装走调的礼物盒

六一那天，学校给每个孩子发一个礼物盒。盒子是粉蓝色的，盖子上贴着一颗星星。豆豆领到一个，抱在怀里一路小跑回家，连午饭都忘了吃，只想先把盒子打开。

盒子里躺着一个木头八音盒，圆滚滚的，顶上有个金色的小发条。豆豆拧了三圈，松开，八音盒唱起来了，叮叮咚咚，是《小星星》。豆豆把耳朵贴在盒子上听，觉得这首歌原来这么小，小得只够装进一只耳朵。

第二天音乐课，音乐老师说，把你们的八音盒带来，我们合奏一首。教室里四十个八音盒一起响，叮叮咚咚挤成一团，像四十只小鸟一起开口。豆豆拧他的八音盒，拧到第四圈，咔哒一声，发条空了。八音盒不唱了，木头肚子哑了。

豆豆把八音盒抱在手里，头低下去。旁边的音音听见了，说，你的盒子怎么了。豆豆说，它死了。音音说，盒子不会死的，它只是忘了调子。

音乐老师走过来，看了看八音盒，说，盒子忘了调子，那我们就教它。她抬起手，全班安静下来。老师说，豆豆的盒子给大家起头，我们用嗓子唱。豆豆拧了一下空发条，咔哒，没声音，可是全班唱起来了，叮叮咚咚的调子从四十个嗓子里出来，比八音盒的声音大多了。

唱到第二遍，同学们自己加了动作，左边二十人唱高音，右边二十人唱低音，音音负责拍手打拍子。豆豆站在中间，手里捧着哑掉的八音盒，唱得比谁都大声。他的嗓子有点走调，可是没有一个人笑他，走调的那一句，大家反而唱得更齐，像怕他跟不上。

下课以后，音音跟豆豆说，你的盒子还是不会唱。豆豆把八音盒放回粉蓝色的盒子里，盖上盖子，盖子上那颗星星亮了一下，其实是窗外的太阳照的。豆豆说，没关系，我替它唱。

放学回家，豆豆把八音盒摆在书桌上，每天拧三圈，虽然它一声不吭，豆豆就在旁边给它伴唱。妈妈说，盒子坏了他还唱。豆豆说，它不是坏了，它把调子存我这儿了。

The Gift Box That Held a Sour Note

On Children's Day the school gave every child a gift box. The box was pinkish blue with a star stuck on the lid. Doudou got one and ran all the way home hugging it, forgetting lunch, wanting only to open it first.

Inside lay a wooden music box, round and plump, with a tiny golden winding key on top. Doudou wound it three turns and let go, and the box began to sing, tinkling out Twinkle Twinkle Little Star. Doudou pressed his ear against the box and thought, so this song is this small, small enough to fit inside one ear.

The next day in music class, the teacher said, bring your music boxes, we will play together. Forty music boxes rang at once in the classroom, tinkles crowding into

one big sound, like forty little birds opening their mouths together. Doudou wound his box, and on the fourth turn it went click, and the spring went empty. The box stopped singing. Its wooden belly had gone mute.

Doudou held the box in both hands and lowered his head. The girl beside him, Yinyin, heard the click and asked, what happened to your box. Doudou said, it died. Yinyin said, boxes do not die, it just forgot the tune.

The music teacher walked over, looked at the box, and said, if the box forgot the tune, then we will teach it. She raised her hand, and the class went quiet. The teacher said, Doudou's box will give us the starting beat, and we will sing with our voices. Doudou turned the empty key once, click, no sound, but the whole class began to sing, the tinkling tune coming out of forty voices, much bigger than any music box.

By the second round the children added their own moves, the twenty on the left singing high notes, the twenty on the right singing low, and Yinyin clapping the beat. Doudou stood in the middle holding his mute box, singing louder than anyone. His voice went a little sour on one line, but nobody laughed. On that sour line everyone actually sang more together, as if afraid he could not keep up.

After class Yinyin said to Doudou, your box still cannot sing. Doudou put the music box back into the pinkish blue box and closed the lid, and the star on the lid flashed once, though it was really the sun outside the window. Doudou said, it is all right, I will sing for it.

When he got home he set the box on his desk and wound it three turns every day. It made no sound at all, but Doudou sang along beside it. His mother said, the box is broken and you still sing. Doudou said, it is not broken, it stored its tune inside me.

