风筝、棉花糖和一个下午

六一点半刚过，闹钟还没响，女儿就爬上床扯我的耳朵：爸爸，你答应今天带我去公园的。我睁开眼，看见她的书包放在床头，昨天她亲手把风筝装进去，风筝的尾巴从拉链口露出一截。

到公园时，东门口的队伍已经排到人行道边上。她也不嫌等，踮着脚往大草坪那边望，像是怕风被别人抢走。进了园她就往前跑，抱着风筝，像抱着怕被人抢走的宝贝。我拎的水瓶和外套跟在后面，脚步慢慢追上她的脚步。

风筝头几回没飞起来。风一阵一阵的，风筝升到一半又栽下去。她抢着去抓线轴，手小，线勒得手指发红。我把风筝举高，喊一声跑，她跑出去几步一回头，风筝吃住了风，一下子蹿上去，她在原地喊起来，飞起来了，飞起来了。我站在原地两手空空，掌心倒有些发酸，举风筝举的。

风筝飞高了，线绷得嗡嗡响。她两只手攥着线轴，身子往后坐，像拽住一条要进港的船。路过的人停下来看，她更来劲，一会儿放线，一会儿收线。风软下来，风筝往下飘，她跑过去迎住，把风筝搂在怀里拍两下，说辛苦了辛苦了。我掏手机想拍张照，她头也不回，眼睛一直跟着风筝。

出园的路上有棉花糖摊。她站在摊前不动，我买了个最大的，粉色的糖丝比她的头还大。咬一口，满嘴黏糊糊的甜，她眯起眼睛嗯了一声。走了一半，棉花糖开始化，糖水顺着她的手指往下淌，她边走边舔手指，手背蹭得亮晶晶。我抽纸巾要给她擦，她把手一缩，说擦了就不得味了。

出公园时太阳已经偏西。她坐在园门口的观光车上，一手举着风筝，一手举着棉花糖棍，脸上花得很，糖渣沾在腮帮子上，粘着一缕头发。她抬头冲我笑，缺了颗门牙，眼睛眯成两条缝。那个笑亮得我移开眼，又忍不住看回来。

回家的路上她在车里睡着了。风筝压在她腿上，棉花糖棍还捏在手心，我轻轻给她抽出来。后视镜里她的脸，腮上还有糖的痕迹。我把车开得很慢，怕颠醒她。

A Kite, Cotton Candy, and an Afternoon

At half past five on the morning of Children's Day, before the alarm went off, my daughter had already climbed onto the bed and tugged my ear. Dad, you promised to take me to the park today. I opened my eyes and saw her school bag beside the bed. She had packed the kite into it herself the night before, and the tail of the kite stuck out of the zipper.

By the time we reached the park, the line at the east gate already stretched to the sidewalk. She did not mind waiting. She stood on tiptoe looking toward the big lawn, as if afraid someone would take the wind first. Once inside, she ran ahead, carrying the kite like a treasure someone might snatch. I followed with a water bottle and a jacket, and my steps gradually caught up with hers.

The first few tries at flying the kite failed. The wind was fitful, and the kite

climbed halfway and fell back. She tried to grab the spool herself, but her hands were too small and the line cut her fingers red. I held the kite high and shouted run. She ran a few steps, looked back, and the kite caught the wind and rose all at once. She shouted on the spot, it is flying, it is flying. I stood there with empty hands, my palms sore from holding the kite up too long.

When the kite was high, the string hummed tight. She held the spool with both hands, leaning back, like someone pulling a boat into harbor. Passersby stopped to watch, and she got more spirited, letting out line and reeling it back. When the wind softened and the kite drifted down, she ran to meet it, hugged it to her chest, and patted it, saying well done, well done. I took out my phone for a photo. She never looked at the camera. Her eyes stayed on the kite.

On the way out there was a cotton candy stall. She stopped in front of it, frozen, and I bought the biggest one. The pink cotton candy was larger than her head. One bite left her mouth full of sticky sweetness, and she closed her eyes and made an mm sound. Halfway along, the cotton candy began to melt, and sugar ran down her fingers. She licked her fingers as she walked, her knuckles shiny and sticky. I reached for a tissue, and she dodged my hand, saying it would not taste right if wiped off.

When we left the park, the sun had slanted west. She sat on the shuttle cart at the gate, the kite in one hand and the candy stick in the other, her face a mess, sugar crumbs on her cheek with a strand of hair stuck to it. She looked up and grinned at me, missing a front tooth, her eyes squeezed into two crescents. That smile was so bright I looked away and then looked back.

