最后一个六一，我们在国旗下

老师们、同学们，早上好。站在这里之前，我在教室后排练了三遍稿子，每一遍都试图讲得庄重一点。可是今天早上走进校门，看见操场边那排梧桐树又高了一截，我突然不想念稿子了。我想跟你们聊聊天，聊我们都在里面的童年。

童年是什么形状的？我想了很久。它可能是夏天操场边没完没了的蝉声，是我们上体育课偷偷绕过去捉过一次蝉鸣的来源，结果什么也没捉到，上课铃响了，全班满头汗跑回队伍。它也可能是教室后墙那排粉笔印，从一年级量到六年级，最高的那个印子是我的，去年夏天量的，旁边有人用铅笔写了一句：还会再长。它更是每天放学在校门口的那个位置，妈妈站在那里，递过来一个拧开盖子的水壶。这个动作她做了六年，我从来没说过谢谢，今天当着全校说一次：妈妈，谢谢你们，把每一个放学都接住了。

我还要谢谢我们的老师。五年级那次我数学考砸，把卷子塞进书包最底层，以为没人发现。数学老师没有点名，只是在作业本里写了一行字：这一页翻过去，下一页重新开始。从那以后我的书包底层再也没塞过东西。老师，你们教给我们的，比课本上的多。

对我们六年级的同学来说，这是最后一个六一儿童节了。再过两个月，我们就要毕业。有人舍不得，有人偷偷兴奋。我想说，长大不是把童年丢掉，是把童年装进口袋。以后我们会上不同的中学，会在更远的地方升旗，可是捉不到的蝉、后墙的粉笔印、拧开盖子的水壶，都会跟着我们。低年级的同学们，你们的六一还有很多个，好好玩，好好长。

最后，请在国旗下的我们记住今天的风。它现在正从操场这边吹到那边，吹着国旗，也吹着我们。我们约定：珍惜每一个童年，长成值得自己骄傲的人。我的讲话完了，谢谢大家。

Our Last June First Under the Flag

Teachers and fellow students, good morning. Before standing here, I rehearsed my script three times in the back row of the classroom, trying each time to sound solemn. But this morning, walking through the school gate, I saw the row of plane trees by the playground had grown another notch taller, and suddenly I didn't want to read a script. I want to have a chat with you about the childhood we are all living inside.

What shape is childhood? I thought about it for a long time. It might be the endless cicadas by the playground in summer — the ones we once sneaked away during PE to find the source of, caught nothing, and ran back to our lines drenched in sweat when the bell rang. It might be the row of pencil marks on the back wall of our classroom, measured from first grade to sixth; the highest mark is mine, measured last summer, with a line in pencil beside it: will grow more. It is also that spot at the school gate every afternoon, where my mother stands and hands me a water bottle

with the lid already loosened. She has done this for six years and I never said thank you. Today, in front of the whole school, I say it once: Mom, thank you for catching every school dismissal.

I also want to thank our teachers. In fifth grade I failed a math test and stuffed the paper into the very bottom of my backpack, thinking nobody noticed. My math teacher never named me; she just wrote one line in my homework book: turn this page, start again on the next. Since then nothing has ever been stuffed into the bottom of my backpack again. Teachers, what you teach us goes far beyond the textbook.

For us sixth-graders, this is our last Children's Day. In two months we graduate. Some of us can't bear it; some secretly thrilled. I want to say: growing up is not throwing childhood away, it is putting childhood into your pocket. We will go to different middle schools, raise flags in farther places, but the cicada we never caught, the pencil marks on the wall, the loosened water bottle — all of it comes with us. Younger students, you have many June Firsts ahead. Play well, grow well.

Finally, let us who stand under the flag remember today's wind. Right now it blows from this side of the playground to that, blowing the flag, blowing us. We make a promise: cherish every childhood, and grow into people we are proud to be. That's my speech. Thank you.

