风筝挂上了电线

那只大燕子风筝是我爸扎的，竹骨糊报纸，尾巴拖一米长，飞起来巷子口的人都抬头。出事那天风正好，线轴转得飞快，我越放越得意，线在手里绷得嗡嗡响。忽然一股横风过来，风筝往侧面一歪，我本能地松了半圈线想稳它，就这半圈的工夫，线从线轴上滑脱了。

大燕子没有掉下来。它晃了几晃，顺着风往巷子尽头飘，最后挂在了电线上，稳稳地停在那儿，尾巴在电线底下飘着，像挂在半空的一幅画。我举着空线轴站在原地，脑子里全是爸说过的话：电线碰不得。我撒腿往家跑，一路喊，爸，风筝挂电线上了。

爸出来仰头看了看，神色倒是平静：挂就挂着吧，人没事就好。他拽着我回去，当天不许我再提风筝。傍晚巷子里的人都在说这件事，有人劝爸拿竹竿去捅，爸摆手：电线上的东西，谁也不能碰，等供电所的人来。

那三天，燕子就挂在电线上。风大时它抖一抖，风小时它一动不动，我们放学都绕到巷子口看它一眼，像看一只被定住的鸟。我给它起了个名字，叫半空。奶奶笑我，一个破风筝，还起名。

供电所的人来的那天上午，白色工程车开进巷子，两个穿蓝色工装的师傅下车，一个戴绝缘手套上杆，一个在下面拦人。师傅拿绝缘剪咔嚓几声，把缠着的旧线剪断，那只燕子晃晃悠悠落下来，我抢着跑过去捡。师傅叮嘱我们：以后离电线远点放，风筝挂线上了别自己取，打电话我们来。爸连声道谢，师傅摆摆手，说这风筝糊得还挺周正。

燕子尾巴在电线上磨掉了一小截，剩下的半截尾巴打了个结，照样能飞。重新放起来那天，它比从前飞得还高。我仰头看着它，总觉得它在电线上那三天没白挂——它见过全巷子的人抬头看它，还坐过供电所的工程车，比我们谁都见多识广。

后来那只风筝收在门后，尾巴上那个结一直没拆。每次看见那个结，我就想起它挂在半空的样子，和巷子口那些仰起来的头。暑假过去一大半，这件事被我们讲了又讲，讲到最后，爸都会补一句：记住，电线上的东西，谁也不能碰。

The Kite Ended Up in the Power Lines

The big swallow kite was made by my father, bamboo bones covered with newspaper, its tail a full meter long. When it flew, everyone at the mouth of the alley looked up. The wind was perfect that day. The spool spun fast, I let out more and more line with growing pride, the line humming in my hands. Then a crosswind came, the kite tilted sideways, and by instinct I paid out half a turn of line to steady it. In that half turn, the line slipped off the spool.

The big swallow did not fall. It swayed a few times, drifted with the wind toward the end of the alley, and ended up caught in the power lines, hanging there steady, its tail floating below the wires like a painting suspended in midair. I stood where I was holding an empty spool, my head full of what my father had always said: never touch the power lines. I ran home as fast as my legs could carry me, shouting on the

way: father, the kite is caught in the wires.

My father came out, looked up, and stayed calm. If it hangs there, so be it, he said, as long as no one is hurt. He pulled me back home and would not let me mention the kite that day. In the evening the whole alley was talking about it. Someone urged him to poke it down with a bamboo pole, and my father waved that off: nothing in the power lines belongs to anyone to touch, wait for the power station people.

For three days the swallow hung in the wires. In strong wind it shivered, in weak wind it sat still, and after school we all detoured to the mouth of the alley to look at it, like watching a bird frozen in place. I gave it a name, Half-Sky. Grandma laughed at me, a ragged kite and it even has a name.

On the morning of the fourth day, a white utility truck of the power station drove into the alley. Two workers in blue uniforms got out, one climbing the pole in insulated gloves, one holding people back below. With a few snips of the insulated cutter the worker cut the tangled old line, and the swallow floated down. I was the first to run and pick it up. The worker told us: keep away from the wires when flying kites, and if a kite ever gets caught, never take it down yourselves, call us and we will come. My father thanked him again and again, and the worker waved it off, saying the kite was actually put together quite neatly.

The swallow tail had been worn short against the wires, and the remaining half was tied in a knot, yet it still flew. The day we flew it again, it went higher than before. Watching it up there, I felt its three days in the wires were not wasted: it had seen the whole alley looking up at it, and it had ridden in a utility truck, more worldly-wise than any of us.

The kite has lived behind our door ever since, the knot in its tail never untied. Every time I see that knot, I remember it hanging in midair and all the upturned faces at the mouth of the alley. Summer vacation was more than half over, and we told this story again and again, and at the end my father always added: remember, nothing in the power lines is for anyone to touch.