She fell asleep in the car on the way home. The kite lay crushed on her lap, and the candy stick was still in her hand, so I pried it out gently. The rearview mirror showed her face, the sugar still on her cheek. I drove very slowly, afraid even the bumps would wake her.

棉花糖化在手指上

棉花糖在化。粉色的糖丝塌在女儿的手指上，黏的，她把手举起来舔，舌头绕着圈。我蹲下来拿湿巾给她擦，她把手藏到背后，别擦，擦了就不得甜了。

半个钟头前，她站在棉花糖摊前，看糖在转动的杆上变成丝。她不出声，整个身子往前探，鼻尖几乎贴上玻璃。摊主把棉花糖递给她，她两只手捧着转过来，一路朝我走一路笑，棉花糖蹭在腮上，蹭出一道粉印子。

放风筝的差事归她爸。爷俩在大草坪上占了块地方，爸爸举着风筝，女儿攥着线轴。跑，爸爸喊一声，女儿冲出去，辫子在背后颠。风筝晃了两下，起来了。女儿回头，跟她爸的眼神撞在一处，两个人同时笑，像藏了一百年的秘密终于说出口。

我坐在长椅上看他们，膝盖上放着喝了一半的水瓶。草坪上全是跑动的孩子，大人散在外围，姿势都差不多，身子微微前倾，随时准备冲过去。隔两条椅子有位妈妈也在看自家孩子放风筝，我们的目光碰了一下，都笑了笑。谁也没说话，谁都明白。

风筝越飞越高，线绷直了。女儿撂下线轴，去追草地上风筝的影子，跳起来想抓住它。当然抓不住，影子从她脚底下溜走。她连跳了几下，一屁股摔坐在草地上。她没哭，坐在原地咯咯地笑，笑得眼睛闭紧，整个人缩成一团。我用手机拍照，拍下来的画面里，那点笑声一分都没装进去。

回家的路上她在推车里睡着了，一只手还半握着，像攥着棉花糖的形状。糖棍掉在车板上，风筝叠起来垫在她屁股底下。我把毯子给她拉到下巴，推着车沿人行道慢慢走。路灯一盏一盏亮起来，树影从她脸上扫过去。

到家她爸把她抱上楼。我去洗湿巾，发现桌上放棉花糖的地方留下一圈粉色的印子。我用手指抹了一下，还是甜的。

Cotton Candy Melting on Her Fingers

The cotton candy was melting. Pink sugar threads collapsed onto my daughter's fingers, sticky, and she raised her hand to lick them, her tongue going round and round. I crouched down to wipe her hand with a wet wipe, and she hid it behind her back. Do not wipe, she said, if you wipe it stops tasting sweet.

Half an hour earlier she had stood in front of the cotton candy stall, watching the sugar spin into threads on the turning rod. She made no sound, her whole body leaning in, the tip of her nose almost touching the glass. When the vendor handed her the candy, she held it with both hands, turned around, and walked toward me grinning, and the cotton candy pressed against her cheek, leaving a pink mark.

Flying the kite was her father's job. The two of them claimed a spot on the big lawn, he holding up the kite, she holding the spool. Run, he shouted, and she took off, her braids bouncing behind her. The kite wobbled twice and climbed. She looked back, her eyes met her father's, and the two of them laughed at the same time, like a secret kept for a hundred years and finally told.

I sat on a bench watching them, a half-finished water bottle on my lap. The lawn was full of running children, and the adults scattered around them all held the same posture, leaning slightly forward, ready to rush over at any moment. A mother two benches away was also watching her child fly a kite, and our eyes met for a second,

and we smiled at each other. Nobody spoke, and everybody understood.

The kite climbed higher, the string pulled taut. My daughter let go of the spool and chased the shadow of the kite across the grass, jumping up to catch it. Of course she could not. The shadow slid under her feet. She jumped several times and fell down onto the grass. She did not cry. She sat there and laughed out loud, laughing with her eyes shut tight and her whole body curled up. I took a photo with my phone, and the picture held not one part of that laugh.

On the way home she slept in the stroller, one hand still half closed, as if it remembered the shape of the cotton candy. The candy stick had fallen to the floor of the cart, and the kite was folded under her bottom. I pulled the blanket up to her chin and pushed her slowly along the sidewalk. The street lamps came on one after another, and tree shadows crossed her face.

When we got home, her father carried her upstairs. I went to wash the wet wipes and found a pink ring on the table where the cotton candy had been set down. I wiped it with my finger, and it was still sweet.

