展开一架旧纸飞机

周末整理储物间，我从一只旧纸箱的底层摸出一架纸飞机。纸黄了，边角起了毛，折痕却还清楚。我把它放在膝上，一点点展开。折痕已经发脆，不敢用力，像揭一层薄冰。纸是旧作业本，格子已经淡了，内侧有一行铅笔字：李小满的飞机，不许偷飞。我盯着这个名字看了很久，才想起来那是我，三年级时签的字。

这架飞机是那个夏天折的。同桌从家里带来半本用旧的作业本，我们趴在课桌上折，指甲顺着边压过去，压一道，吹一下灰，机头在桌角上磕两下，说这样飞得稳。折好的飞机藏在书包夹层，攒到儿童节才舍得放。老教学楼有三层，二楼和三楼之间有一段外廊，栏杆是铁皮的，漆掉得斑斑驳驳。我们排队趴在栏杆上，轮流往下扔。轮到我，我哈一口气，松手，飞机斜着冲下去，掠过楼下那一排梧桐的树冠，有一瞬间挂在半空，我们趴在栏杆上欢呼，叶子哗啦啦地响。第二天，校长在梧桐枝头挂了彩旗，我们仰着头数颜色，红的一串，黄的一串。那是为六一儿童节挂的。

节日那天，每人领一个牛皮纸袋，袋口用订书机钉着，要沿着边慢慢撕开。里面几颗水果糖、一块奶糖、一小包冲汽水的粉。我把纸袋攒起来，叠成小方包，压在铅笔盒底下。最后一颗水果糖一直舍不得吃，放到糖纸都皱了，糖在兜里化得变了形，才一口吃掉，那点甜味记了很多年。

女儿不知什么时候探头进来，问我折什么。我抽出一张纸，当场折了一架。手指生了，翅膀一边高一边低，递给她。她站到沙发上往下扔，飞机一头栽进靠垫，她咯咯笑，回头问我：这个就叫纸飞机吗？我说叫。她说：它飞得一点都不远。我说，它小时候不算矮，曾经有一架，飞过一整排梧桐树。她不懂，把新飞机摆到书桌上，和铅笔盒并排放好。

旧的那架，我顺着原来的折痕重新折好，夹进一本厚书，立在书架上，就在她的铅笔盒旁边。窗外正好有风，梧桐的叶子响了一下，很轻，像谁在很远的地方翻了一页纸。

Unfolding an Old Paper Airplane

While tidying the storeroom one weekend, I fished a paper airplane out of the bottom of an old cardboard box. The paper had yellowed, the corners frayed, but the creases were still sharp. I laid it on my knee and unfolded it bit by bit. The folds had gone brittle; I dared not press hard, as if peeling thin ice. It was folded from an old exercise book, its grid lines faded, and inside was a pencil line: Li Xiaoman's plane, no stealing flights. I stared at the name a long time before remembering it was me, signed in third grade.

The plane was folded that summer. My deskmate brought half a used exercise book from home, and we folded it flat on the desk, pressing our nails along each edge, blowing off the dust, tapping the nose twice against the desk corner because that made it fly steadier. The finished planes went into the hidden pocket of our schoolbags, saved until Children's Day before we dared let them fly. The old teaching building had three floors, with an open corridor between the second and third, its

iron railing peeling in patches. We lined up leaning on the railing, taking turns throwing down. When my turn came, I breathed on it, let go, and the plane dove sideways, skimming the crowns of the plane trees below, hanging in midair for a moment while we cheered from the railing and the leaves rustled. The next day the headmaster hung colored flags in the plane trees, and we tilted our heads back counting the colors, a string of red, a string of yellow. That was for Children's Day.

On the holiday each of us got a kraft paper bag, its mouth stapled shut, to be torn open slowly along the edge. Inside were a few fruit candies, a milk candy, and a small packet of powder for making soda. I kept the bags, folded into little squares, pressed under my pencil case. The last fruit candy I could not bear to eat; I kept it until the wrapper wrinkled and the candy melted misshapen in my pocket, then ate it in one bite. That sweetness I remembered for years.

At some point my daughter poked her head in and asked what I was folding. I pulled out a sheet of paper and folded one on the spot. My fingers had gone clumsy, the wings uneven, and I handed it over. She stood on the sofa and threw it down; the plane nosedived into a cushion. She giggled and asked, Is this really called a paper airplane? I said yes. She said, It doesn't fly far at all. I said, When it was young it flew quite high - once there was one that sailed over a whole row of plane trees. She did not understand. She set the new plane on her desk, neatly beside her pencil case.

The old one I refolded along its original creases, slipped it into a thick book, and stood it on the shelf right next to her pencil case. Outside the window the wind rose, and the plane tree leaves rustled once, softly, like someone far away turning a page.