礼物我留到晚上才拆

六一那天早上，我进教室的时候就看见课桌角上放着一只方方的盒子，天蓝色的包装纸，缠着银色丝带，盒子上插着一张小卡片：节日快乐。我拿起来摇了摇，很轻。我想把丝带解开，手指不听话，越解结越紧。正好班长喊早读，我把盒子按进桌肚，决定放学再拆。

第一节课是数学。我把盒子摆在桌角上，写一个字，眼睛就自己飘过去一次。银色丝带在窗户光里一闪一闪，我猜里面是什么。文具盒？太轻了。玩具？摇着没响。我甚至猜是一张写着愿望的纸条。老师在黑板上写乘法口诀，我跟着抄，一行都没记进去。

课间我抱着盒子下楼给同桌看。她拿到耳朵边上摇了摇，说听着像纸。我有点失望又有点高兴，纸就是书，书挺好的。上楼的路上我把盒子捧在两只手里，像捧一碗水，跑都不敢跑。盒子贴着胸口，我觉得心口也在跟着它一下一下地撞。

下午班级联欢，我坐在前排鼓掌，心里全是桌肚里那只盒子。最后一个节目一完，我冲回教室，把盒子塞进书包，拉链拉到底，像怕它半路跳出来。

到家，写完作业，吃完饭，我才把盒子放到书桌上。妈在门口探头，问你怎么不在学校拆，人家都拆了。我说我留到晚上。她笑，说金贵成这样。我解开银丝带，撕开天蓝色的纸，掀开盒盖——一只水杯，奶白色，杯身上印着一只小熊，不重不轻，刚好。我翻过来看，杯底贴着一张小标签，是妈的字：多喝水。

我盯着那张标签看了一会儿。中午我猜过文具盒，猜过玩具，猜过纸条，没猜过水杯，也没猜过标签上是妈的字。我倒了杯水喝完。礼物到的那天，我花了一整天去猜它，猜的过程比礼物本身金贵。我把包装纸展平压进抽屉，银丝带绕好收进小铁盒，想着明年六一还能用。

The Gift I Waited Until Night to Open

On the morning of Children's Day, I spotted a square box on the corner of my desk as soon as I walked into the classroom. Sky-blue wrapping paper, a silver ribbon wound around it, and a little card stuck on top: Happy Holiday. I picked it up and shook it - very light. I tried to untie the ribbon, but my fingers wouldn't cooperate, and the knot only tightened the more I worked at it. Just then the class monitor called for morning reading, so I pressed the box into my desk cubby and decided to open it after school.

The first class was math. I set the box on the corner of my desk, and every character I wrote, my eyes drifted over on their own. The silver ribbon flickered in the window light, and I kept guessing what was inside. A pencil case? Too light. A toy? It made no sound when shaken. I even guessed it was a slip of paper with a wish written on it. The teacher copied the multiplication table onto the blackboard, and I copied along without absorbing a single line.

At break I carried the box downstairs to show my deskmate. She held it to her ear, shook it, and said it sounded like paper. I felt a little disappointed and a little glad at once - paper means a book, and books are good. On the way back upstairs I held the box in both hands like a bowl of water and didn't dare run. It pressed against my chest, and I felt my heart bumping along with it.

In the afternoon came our class party. I sat in the front row clapping, my mind entirely on the box in my desk cubby. The moment the last act ended, I dashed back to the classroom, stuffed the box into my schoolbag, and zipped it shut as if afraid it might jump out on the way home.

Only after getting home, finishing homework, and eating dinner did I set the box on my desk. Mom peeked in at the doorway and asked why I hadn't opened it at school - everyone else had. I said I saved it for the evening. She laughed: how precious, she said. I untied the silver ribbon, tore open the sky-blue paper, and lifted the lid - a water bottle, milky white, a little bear printed on its side, not heavy, not light, just right. I turned it over, and on the bottom was a small label in Mom's handwriting: Drink more water.

I stared at that label for a while. At noon I had guessed a pencil case, a toy, a wish slip - never a water bottle, and never that the label would be in Mom's handwriting. I poured a cup and drank it all. On the day the gift arrived, I spent the whole day guessing what it was, and the guessing turned out more precious than the gift itself. I flattened the wrapping paper and pressed it into a drawer, wound up the silver ribbon into a small tin, thinking I could use it again next Children's Day.

