难过的时候，书里有人比你勇敢

大家好。我是这学期才转来的，站在这儿，手心还是出汗的。老师让我推荐一本好书，我想推荐《草房子》。不瞒大家，我刚来这个学校的那几个星期，是这本书接住我的。

转来第一周，我没跟谁说过一句多余的话。午饭自己吃，放学自己走，晚上把新书包的拉链拉到一半又拉上，像跟它赌气。是我们班主任接住了我。她没问我为什么不说话，她在阅读课上拿起一本封面画着草顶房子的书，说：今天起，老师每天读一章给你们听。第一天晚上，她读到桑桑把鞋子改成碗架，全班笑倒，我也没忍住，嘴角动了一下。

一章一章听下去，我记住了杜小康。他家是油麻地最阔的，红门大院的少爷，一条船把家底沉进了河里。他退学，跟父亲去芦苇荡放鸭，暴风雨的夜里鸭子跑散，他一个人追，追得满脸是水。再后来，他回到油麻地，在学校门口摆起小摊，白手套，小瓷碗，一样一样招呼同学来买。书里写，没有一个人笑话他。我听到这儿，把下巴埋进臂弯里，好半天没抬头。

我为什么推荐它？因为书里有人比你勇敢。你考砸了，杜小康连学都没得上；你被人孤立过，杜小康连从前的朋友都躲着他。可他照样支摊、照样吆喝、照样把腰站直。你看着看着，就觉得自己那点难堪，好像也没那么大了。

我还推荐它，因为书里有人在等人。秦大奶奶坐在学校门口等孩子们放学，温幼菊老师在药寮里唱歌等桑桑把药喝完。油麻地的大人从不催孩子快点长大，他们只是守着。我来到新学校，也想像油麻地的大人一样，跟你们互相守着。

同学们，如果你也有过不想说话的星期，就去读《草房子》。你会在书里遇见一个比你更难、却比你更勇敢的小孩，他会隔着书页跟你说：没事，日子会好起来的，你看我。这句话，我收下了。今天，我也把它转送给在座的每一个人。

我的演讲完了。希望下一个学期，站在这里推荐书的人里，有你们，也有我交到的新朋友。谢谢大家。

When You Are Sad, Someone in a Book Is Braver Than You

Hello everyone. I transferred here only this term, and my palms are still sweaty standing up here. My teacher asked me to recommend a good book, and I want to recommend Grass House. I will not hide it: in my first weeks at this school, this book was the one that caught me.

During the first week, I did not say one extra word to anyone. I ate lunch alone, walked home alone, and at night pulled my new schoolbag's zipper halfway up, then down again, as if sulking with it. Our homeroom teacher caught me. She never asked why I would not talk. In reading class she picked up a book with a thatched house on its cover and said: starting today, your teacher will read one chapter aloud to you every day. That first evening, she read the part where Sang Sang turned his shoes into a dish rack, and the whole class collapsed laughing. I could not help it either.

The corner of my mouth moved once.

Chapter by chapter, I came to know Du Xiaokang. His family was the richest in Youmadi, young master of the big red-door courtyard, until one boat sank the family fortune into the river. He left school and herded ducks with his father in the reed marsh. On the night of the storm, the ducks scattered, and he chased them alone, his face covered with water. Later he came back to Youmadi and set up a small stall by the school gate, white gloves, little porcelain bowls, calling out to classmates one by one to buy. The book says nobody laughed at him. When I heard that, I buried my chin in my arms and did not look up for a long time.

Why do I recommend it? Because someone in the book is braver than you. If you fail a test, Du Xiaokang could not even stay in school. If you have been left out, Du Xiaokang had even his old friends avoiding him. Yet he still set up his stall, still called out his prices, still stood with his back straight. Watch him long enough, and your own small embarrassment starts to look smaller.

I also recommend it because someone in the book is waiting for people. Grandma Qin sits by the school gate waiting for children to leave school; Teacher Wen Youju sings in the medicine room, waiting for Sang Sang to finish his bowl. The grown-ups of Youmadi never rush children to grow up fast. They simply stand by. At this new school, I would like to stand by you the way the grown-ups of Youmadi do.

Fellow students, if you too have had weeks when you did not want to talk, go read Grass House. Inside it you will meet a child whose life is harder than yours and who is braver than you, and he will say to you across the pages: it will be all right, days get better, look at me. I have taken that sentence. Today, I pass it on to every one of you here.

My speech is finished. I hope that next term, among the people standing here recommending books, there will be you, and also new friends I have made. Thank you all.