原以为儿童文学很幼稚

《草房子》是我妈硬塞给我的。她说你上了初中书读得太少，把这本书看完。我瞥了一眼封面，几个小孩站在草房前，心想这是小学生看的，我都能算半个大人了。第一周它躺在桌角，我碰都没碰。

第一个周末停电，手机没电了，我百无聊赖，翻开它打发时间。开头写油麻地的房子是茅草的，屋顶上长着一丛狗尾草，桑桑踩着梯子往屋顶上爬，他妈在下面骂。我笑出了声，接着往下读，读到桑桑把碗柜改成鸽子笼，把蚊帐改成渔网，我一口气读了四十页。停电那晚的蜡烛烧短了一截，我都没注意。我妈推门进来查房，看见我举着书笑，愣了一下，没打扰我，轻轻把门带上了。

真正让我坐直的是杜小康。他家是油麻地最阔的，红门，大衣柜，他冬天穿一条新棉裤都要换着样穿。后来船翻了，货全没了，他退学去摆小摊，手上还戴着白手套。我在那一页停了很久，想一个问题：他为什么非要戴白手套？我想了几个晚上，想到一个词，体面。这个词课本里没教过，我自己从书里捞出来的。

从那以后我睡前不再只刷手机，改成看二十分钟书。我妈以为我转性了，其实我只是想知道杜小康的摊子后来怎么样了，想知道桑桑的病最后好没好。读书这件事一旦自己想知道，就停不下来，跟别人催是完全两回事。

书读完那天是周三，我把封面抚平，忽然觉得它不幼稚。它写穷，写病，写一个人怎么扛事，哪样不是大人世界的事？只是它用孩子的眼睛写。我把书放回桌角，跟第一周的位置一样，但我的心境不一样了。它替我推开了一扇门，门后面原来有那么多书，那么多人在等着。

I Thought Children's Literature Was Childish

Grass House was forced on me by my mother. She said you are in middle school now and read too little — finish this book. I glanced at the cover: a few children standing in front of thatched houses. This is for elementary kids, I thought; I am practically a grown-up. For the first week it lay at the corner of my desk untouched.

On the first weekend the power went out and my phone was dead. Bored out of my mind, I opened the book to kill time. The opening describes the houses of Youma Di with thatched roofs, dogtail grass growing on top, and Sang Sang climbing a ladder to the roof while his mother scolds him from below. I laughed out loud. I kept reading — Sang Sang turned his family's cupboard into a pigeon coop and his mosquito net into a fishing net — and I got through forty pages in one sitting. The candle burned a good inch shorter that night, and I did not notice. My mother came in to check on me, saw me holding the book and laughing, froze for a second, did not disturb me, and quietly pulled the door shut.

What really made me sit up straight was Du Xiaokang. His family was the

wealthiest in Youma Di: a red gate, a big wardrobe, and new padded trousers changed by style even in winter. Then the boat sank, the cargo was gone, he dropped out of school to run a street stall — and he still wore white gloves. I stared at that page for a long time, turning one question over: why insist on the white gloves? It took me several evenings to land on a word: dignity. The textbook never taught me that word; I fished it out of the book myself.

After that, before bed I stopped scrolling my phone and read for twenty minutes instead. My mother thought I had changed overnight. Really, I just wanted to know what became of Du Xiaokang's stall and whether Sang Sang's illness would end. Once reading becomes your own wanting-to-know, you cannot stop — and it is nothing like being pushed by someone else.

The day I finished was a Wednesday. I smoothed the cover flat and suddenly felt it was not childish at all. It writes about poverty, illness, and how a person carries a burden — which of those is not the adult world's business? It simply writes them through children's eyes. I put the book back at the corner of the desk, exactly where it sat in week one, but I was not the same. It pushed a door open for me, and behind that door are so many books, so many people waiting.

www.vv99.net