寻宝图上的七个红圈

六一那天，游园活动改成了校园寻宝。每人发一张寻宝图，图上是手画的校园，七个红圈，每个圈里写半句谜面。班主任说，找齐七个红圈到终点兑奖，谜底贴在相应的位置，撕下来贴在图背面。我和王多多、陈一飞、李小满自动凑成一组，四张图拼在桌上研究，像四个小侦探。

第一个红圈的谜面是：我有一根手指，从不停下。王多多第一个反应过来，跑去篮球架底下，果然摸到一张纸条，上面画着第二个谜面。我们越跑越快，鞋带开了都顾不上系。花坛边、乒乓球台腿后面、图书馆门背后的挂钩上，红圈一个一个被我们贴到图背面，贴满一排，像四枚勋章。

卡在第五个红圈。谜面写着：三加四等于几，答案在答案的后面。我们在黑板教室转了三圈。陈一飞把黑板上值日表的名字数了一遍，不对。我盯着黑板角落那道没擦的算术题，三加四等于七，答案的后面——值日表第七格。我踮脚摸到挂钩上的纸条，手心全是汗。

第六个红圈在音乐教室的钢琴凳下，李小满趴在地上伸手进去够，够出来一张被灰糊住的纸条，她吹了一口气，灰飞起来呛得我们四个咳成一团，走廊里别的组回头看我们，我们毫不在意。

第七个红圈谁也没找到。我们把四张图翻来覆去看了十遍，谜面是：我在你最不想来的地方。最不想来的地方，我们轮流猜，体育器材室、办公室、厕所，全找过，没有。最后是终点兑奖的老师提示：最后一处，在领奖处。我们四个面面相觑，笑到蹲在地上。原来谜底一直等在终点。

兑奖处排着长队，我们交上贴满六张纸条的图，老师照样给我们兑了奖——一条金鱼，装在小塑料袋里，橘红色，尾巴比身子还大。王多多提议轮流拎，一人一段路，塑料袋换了三只手，谁的手都没抖。

金鱼现在养在我家窗台上，叫小七，因为我们是差一个红圈换来的它。有时候我看它绕着玻璃转圈，就想起那天四个人的影子在校园里跑成一串。六一的奖品会旧，金鱼会长大，那张贴满纸条的寻宝图，我压在书桌玻璃板底下，四个人的名字还挤在右下角。

Seven Red Circles on the Treasure Map

That Children's Day, the garden party was changed into a campus treasure hunt. Each of us got a treasure map, the school drawn on it by hand, with seven red circles, each holding half a riddle. The homeroom teacher said: find all seven circles and trade in at the finish line; the answers are stuck at the matching spots - tear them off and paste them on the back of your map. Wang Duoduo, Chen Yifei, Li Xiaoman and I naturally formed a team of four, spreading our maps on a desk to study like four little detectives.

The first riddle read: I have one finger and never stop. Wang Duoduo figured it out first, ran under the basketball hoop, and indeed fished out a slip with the second riddle on it. We ran faster and faster, too busy to retie undone shoelaces. By the flowerbed, behind the ping-pong table legs, on the hook behind the library door - one by one the red circles got pasted onto the backs of our maps, a whole row of them, like four medals.

We got stuck on the fifth circle. The riddle read: three plus four equals what; the answer hides behind the answer. We circled the blackboard classroom three times. Chen Yifei counted every name on the duty roster - wrong. I stared at the arithmetic problem left unwiped in the corner of the blackboard: three plus four equals seven, behind the answer - the seventh slot of the duty roster. Standing on tiptoe, I felt for the slip on the hook, my palm drenched in sweat.

The sixth circle sat under the piano bench in the music room. Li Xiaoman lay on her stomach and reached in, pulling out a slip caked with dust. She blew on it, the dust flew up, and the four of us coughed in a heap. Teams from the corridor turned to

stare; we didn't care one bit.

Nobody could find the seventh circle. We turned our four maps over and over ten times. Its riddle read: I am in the place you least want to go. The place we least wanted to go - we took turns guessing: the equipment room, the staff office, the washroom. All searched, nothing. Finally the teacher at the prize desk dropped the hint: the last one is at the prize desk. The four of us looked at each other and laughed until we squatted on the ground. The answer had been waiting at the finish line all along.

A long line waited at the prize desk. We handed in maps with six slips pasted on, and the teacher still traded us a prize - a goldfish in a small plastic bag, orange-red, its tail bigger than its body. Wang Duoduo proposed taking turns carrying it, one stretch of road each. The bag changed hands three times, and not one hand trembled.

The goldfish now lives on my windowsill, named Little Seven, because we got it for seven minus one circles. Sometimes I watch it circling the glass, and I remember four shadows running through the campus that day, strung together. Prizes from Children's Day grow old, the goldfish will grow up, and that map covered with slips sits pressed under my desk's glass plate, our four names still crowded in the bottom corner.

