六一排练日记：楼梯间的合唱声

五月二十六日 星期二 晴

音乐老师把我们的合唱排练安排在每天中午的楼梯间。楼梯间拢音，四十个人的声音挤在两层楼之间，唱歌的人自己先被吓一跳。我们唱《明天会更好》，分两个声部。第一遍，低声部总是被高声部带跑，音乐老师喊停六次。她不说重唱，只说把耳朵借给旁边的人。第二遍，楼梯间里真的安静了一秒，然后四十个声音自己找到了位置。

五月二十八日 星期四 阴

出事的是领唱的陈晚。她唱到第二段副歌，前奏过了两小节，她的声音没进来。四十个人里四十个声音都在，唯独缺她那条最高的线。音乐老师没喊停，带着大家唱完，然后才回头看陈晚。陈晚站在原地，手指抠着谱架的边。回教室的路上她一直走在最后。班长追上去跟她并排走，两个人头碰头说了一路。第二天中午，陈晚自己走到音乐老师面前说，再给我排一次。

五月三十日 星期六 晴

今天加排了一场，专门排副歌进唱。音乐老师让陈晚闭上眼睛，只听前奏，听到第三个音再开口。练了十几遍，陈晚的耳朵记住了那个音。排练完她站在楼梯间窗口，跟每个人说对不起。没人接她的对不起，大家只是起哄说再来一遍。她愣了一下，也笑了。

六月一日 星期四 晴

演出在下午第三节课，礼堂坐满了人。第二段副歌的前奏响起来的时候，我在后排屏住呼吸。两小节，三小节——陈晚的声音进来了，比排练时还高半度，稳稳压在所有声音上面。那一刻我鼻子有点酸。最后一个音收住，礼堂静了两秒，掌声才炸开。

后台拆领结的时候，陈晚说她上台前在厕所隔间里哭了五分钟。音乐老师路过，听见了，装作没听见，只说了句唱得好。回教室的路上，我们四十个人在走廊里排成一排，谁也没说话，可谁都在哼那段副歌。这一周最难的不是嗓子，是那个卡在两小节前奏里的声音，终于自己走出来了。

Children's Day Rehearsal Diary: Singing in the Stairwell

May 26th. Tuesday. Sunny.

The music teacher scheduled our choir rehearsals at noon every day, in the stairwell. The stairwell gathers sound — forty voices squeezed between two floors, so the singers frighten themselves first. We are singing Tomorrow Will Be Better, split into two parts. In the first run, the lower part kept getting dragged off by the higher part, and the teacher called stop six times. She did not say sing it again; she only said, lend your ear to the person beside you. On the second run the stairwell truly went quiet for one second, and then forty voices found their places on their own.

May 28th. Thursday. Overcast.

The trouble came for Chen Wan, our lead. In the second chorus, two bars past the intro, her voice never came in. Forty voices were there, and only her highest line was missing. The teacher did not stop us; she carried everyone through the song, then turned to look at Chen Wan. Chen Wan stood frozen, her fingers clawing the edge of the music stand. On the way back to class she walked at the very rear. The class monitor caught up and walked shoulder to shoulder with her, heads bent together the whole way. At noon the next day, Chen Wan walked up to the music teacher herself and said: give me one more rehearsal.

May 30th. Saturday. Sunny.

We added an extra session today, devoted to the chorus entry. The teacher had Chen Wan close her eyes, listen only to the intro, and come in on the third note. They ran it a dozen times until her ear memorized that note. After rehearsal she stood at the stairwell window and apologized to everyone one by one. Nobody accepted the apology; the class just heckled her into one more round. She froze for a second, then laughed too.

June 1st. Thursday. Sunny.

The performance was in the third period of the afternoon, the auditorium packed. When the intro of the second chorus began, I held my breath in the back row. Two bars, three bars — Chen Wan's voice came in, half a tone higher than in rehearsal, steady above every other voice. My nose stung a little at that moment. The last note closed, the auditorium stayed silent for two seconds, and then the applause burst.

Backstage, undoing bow ties, Chen Wan said she had cried five minutes in a bathroom stall before going on. The music teacher walked past, heard it, pretended not to, and only said: well sung. On the way back to class, the forty of us walked single file down the corridor, nobody talking, yet everyone humming that chorus. The hardest thing this week was not the voice — it was the voice stuck inside those two bars of intro, finally walking out on its own.

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