升旗台上的三百秒

六一前的那个礼拜，我每天写完作业就对着卧室的镜子讲一遍。稿子是班主任陪我改了四稿的，第一稿里全是大人爱听的话，什么花儿啊园丁啊，改到第四稿，全换成了我自己的事。班主任说，国旗下讲话最要紧的不是漂亮，是真的。你讲真的，三百多个人就听得进去。

升旗是八点整。六点四十我就到了学校，礼堂后台候场，手里捏着稿子，纸边被我捏出了毛。前面是四年级的护旗队入场，脚步声整整齐齐，我的心跳比他们的脚步还响。轮到我上台，台阶一共五级，我记得很清楚，因为我数着走的。站上升旗台，全校的人都在下面，太阳刚好在国旗旁边，照得我眯眼。第一句话出口的时候声音有点抖，我说：老师们、同学们，早上好。第二句开始就稳了。

我讲了我的童年。我讲我们家楼下有一棵歪脖子枣树，我五岁爬上去过一次，下不来了，是爸爸搬梯子来把我抱下来的，我在梯子上搂着他脖子，闻到满鼻子他衣服上的洗衣粉味。现在那棵树被砍了，小区修了停车场，可是每年六月，洗衣粉味一钻进鼻子，我就回到那架梯子上。我讲我要谢谢两个人：谢谢我的爸爸，那天在梯子上一直说没事没事；谢谢我的班主任，她把一篇全是空话的稿子退给我四次，说重写，你能找到更好的。

我还讲了我们的约定。我跟全校的同学说：童年是有期限的，我们谁也没法让它停下来，可是可以让它记得住。这个六一，去做一件你长大了会想起来笑的事。去爬一次树，去放一次风筝，去跟好朋友在操场上转圈转到头晕。我在台上说这句话的时候，下面三年级那一片先笑出了声，然后整个操场都在笑。那不是起哄，那是听懂了。

讲完是三百零几秒，我记不太清。下台阶的时候腿还是软的，回到队伍里，班主任朝我竖了一下大拇指。后来一个三年级的男生跑过来跟我说，他真的打算去放风筝。那天下午我把稿子叠成纸飞机，从教室窗口放出去。它没有飞远，落在操场边的花坛里，被风翻过来，正面朝上，像它本来就该待在那儿。

Three Hundred Seconds on the Podium

The week before June First, I gave my speech to the bedroom mirror every evening after homework. Our homeroom teacher sat with me through four drafts. The first was full of grown-up phrases about flowers and gardeners; by the fourth, every line was something that actually happened to me. She said the most important thing in a flag speech is not beauty but truth — speak truly, and three hundred people will listen.

The ceremony was at eight sharp. I arrived at six forty and waited backstage in the hall, clutching my script until its edges frayed. Ahead of me the fourth-grade flag guard entered, footsteps perfectly even, and my heart beat louder than they did. When my turn came, I climbed onto the podium — five steps, I remember clearly, because I counted each one. Up there, the whole school below me, the sun right beside the flag, making me squint. My voice trembled a little on the first sentence: Teachers and fellow students, good morning. By the second sentence it steadied.

I told them about my childhood. Under our old apartment building stood a crooked jujube tree. At five I once climbed it and couldn't get down; my father brought a ladder and carried me off it, and up on the ladder I hugged his neck with his laundry detergent filling my nose. The tree is gone now, replaced by a parking lot, but every June, the moment that detergent smell reaches me, I am back on that ladder. I said I wanted to thank two people: my father, who kept saying it's okay, it's okay up on the ladder; and my homeroom teacher, who returned my empty-worded script four times saying rewrite it, you can find something better.

I also told them about our promise. I said to the whole school: childhood has a term limit, none of us can make it stop, but we can make it memorable. This June First, go do one thing you will smile about when you are grown. Climb a tree, fly a kite, spin in circles on the playground with your best friend until you are dizzy. As I said this from the podium, the third-graders' section laughed first, and then the whole playground laughed. That wasn't heckling. That was understanding.

The speech lasted just over three hundred seconds; I don't remember exactly. My legs were still weak coming down the steps, and back in line our homeroom teacher gave me a thumbs-up. Later a third-grade boy ran up to tell me he really was going to fly a kite. That afternoon I folded my script into a paper airplane and launched it from the classroom window. It didn't fly far — it landed in the flowerbed by the playground, turned over by the wind, face up, as if that was where it belonged.