台上那三十秒没词的朗诵

周小舟报名朗诵，是因为语文老师说，这次联欢会每个班要出一个节目，没人报他就点名。全班四十六个人，他的名字在点名册第十一行，老师念到第十一行的时候，他正低头抠橡皮，一抬头对上老师的眼睛，手就举起来了。举起来他就后悔了，可手已经举起来了。

从那天起他每天对着卧室的穿衣镜念，念的是《小小的船》改的长诗，第二段写星星。他奶奶坐在床边听，听完说念得跟背书一样。他知道跟背书一样，可他只会背书一样地念。排练那天在教室，他念到第二段，前排女生回头看他，他声音立刻小下去，像收音机被人拧了音量。

六一下午，礼堂挂满彩带，前面几排坐着家长。报幕员念到诗朗诵，周小舟从侧面上台，聚光灯打在他脸上，他看不见台下，只看见一片黑，黑里隐约有手机亮着。他开口，第一段顺顺当当，声音比他排练时都大。第二段，星星那一段，他念到一半，词没了。不是模糊，是彻底没了，像抽屉被人整个抽走。

台上静下来。他听见自己的呼吸，听见话筒里嗡嗡的电流声。一秒，两秒。台下开始有细碎的声音。他站在原地，手指抠着诗稿的角，抠出四个洞。第三十秒上，他开口了，词还是没回来，他用自己的话补：星星很多，很多，就是那种，你数着数着就忘了数到几的那种。后面他磕磕绊

绊把结尾接上了，念得跟背书一样，又跟背书完全不一样。

他鞠了躬下台，耳朵里全是自己的心跳。走到侧幕，台下掌声才响起来，先稀稀拉拉，然后齐了，像雨从零星到下大。同桌从座位上蹿起来冲他比大拇指，嘴型是：牛。他摆摆手，脸烫得能煎蛋。

回座位时，他桌上放着半瓶水，瓶盖是开的，瓶身上贴着一小条胶带，写着：给你留着。不知道谁贴的，猜是同桌，也可能是前排那个总回头的男生。他喝了两口，剩下的没舍得喝完。

后来周小舟还是话不多。只是班级要出节目时，点名册念到第十一行，他的手会先想一想，再举。那个忘词的三十秒他没跟谁说过，写在周记里，结尾他写：原来词丢了，人可以不跟着丢。

The Thirty Seconds Without Words on Stage

Zhou Xiaozhou signed up for the recitation because the Chinese teacher announced that each class needed one act for the party, and if nobody volunteered she would call names. Forty-six students in the class; his name sat on line eleven of the roster. When the teacher reached line eleven, he was head-down shredding his eraser. He looked up and met her eyes, and his hand went up. The instant it went up he regretted it, but the hand was already up.

From that day on he recited each evening at the full-length mirror in his bedroom, a long poem adapted from Little Boat, its second stanza about stars. His grandmother sat on the bed listening, then said he recited like he was memorizing textbooks. He knew it sounded like memorizing; memorizing was the only way he knew how to recite. At the classroom rehearsal, when he hit the second stanza, a girl in the front row turned to look at him, and his voice shrank on the spot, like a radio being turned down.

On the afternoon of Children's Day the auditorium hung with ribbons, and the front rows filled with parents. When the host announced the poetry recitation, Zhou Xiaozhou entered from the side. The spotlight hit his face; he couldn't see the audience, only a darkness, phones glinting faintly inside it. He began. The first stanza went smoothly, his voice louder than in rehearsal. The second stanza, the one about stars - halfway through, the words vanished. Not fuzzy: gone completely, like a drawer pulled clean out.

The stage went silent. He heard his own breathing, heard the hum of current in the microphone. One second, two. Faint rustling started in the audience. He stood frozen, fingers digging at the corner of his script, punching four little holes. At the thirtieth second he spoke - the words still never came back - and he filled the gap with his own words: There are lots of stars, lots, the kind where, you count and

count and forget what number you reached. After that he limped his way to the ending, stumbling, reciting like a textbook and yet nothing like a textbook.

He bowed and walked off, his ears pounding with his own heartbeat. Halfway to the wings, the applause finally started - scattered at first, then unified, like rain going from sparse to a downpour. His deskmate shot up from his seat and thrust a thumb at him, mouthing one word: awesome. He waved his hand off, his face hot enough to fry an egg.

Back at his seat sat half a bottle of water, cap already off, a strip of tape on the bottle reading: Saved for you. He never found out who put it there - probably his deskmate, maybe the boy in front who always turned around. He took two sips and couldn't bring himself to finish it.

Zhou Xiaozhou still doesn't talk much. Only, when the class needs an act and the roster reaches line eleven, his hand now thinks first, then rises. He never told anyone about those thirty forgotten seconds. He wrote them in his weekly journal, and its last line read: turns out the words can get lost without the person getting lost along with them.