两个书包

操场角落靠着两个书包，一个蓝色，一个灰色，肩带缠在一起，像两只握手的小动物。

蓝色的属于林小雨，灰色的属于陈望，全班都知道，她们是好朋友。

体育课解散以后，两个书包独自留在白杨树下，看满操场的人跑来跑去。

蓝色的书包被汗浸湿了一块，灰色的那只被风推得晃一下，像是递过去一张纸巾。

书包当然不会做事，做事的是林小雨和陈望。

那次期中考试，林小雨数学考砸了，一个人坐在看台最高的一格。

陈望没有过去讲道理，只是把自己的灰书包提过去，放在她旁边。

两个书包靠在一起，两个人隔着一臂的距离，谁也不说话。

后来林小雨说，那天她没有哭，因为灰色的书包在那里。

陈望的妈妈发现，陈望开始帮人拿书包，一只装自己的课本，一只装别人的信任。

书包一天天重起来，里面塞满试卷、错题本、字典和一沓一沓的明天。

她们一天天高起来，校服裤脚一寸一寸往上收。

千米测试那天，陈望在最后一圈崴了脚，林小雨从前面折回去，扶住她的胳膊。

计分的裁判说，那两个女生是最后冲线的，却是笑得最亮的。

晚自习结束，她们背着两个书包走出教室，带子在夜里吱呀吱呀地响。

她们谈起远方，说要去一座很远的城市，远到能看见真正的海。

书包听不见远方这个词，书包里却夹着写给远方的志愿表。

毕业的日子越来越近，白杨叶子一层一层地落。

林小雨在灰书包上贴了一张纸条，写着，去远方记得回头。

陈望在蓝书包上贴了一张纸条，写着，走慢一点，等我。

两个书包最后一次靠在白杨树下，影子叠在一起，分不出哪块是哪块。

操场记得两对脚印，一对轻，一对重，步子始终互相等。

很多年以后人会散开，操场不会忘。

远方还是远，但她们不再怕。

因为她们都见过一种陪伴的样子，像白杨树的影子，落在书包上，一声不响。

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而成长，就是背着越来越重的书包，在操场上再走一圈，身边那个人还在。

Two Schoolbags

In the corner of the playground lean two schoolbags, one blue and one gray, their straps tangled together like two little animals shaking hands.

The blue one belongs to Lin Xiaoyu, the gray one to Chen Wang, and the whole class knows they are best friends.

After PE class dismisses, the two schoolbags stay alone under the white poplar tree, watching the whole playground run back and forth.

A patch of the blue bag is soaked with sweat; the gray one is nudged by the wind to sway once, as if handing over a tissue.

Of course schoolbags cannot do anything. The ones who do things are Lin Xiaoyu and Chen Wang.

The day of the midterm exam, Lin Xiaoyu failed math and sat alone on the highest step of the stands.

Chen Wang did not go over to lecture her. She only carried her own gray schoolbag over and placed it beside her.

The two schoolbags leaned together; the two girls sat the length of one arm apart, and neither spoke.

Later Lin Xiaoyu said she did not cry that day, because the gray schoolbag was there.

The mother of Chen Wang noticed that Chen Wang had begun carrying bags for others too, one holding her own textbooks, one holding the trust of others.

The schoolbags grew heavier day by day, stuffed with test papers, mistake notebooks, dictionaries, and stack after stack of tomorrows.

The two girls grew taller day by day, the hems of their uniforms gathering inch by inch.

On the day of the thousand-meter test, Chen Wang twisted her ankle on the last lap, and Lin Xiaoyu ran back from ahead and held her arm.

The teacher keeping time said those two girls crossed the line last, but they were the brightest smiling of all.

When evening study ended, they walked out of the classroom with two schoolbags on

their backs, the straps creaking softly in the night.

They talked about the distance, saying they wanted to go to a very far city, far enough to see a real sea.

Schoolbags cannot hear the word distance, yet inside them are tucked the application forms written for the distance.

Graduation drew closer, and the poplar leaves fell layer after layer.

Lin Xiaoyu stuck a note on the gray bag: when you go to the distance, remember to look back.

Chen Wang stuck a note on the blue bag: walk slowly, wait for me.

For the last time the two schoolbags leaned together under the poplar, their shadows folded into one, impossible to tell apart.

The playground remembers two pairs of footprints, one light, one heavy, their steps always waiting for each other.

Many years later people will scatter, but the playground will not forget.

The distance is still far, but they are no longer afraid.

Because they have both seen what companionship looks like: like the shadow of the poplar tree, falling on a schoolbag without a sound.

And growing up is carrying a heavier and heavier schoolbag, walking one more lap around the playground, with that person still beside you.