her schoolbag she said, Dad, don't get angry at work - put your sadness into your hands.

She asked no more and fell asleep. I thought the matter had passed. Three weeks later she lost the class officer election, dropped her schoolbag by the door, and I expected tears. There were none. She fetched a stool, wiped the cabinet, stacked her books one by one, then told me: Dad, I put my sadness into my hands.

She slept early that night. Sitting in the living room, remembering her question, I suddenly understood what reading aloud truly gives a child. The book did not teach her not to be sad; it let her meet, in advance, a sad child catching his days as they fell. Later she asked me whether Du Xiaokang became class monitor again. I said the book doesn't say. She said, then he is certainly monitor in his own heart.

That is perhaps the gift of shared reading: the child's question arrives home before the book does. Her line about being monitor in his own heart stays with me to this day. Why doesn't Du Xiaokang cry - I still have no standard answer, but my daughter already has her own.

校门口的小摊

共读《草房子》读到杜小康在校门口摆小摊，儿子把书往我这边挪了挪，指着那段问：妈妈，他家里都没了，他怎么不难过？他看起来还想做生意。

我随口说，他难过呀，书里写他夜里偷偷哭过。儿子摇头，说不是，他问的是摆摊的时候。他那时候不哭，还招呼客人，他不难过吗？

我被问住了。想了半天我说，可能难过和做事可以同时待在心里，像两个抽屉，难过那个抽屉不打开，做事那个抽屉打开着。儿子说，那杜小康会开抽屉。我说，他会。儿子又补了一句，那他两个抽屉都开着，一个装难过，一个装生意，他比我会收拾。我笑他瞎说，他一本正经地继续看书，翻到了下一章。

第二天早上送他上学，校门口有个卖手套的老爷爷，摊子小，手冻得通红。儿子忽然停下，盯着看了几秒，小声说，妈妈，他像杜小康。我说，老爷爷是大人，杜小康是书里的人。儿子说，我知道，可是大人以前也可能当过杜小康。

那天放学，他把自己的旧围巾洗了晒干，第二天一早戴去学校，路过手套摊时摘下来递给老爷爷，说爷爷你戴着这个卖手套，手就不冻了。老爷爷愣了半天，他摆摆手跑了，跑得飞快，像怕老爷爷还他。

晚上他写作业，我在旁边看书。他忽然说，妈妈，我今天没难过的事，我就是想给他围巾。我说我知道。他说的对，那不是难过，那是他从杜小康那里学会的一件事：看见别人在硬撑的时候，别站着看。

共读这本书半年了，我常想，那天我没能答好的问题，其实儿子自己答了。杜小康为什么不难过，书里没写透，校门口那条旧围巾写透了。

The Little Stall by the School Gate

Reading Grass House together, we came to the part where Du Xiaokang keeps his little stall by the school gate. My son slid the book toward me, pointed at the passage and asked: Mom, his family lost everything - how can he not be sad? He even seems willing to do business.

I answered offhandedly that of course he was sad; the book says he cried secretly at night. My son shook his head. No, he meant while he was running the stall. He wasn't crying then, he was greeting customers - was he not sad?

I was stumped. After a long think I said, maybe sadness and work can live in the heart at the same time, like two drawers: the sadness drawer stays shut, the work drawer stays open. My son said, then Du Xiaokang knows how to open drawers. I said, he does. He added one more line: he keeps both drawers open, one for sadness and one for business - he tidies his heart better than I do. I laughed and called it nonsense; he kept reading the next chapter with perfect seriousness.

The next morning, walking him to school, we passed an old man selling gloves at the gate, his stall tiny, his hands red with cold. My son stopped suddenly, stared for a few seconds, and whispered, Mom, he looks like Du Xiaokang. I said the grandpa is a grown-up, Du Xiaokang is a person in a book. He said, I know - but grown-ups might once have been Du Xiaokang too.

After school that day he washed his old scarf and dried it in the sun, wore it to school the next morning, and as he passed the glove stall he took it off and handed it to the old man: Grandpa, wear this while you sell gloves and your hands won't freeze. The old man stood stunned for a long moment; my son waved and ran off, running fast, as if afraid the old man would give it back.

