阳台上的双道彩虹

七月二十九日 星期三 雷阵雨转晴

下午四点多，天变成了铁锅的颜色，一层一层往楼顶上面压。风先到，把路边梧桐树的叶子吹得翻了面，露出浅绿的背面，又把一个塑料袋在街上赶得一跳一跳。然后雨就轰地下来了，斜着下，打在阳台的玻璃上啪啪响，像有人敲门还不等人应。我正在书桌前跟一道数学题较劲，笔一放，走到窗边去看。对面那栋高楼一下子就没了，只剩顶上两层在雨雾里留着一个淡淡的轮廓。落水管的水像瀑布一样倒出来，路上的水洼开满了密密的泡，像一千多个肥皂泡同时出现又同时破掉。

城里的雷阵雨跟奶奶村里的雨不一样。村里的人可以跑到田埂上去，站在雨中间；这里全城只能隔着一层玻璃看。我想：这场雨落给了全城，可全城都关着窗户。

雨停了，云从中间裂开，光哗地倒下来，把整座城市洗得发亮。妈妈在客厅喊：快来快来，快看！我跑到阳台上。西边天上，那一排高楼的顶上，挂着一道彩虹——还不止一道！大彩虹底下还有一道，淡淡的、细细的，颜色顺序是反的。双彩虹。我两只手忙乱地从兜里摸出手机，手指头笨得连焦点都对不上，拍出来天上糊着一团灰白。再拍，还是糊。妈妈说：把手机放下，用眼睛看。我把手机塞回兜里，认认真真地看。彩虹在慢慢变淡，红色那一段先没，蓝色那一段最后才走。它没了以后，天就是平常的天，好像什么都没发生过。

我看着手机里那两张糊掉的照片，忽然明白了一件事：有些东西，不是用来带走的，是用来看见的。我一个夏天都在忙着记录：录游戏集锦，录同学讲的段子，连吃饭都要先拍一遍，然后那些文件再也不会被打开，像一沓我根本没去过的旅行的收据。可这道彩虹，我是用两只眼睛一秒一秒看完的，从它出来看到它消失，它存在我脑子里，比任何照片都清楚，也都新。

还有一件事要记下来：妈妈一直站在我旁边。她每天忙，我记不起她上一次这样站着看天是什么时候了。这一次是她喊我过来看的，不是我喊她。原来大人也需要有人提醒他们抬头，只是他们从来不说。

今晚我在日记里写：彩虹一共活了七分钟左右。我没把它带走，可我全得到了。

The Double Rainbow on Our Balcony

July 29th, Wednesday, thunderstorm then clear

It was a little past four in the afternoon when the sky turned the color of an old iron pot, pressing lower and lower over the tops of the buildings. The wind arrived first. It blew the leaves of the scholar trees along the roadside inside out, showing their pale green backs, and it dragged a plastic bag down the street in jumps. Then the rain came down with a roar, falling sideways, tapping a fast rhythm on the balcony window glass that sounded like somebody knocking and refusing to wait for an answer. I had been sitting at my desk working through a math problem set. I put my pen down and went to the window to watch. The tall building across the street

disappeared in an instant, and only the faint outline of its top two floors stayed visible inside the rain mist. Water poured out of the downpipe like a waterfall, and the puddles on the road bloomed with dense little bubbles, like a thousand soap bubbles appearing and vanishing all at once.

A summer thunderstorm in the city is different from the rain in Grandma's village. Out there, people can walk to the edge of the field and stand right in the middle of it. Here, the whole city can only watch the rain through a single pane of glass. I thought to myself: this rain is falling for everybody in the city, and yet almost every window in the city is closed.

Then the rain stopped, the clouds split open in the middle, and light poured down and washed the whole city bright. Mom called from the living room: come quick, come quick, look at this! I ran out to the balcony. Over the western sky, above the row of high-rises, there was a rainbow — and it was not alone. Under the big bright one there was a second, fainter and thinner, with its colors in the reverse order. A double rainbow. I fumbled my phone out of my pocket with both hands, my fingers so clumsy that the screen could not decide what to focus on, and the picture I took showed nothing but a grayish-white smudge across the sky. I took another one. Still a smudge. Mom said: put the phone away and look with your own eyes. So I put the phone into my pocket and really looked. The rainbow was already fading, slowly, the red part disappearing first and the blue part staying the longest. When it was gone, the sky was just an ordinary sky again, as if nothing at all had happened.

I looked at the two blurry photos on my phone, and suddenly I understood something. Some beautiful things are not meant to be taken away. They are meant to be seen. I have spent the whole summer trying to record things: recording game clips, recording the funny videos my classmates make, photographing the food on the table before I take a single bite, and then never opening any of those files again. The recordings sit in my phone like a pile of receipts for trips I never actually took. But this rainbow, I watched it with my own two eyes, second by second, from the moment it appeared to the moment it disappeared, and it is stored somewhere inside my head, sharper and fresher than any photo could ever keep it.

There is one more thing I want to write down. Mom stood next to me the whole time. She is busy every single day, and I could not remember the last time she had stood still long enough to look at the sky. This time it was she who called me over to look, not the other way around. Maybe grown-ups need somebody to remind them to look up too; they just never say so out loud. Next time there is something in the sky, I decide right now, I will be the one who calls.

Tonight I wrote in my diary: the rainbow lived for about seven minutes. I failed to take it away with me, and I got every second of it.