写给二十年后的自己

今年六一的升旗仪式，和往年不一样。班主任说，国旗下讲话我们不讲排练好的套话，全班每人写一句话，写给二十年后的自己，由我挑几句念给全校听。这个决定在班里炸开了锅：有人问二十年后的自己还认不认得现在的字，有人说要写就要写最厉害的愿望。我收纸条的时候，三十九张，每张都折成不同的形状，有的折成飞机，有的折成方块，还有一张折成了一颗星星。

讲话那天早上，我在台上展开那些纸条。我说：同学们，二十年后，我们三十九个人里，有人可能成了老师，有人可能成了修飞机的人，有人可能在做我们现在还没听说过的工作。但是不管成了什么，下面这些话是九岁的你写给大人的。然后我念。有人写：你还会不会在夏天找蝉？有人写：别忘了你三年级最好的朋友叫小航，你们拉过钩。有人写：希望二十年后的你，看到有人摔倒还会去扶。念到这句的时候操场特别安静，安静得能听见旗在响。

我也念了自己那张。我写的是：你还记得妈妈每天拧开的水壶盖吗？记得的话，就回去帮她拧一次。念完我朝三年级那一片看，我妈妈就站在家长观礼区，她愣了一下，然后抬手晃了晃，像赶走什么，又像是在打招呼。

讲话的最后，我把三十九张纸条装进一个铁盒，封条上写着开盒日期：二十年后的六一。铁盒交给了学校档案室，保管单由班长签的名。校长在总结讲话里说，这是他听过最短的一次国旗下讲话，也是他最不想打断的一次。

散会回教室的路上，同桌问我，二十年后的我们真的会打开那个盒子吗。我说不知道，但是写信这件事已经完成了——写下的那一秒，九岁的我们就已经站到了大人面前，把童年递了过去。风从操场那边过来，把队伍里校服的衣角吹得轻轻动。那天没有一个人说笑。我们都在心里，给自己存了一封信。

A Letter to Myself Twenty Years From Now

This year's June First flag ceremony was different from any before. Our homeroom teacher announced that for the flag speech we would skip the rehearsed clichés: every student in the class would write one sentence to themselves twenty years from now,

and I would read a few chosen lines aloud to the whole school. The class erupted. Someone asked whether the grown-up version of them would still recognize their handwriting; someone said if you write, write the grandest wish. When I collected the slips there were thirty-nine, each folded differently — some into airplanes, some into squares, one into a star.

On the morning of the ceremony I unfolded the slips on the podium. I said: fellow students, in twenty years, among our thirty-nine, someone may be a teacher, someone may repair airplanes, someone may be doing a job none of us has heard of yet. But whatever you become, the words below are written to the grown-up you by the nine-year-old you. Then I read. One said: do you still hunt for cicadas in summer? Another: don't forget your best friend in third grade was named Xiaohang, you once pinky-promised. Another: I hope the you of twenty years later still helps up anyone you see fall. When I read that line, the playground went very quiet — quiet enough to hear the flag rustling.

I read my own slip too. Mine said: do you still remember the water-bottle lid Mom loosened every day? If you do, go home and loosen it for her once. After reading, I looked toward the third-grade section. My mother was standing in the parents' area; she froze for a moment, then raised her hand and waved — as if shooing something away, or as if saying hello.

At the end of the speech I put all thirty-nine slips into a tin box, its seal strip marked with the opening date: June First, twenty years later. The box went to the school archive, and the class monitor signed the custody receipt. In his closing remarks the principal said it was the shortest flag speech he had ever heard, and the one he least wanted to interrupt.

On the walk back to class, my deskmate asked whether the us of twenty years later would really open that box. I said I don't know, but the writing was already finished the moment it was done — in the second we wrote it down, the nine-year-old us had already stood before the grown-ups and handed over childhood. Wind came across the playground, stirring the hems of our uniforms in the line. Not a single person joked that day. Inside, each of us had saved a letter for ourselves.

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