雪落无声

晚自习下课铃响过，教室里的人陆陆续续走空。我把错题本合上，才发现窗外在下雪。走廊上的灯把门口照得发白，雪片斜着飘出去，飘到半空又折回来，像犹豫着要不要落地。我在楼道口站了一会儿，还是把伞从书包侧袋里抽出来，撑开，走进了雪里。

这条路我走了大半年，白天从没觉得它长。今晚不一样。路灯一盏一盏亮着，橘黄色的光锥立在雪里，每一片飘进光里的雪都被照得透亮，看得见它旋转、下落，落在光锥的边缘就暗下去，重新变回一片普通的雪。我在一盏灯下停了停，仰头看，雪从很高很高的地方下来，经过光的时候亮一下，像一路走一路眨眼睛。整条街安静，白天的车声、店里的音乐声都退远了，只剩下雪落在伞面上的声音，极轻，像有人在很远的地方翻书。

我继续往前走。脚下的雪没经过踩踏，松软，一脚下去咯吱一声，下一脚又是一声。我试着踩出节奏，一步一声，像给这条夜路打拍子。走着走着，我故意偏离脚印，踩进没人的雪里，雪没过鞋帮，凉意隔着袜子渗进来。我回头，一串脚印从楼门口一直延伸到路灯下，再往前，很快就有新的雪落进去，把脚印的边缘一点点填平。刚才那点考砸的烦闷，本来堵在胸口，这会儿看着脚印被雪一点一点盖住，忽然也没那么重了。原来雪是在替人盖东西的，盖脚印，盖白天的事。

走到街心，远处是居民楼。夜色里那一整片楼黑着，窗户里的灯一格一格亮着，有的黄，有的白，有的拉着窗帘，光从帘子缝里漏出来，变成一条细线。我知道那些格子里有一格是我家，妈妈留的灯。想着那格灯，脚步就快了。雪还在下，落在肩上，落在伞沿上，没有声音。可我的鞋底踩在雪上，咯吱，咯吱，是有声音的。雪落无声，走路有声，一个人走夜路这件事，忽然就不觉得孤单了。

楼下的单元门厅亮着，我收了伞，跺掉鞋上的雪，一步一个白印子走进电梯。电梯镜子里的人眉毛上挂着没化的雪粒。我冲自己笑了一下。出了电梯，门缝里透出家里的光，妈妈的声音从厨房里出来，问冷不冷，饭在锅里热着。我换鞋的时候回头看了一眼窗外，雪还在下，安安静静地落。这一夜的路，我一个人走完了，走得挺好。

The Snow Falls Without Sound

When the evening study bell rang, the classroom emptied little by little. I closed my mistake notebook and only then noticed it was snowing outside. The corridor light bleached the doorway, and the flakes drifted out at a slant, turned around halfway, as if hesitating about landing. I stood a while at the stairwell entrance, then still pulled the umbrella from my bag's side pocket, opened it, and walked out into the snow.

I had walked this road most of a school year and never found it long in daylight. Tonight was different. The street lamps stood on in ones and twos, their orange cones of light planted in the snow. Every flake entering a cone was lit through; you could see it spin and fall, and once it reached the cone's edge it dimmed back into an ordinary flake. I paused under one lamp and looked up. The snow came down from very,

very high, flashing once as it passed through the light, like walking along while blinking. The whole street was quiet. The daytime traffic and the shop music had withdrawn, leaving only the sound of snow on the umbrella canopy, extremely soft, like someone turning pages far away.

I walked on. The snow underfoot had not been trodden, soft and loose; each step made a crunch, and the next step another. I tried to set a rhythm, one step one sound, keeping time for this night road. Then I deliberately left the footprints and stepped into untouched snow, which swallowed my shoes, cold seeping through my socks. I looked back. A trail of footprints ran from the building entrance all the way to the lamp, and ahead, fresh snow was already falling into them, smoothing their edges bit by bit. The frustration over my failed test, which had sat heavy on my chest, suddenly did not feel so heavy as I watched the snow cover the prints inch by inch. So this is what snow does: it covers things for people, footprints, and the events of the day.

At the middle of the street, apartment buildings glowed in the distance. The whole block lay dark in the night, its windows lit square by square, some yellow, some white, some with curtains drawn, light leaking through the gap into a thin line. I knew one of those squares was my home, the lamp Mum left on. Thinking of that square, my steps quickened. The snow kept falling on my shoulders, on the rim of the umbrella, without a sound. But my shoes crunching through the snow did have a sound. The snow falls silent, footsteps speak, and walking a night road alone suddenly did not feel lonely anymore.

The lobby downstairs was lit. I folded the umbrella, stamped the snow off my shoes, and stepped into the elevator leaving white prints one by one. The figure in the elevator mirror had unmelted snow grains on its eyebrows. I smiled at myself. Outside the elevator, light showed through the crack of my door, and Mum's voice came from the kitchen asking if I was cold, telling me dinner was warming on the stove. While changing my shoes I glanced back at the window. The snow was still falling, quiet and steady. This night's road, I had walked it alone, and I had walked it well.