公园西边的风

公园西边的风，六月初最好。儿子攥着线轴站在风口，我站在几步开外，两只手插在兜里。他已经不用我了，举风筝、放线、跑，全是他自己一个人的事。

风筝升得很稳。他一点一点放线，动作平静，没有小时候那种非要喊一嗓子飞起来了的兴奋。我记得头一年放风筝，他刚上二年级，跑起来歪歪扭扭，风筝跟着他歪歪扭扭地升，他回头看我，满脸都是笑。今天他只回了一次头，看见我站着，又把头转了回去。

我坐在长椅上看。他比从前高了，肩膀也打开了，攥着线轴站在那里，像个小大人。风大些，线嗡嗡地响，他把线轴的角度调了调，风筝又往上窜了一截。我掏出手机想拍照，想了想又收起来，觉得拍照有点像打扰。

过一会儿他回来了，风筝落在身后的草地上，他也不管。爸，我想吃棉花糖。他自己掏钱买的，掏的是奶奶给他的硬币，一把摆在摊台上数。摊主给做了个蓝色的，他捧着走回来，还没走近就把一半举到我面前，你尝尝，蓝莓味的。我咬一口，就是糖水。他看我吃瘪的样子，笑得眼睛弯起来，不是蓝莓味吧，骗你的。

我就是那时候看见他笑的。他在家里话不多，笑得更少，房门一关写作业，出来也戴着耳机。那天在公园正当中，风筝落在他身后，棉花糖的糖沾在手指上，他笑得直不起腰。长椅边几个老人看过来，他一点没察觉。

我们在公园待到太阳偏西。他收风筝，把骨架一根一根抽出来叠好，叠得比叠课本仔细。回

家的路上他走在前头看手机，我走在后头。他忽然回头说，爸，明年六一还来放风筝吧。我说好。他把手机收起来，加快两步赶上我，旁边并着走，别的什么也没再说。

上车他摇下一半车窗，风把袋子里剩的棉花糖吹得动。他望着窗外忽然说，其实我不是很爱吃棉花糖了。我没接话。风从车窗灌进来，带着一点糖的甜味。我明白他的意思，也明白他还是肯买一个给我。

The Wind on the West Side of the Park

The wind on the west side of the park is the best in early June. My son stood facing it with the spool in his hands, and I stood a few steps behind, both hands in my pockets. He no longer needed me. Holding the kite, letting out line, and running were all his own business now.

The kite climbed steadily. He paid out line little by little, his movements calm, without the excitement of when he was small, when he had to shout that it was flying. I remembered the first year we flew a kite. He had just started second grade, running crookedly, the kite climbing crookedly after him, and he turned back to look at me with a face full of smile. Today he looked back only once, saw me standing there, and turned his head away again.

I sat on a bench and watched. He was taller than before, his shoulders opened out, standing there with the spool like a small adult. The wind freshened and the string hummed. He adjusted the angle of the spool, and the kite climbed another notch. I took out my phone, thought about a photo, and put it away. It felt as if taking one would be an interruption.

After a while he came back, the kite dropped onto the grass behind him, and he did not mind it at all. Dad, I want cotton candy, he said. He paid for it himself, taking out the coins his grandmother had given him and laying them on the stall counter one by one. The vendor made a blue one. He carried it back and, before he was even close, held half of it up to me. Try it, he said, blueberry flavor. I took a bite. It was only sugar water. He laughed at my face, his eyes crinkling. Not blueberry, right, I tricked you.

That was when I saw him smile. At home he does not talk much and laughs even less, shutting his door over his homework, coming out with his earphones in. That day, in the middle of the park, with the kite fallen behind him and candy sugar on his fingers, he laughed so hard he bent over. A few old people by the bench looked over, and he never noticed.

We stayed until the sun tilted west. He took the kite apart, pulling out the

frame sticks one by one and folding them, more carefully than he folds his textbooks. On the way home he walked in front looking at his phone, and I walked behind. Suddenly he turned and said, Dad, let us come fly kites again next Children's Day. I said all right. He put the phone away, quickened his pace to catch up, walked shoulder to shoulder with me, and said nothing else.

In the car he rolled the window halfway down, and the wind stirred the leftover cotton candy in the bag. Looking out the window he said suddenly, actually, I am not really into cotton candy anymore. I did not answer. The wind blew in from the window with a faint sweetness of sugar. I understood what he meant, and I understood that he had still been willing to buy one for me.