That evening he did his homework while I read nearby. He suddenly said, Mom, nothing sad happened to me today, I just wanted to give him the scarf. I said I know. He was right - it wasn't sadness; it was something he had learned from Du Xiaokang: when you see someone holding up under a hard life, don't just stand and watch.

It has been half a year since we started reading this book together, and I often

think that the question I failed to answer that day was answered by my son himself. Why Du Xiaokang was not sad - the book never wrote it out fully; the old scarf at the school gate wrote it out fully.

家里的小摊

晚饭后共读《草房子》，读到杜小康把课本和瓶瓶罐罐摆上校门口的架子。读完那一章，女儿把沙发垫子搬到客厅中间，又抱来她的文具盒和几本旧故事书，摆成一排，宣布她的小摊也开张了。

她坐在垫子上招呼我：客人，买橡皮吗，五毛。我掏兜找硬币，她说不收真钱，收问题。她的第一个问题就是：爸爸，杜小康为什么不难过？他家都没了，他摆摊还笑。

我坐在小凳上想了想说，他可能不是不难过，是难过归难过，日子归日子。她摇头，说不对，杜小康摆摊的时候是真的在忙，忙的时候难过进不来。我说你怎么知道他在忙。她说，我摆着小摊就不想别的事了呀。她招呼完我，又招呼墙上的钟，说钟先生也来买一个书签，钟没答话，她就自己替钟挑了一个，插到日历边上。

那一晚她的摊子做了很多生意。她卖橡皮，卖用故事换的书签，还卖了一次讲笑话，客人是我，我笑得很大声。收摊的时候她把东西一样一样装回文具盒，装得很慢很整齐，像书里杜小康数毛票那样。

装完她忽然说，爸爸，我知道杜小康为什么不难过了。我问为什么。她说，忙着忙着，难过就下班了。她说完自己去洗漱，踩着小凳子刷牙，镜子里的她一脸认真。

我站在客厅收拾沙发垫子，半天没动。我给孩子讲过那么多道理，不如她摆一晚小摊自己撞见的那一句。难过就下班了——这话书里没写，是女儿从杜小康的摊子上，自己走过来捡到的。

后来我们家的小摊隔三差五开张，客人轮流是我跟孩子妈妈。每次收摊，女儿都把东西码整齐。她说这是杜小康的规矩。我想，共读一本书能留下这样的规矩，比留下多少好词好句都值。

The Little Stall at Home

After dinner we read Grass House together and came to the part where Du Xiaokang sets his textbooks and jars on the shelf by the school gate. The moment the chapter ended, my daughter carried sofa cushions to the middle of the living room, brought over her pencil case and a few old storybooks, lined them up, and announced that her little stall was open for business too.

Sitting on the cushion, she greeted me: Customer, want an eraser? Fifty cents. I

patted my pockets for coins; she said no real money, questions only. Her first question was: Dad, why isn't Du Xiaokang sad? His family lost everything, yet he smiles at his stall.

I sat on a little stool and thought. Maybe it's not that he isn't sad, I said - sadness is one thing, the days are another. She shook her head. No, she said, when Du Xiaokang runs his stall he is truly busy, and when someone is busy sadness can't get in. How do you know he's busy, I asked. She said, because when I keep my stall I don't think about other things. After serving me she served the wall clock too, asking Mr. Clock to buy a bookmark; when the clock did not answer, she picked one for him herself and tucked it beside the calendar.

Her stall did a lot of business that evening. She sold erasers, bookmarks paid for with stories, and once she sold a joke - the customer was me, and I laughed loudly. When closing up, she packed everything back into her pencil case one by one, slowly and neatly, the way Du Xiaokang counts small bills in the book.

When she finished packing she suddenly said, Dad, I know why Du Xiaokang isn't sad. I asked why. She said, busy and busy, and sadness clocks off work. Then she went to wash up, brushing her teeth on her little step-stool, her face serious in the mirror.

I stood in the living room gathering the cushions and did not move for a long while. I have explained so many principles to my child; none of them beat the one line she found herself after one evening at a pretend stall. Sadness clocks off work - the book never wrote that. My daughter walked over to it herself, from Du Xiaokang's stall.

Since then our little stall opens now and again, with my wife and me taking turns as customers. Every time she closes up, my daughter stacks everything neatly. She says it is Du Xiaokang's rule. If reading a book together leaves behind a rule like that, I think it is worth more than any number of pretty phrases.