黑板上的那行字没人肯擦

黑板上的字是早上到的时候看见的：六一快乐，后面另起一行，毕业快乐。写字的人把毕业快乐四个字描了三层，粉笔灰在槽里积了一小堆。我站在讲台上看了好一会儿，手痒想去擦，手伸到一半又收回来。这是我们在小学过的最后一个六一，谁都知道，谁都没说破。

联欢会第二节课开始，桌椅围成一圈，中间空出舞台。教室后墙的黑板被彩带围了一圈，气球用透明胶粘在窗玻璃上，风一吹，气球轻轻撞玻璃，发出闷闷的咚咚声。班长报幕，第一个节目是四人合唱，伴奏的钢琴是音乐老师借来的电子琴，插电的时候插头松了，台下哄笑，弹琴的男生面不改色把插头按回去，接着弹。我演的是小品里负责摔倒的那一个，道具西瓜是纸糊的，摔下去的时候膝盖磕在地板上，有点疼，可观众笑得最大声，我爬起来鞠躬，膝盖的疼就变成了得意。

节目演完是互赠礼物。教室里一下子安静不下来，书包拉链声、包装纸的沙沙声、惊呼声，全搅在一起。同桌送我一个笔记本，扉页上写着你欠我的三块橡皮，初中记得还。我送她的是昨晚做到十一点的纸星星，十二颗，装在一个洗干净的玻璃瓶里，每一颗里面塞了一张小纸条，写着只有我们俩看得懂的事。她拧开瓶子倒出来数，数到第七颗停住了，把那颗攥在手心，没说话。前后桌的男生们交换的是球星卡，一张卡吵得脸红脖子粗，最后勾着肩膀和好了。后排胆小的女生给每人发了一颗糖，发到我这里多塞了一颗，冲我眨眨眼。

快放学，班主任走进来，手里没有拿书。她站在讲台中间，看了我们一圈，说这是陪你们的最后一个六一，六年级了，马上要各奔东西，她不求我们考多好的学校，只记得三件事：好好吃饭，交到敢吵架也敢和好的朋友，难过的时候别憋着。说到第三件，她的声音哑了一下，转过身去，在黑板上毕业快乐后面画了一个小小的太阳。我们鼓掌，掌声持续得比任何一次都久，有人一边鼓掌一边吸鼻子，声音在安静的教室里格外清楚。

放学铃响，大家背起书包往门口走，走到门口又都回头看黑板。那行字在夕阳里，粉笔的白在墨绿的黑板上亮着。值日生拿着黑板擦在讲台边转了两圈，最后把黑板擦放回了槽里，说，明天再说吧。没有人反驳。那行字在黑板上留了一整天，像我们谁也不肯先说出口的那句话。

Nobody Would Erase the Words on the Blackboard

The words on the blackboard were there when I arrived in the morning: Happy Children's Day, and on a separate line after it, Happy Graduation. Whoever wrote them traced the graduation words over three times, and a small pile of chalk dust collected in the tray. I stood at the podium looking for a while, my hand itching to erase, and pulled it back halfway. This was our last Children's Day in elementary school. Everyone knew it; nobody said it out loud.

The party began in the second period. Desks and chairs formed a circle with the stage left open in the middle. The back blackboard was framed with streamers, and balloons were taped to the window glass with clear tape; in the breeze they knocked softly on the glass, thump thump. The class host announced the first act, a quartet.

The piano was an electronic keyboard borrowed from the music teacher, and when they plugged it in the plug came loose, drawing roars of laughter from the audience; the boy playing did not bat an eye, pressed the plug back in, and kept playing. My part in the skit was falling down. The prop watermelon was paper-mache; when I fell, my knee hit the floor and hurt a little, but the audience laughed the loudest at that moment, so when I got up to bow, the pain turned into pride.

After the acts came the gift exchange. The classroom suddenly could not hold its quiet: backpack zippers, the rustle of wrapping paper, and exclamations all mixed together. My deskmate gave me a notebook; on the first page she wrote: you still owe me three erasers, remember to pay up in middle school. What I gave her was the paper stars I stayed up until eleven making last night, twelve of them in a washed glass jar, each hiding a tiny slip of paper with something only the two of us could understand. She unscrewed the jar and poured them out to count, stopped at the seventh, closed her fist around it, and said nothing. The boys front and back traded soccer cards, arguing red-faced over one card, and ended up arm in arm making up. The shy girl in the back row handed everyone a candy, slipped me an extra one, and winked.

Just before dismissal, our homeroom teacher walked in without a book in her hand. She stood in the middle of the podium, looked around at all of us, and said this was the last Children's Day she would spend with us; we were sixth graders about to scatter, and she did not ask for great exam results, only three things: eat well, keep friends brave enough to quarrel and to make up, and do not swallow your sadness. On the third one her voice cracked for a moment; she turned around and drew a small sun after Happy Graduation on the blackboard. We applauded, longer than any time before, and someone sniffled while clapping, the sound unusually clear in the quiet room.

The dismissal bell rang. Everyone shouldered backpacks and walked to the door, then turned back at the doorway to look at the blackboard. The words glowed in the setting sun, chalk-white shining on the dark green board. The class on duty paced twice at the podium with the eraser, and finally put it back in the tray, saying: tomorrow we'll talk. Nobody argued. The words stayed on the blackboard all day, like the sentence none of us was willing to say first.