礼物盒自己的一天

我是一只礼物盒，纸做的，身上印着气球。六一早上八点，我被放在二年级三班的讲台上，我们一箱十二只，排成一排。我的任务是等一个孩子把我领走，可我从八点等到九点，一只都没被领走。

九点是音乐课。音乐老师抱走我们中间的一只，说今天玩传盒子，音乐响就传，音乐停，盒子在谁手里，谁就打开。我站在讲台上看得眼热，传盒子有什么难的，我还会唱歌呢，我肚子里装着一支银色口琴，只是没人拧开我。

音乐响起来，盒子们开始传。传到第三轮，音乐停了，盒子停在一个小辫子女孩手里。她站

起来，打开盖子，拿出里面的口琴，脸红了。她吹了一个音，就一个音，嘟，然后她把口琴放回盒子，坐下了。她叫小雅，后来我知道的。她坐下的时候，把那只盒子抱在怀里没还回去。

第二天，我被领走了。领走我的就是小雅。她抱着我回家，路上一直低头看我的气球印花。她打开我的时候很小心，先把星星贴纸揭下来放平，再掀盖子。她拿出口琴，对着窗户吹，嘟，嘟，嘟，吹了一整个下午。她吹得其实不好，一个音一个音地挪，像走路还不太稳。

音乐课又到了。老师说要两人一组合奏，小雅站在原地不动，她没有伙伴。旁边的胖墩举着口琴跑过来，说跟我一组吧，我吹得响，你吹得高。小雅点点头。他们排练，胖墩吹得咚咚响，小雅跟得上，就是不敢大声。胖墩说，你大声点，我的声音大，能带着你。

汇报演出的时候，小雅那组第一个上台。小雅站到话筒前，攥着口琴，攥得手心都湿了。音乐起来，胖墩先吹，响得像打鼓，小雅的口琴跟进去，细细的一条线，从鼓声里穿出来。吹到一半，小雅忽然抬起了头。

吹完，全班鼓掌。小雅跑下台，把我打开，把口琴放进去，又把我合上。她小声跟我说，明天还练。我说好，虽然我是一纸盒子，不会说话，可她听见了。

现在我在小雅的床头，每天夜里都梦见音乐课。其实礼物盒也有节日，我们的节日就是被打开的那一天。我等了两年才等到小雅，值了。

A Day in the Life of a Gift Box

I am a gift box, made of cardboard, printed with balloons. At eight on Children's Day morning I was set on the podium of Class Three, Grade Two. We came in a crate of twelve, standing in a row. My job was to wait for a child to take me home, but I waited from eight to nine and nobody took me.

At nine came music class. The music teacher picked up one of us and said today we play pass the box: pass it while the music plays, and when the music stops, whoever holds the box opens it. I watched from the podium, itching to join. Passing a box is not hard. I can even sing. Inside me is a silver harmonica; nobody has just opened me yet.

The music started and the boxes began to travel. In the third round the music stopped, and a box landed in the hands of a girl with a braid. She stood up, opened the lid, took out the harmonica, and blushed. She played one note, just one, toot, then put the harmonica back and sat down. Her name is Xiao Ya, I learned later. When she sat, she kept that box in her lap and did not return it.

The next day I was taken home, and the one who took me was Xiao Ya. She carried me along the way, head down, looking at my balloon print. She opened me carefully, first peeling off the star sticker and setting it flat, then lifting the lid. She

took out the harmonica and played toward the window, toot, toot, toot, the whole afternoon. She was not really good at it, moving note by note, like a child still unsteady on her feet.

Music class came again. The teacher said to play in pairs. Xiao Ya stood still. She had no partner. A chubby boy next to her ran over with his harmonica and said, pair with me, I play loud, you play high. Xiao Ya nodded. They rehearsed. The boy played booming like a drum, and Xiao Ya kept up, just too shy to play loudly. The boy said, play louder, my sound is big enough to carry you.

At the class showcase their pair went first. Xiao Ya stood at the microphone, harmonica in hand, her palm wet with sweat. The music began, the boy played first, loud as drums, and Xiao Ya's harmonica joined in, a thin thread of sound threading out through the drumming. Halfway through, she suddenly raised her head.

When they finished, the whole class applauded. Xiao Ya ran off stage, opened me, put the harmonica inside, and closed me again. She whispered to me, we practice again tomorrow. I said all right. I am only a cardboard box and cannot talk, but she heard me.

Now I sit by Xiao Ya's bed, and every night I dream of music class. Gift boxes have holidays too. Our holiday is the day we get opened. I waited two years to find Xiao Ya, and it was worth it.

半块橡皮和一整首歌

六一那天，全班每个人都收到一个礼物盒。石头的盒子包着花牛纸，他凑到耳朵边摇了摇，里面哗啦哗啦响，像装了一把小石头。他想当场拆开，老师说，礼物要在音乐课上拆，才算全班一起过的节。

音乐课上，老师敲鼓，同学们把盒子从一只手传到另一只手。鼓声一停，盒子停在谁手里，谁就拆开给大家看。第一个拆的是小虎，盒子里是一只口哨，他吹了三声，全班跟着学鸟叫。第二个是蓝诺，里面是一根跳绳，老师让大家轮流跳了一圈。

鼓又响了，盒子又传起来。鼓一停，盒子正好落在石头手里。他刚要拆，老师说，时间到了，下节课接着玩。石头捧着盒子捧了很久，到底没拆成。

下课，石头把没拆的盒子放回课桌，压在最底下。同桌甜甜看见了，把自己的盒子打开，从里面拿出一块草莓形状的粉橡皮，从中间掰成两半，推过来一半。甜甜说，给你一半，这样你也有一份礼物了。

石头把那半块橡皮放进铅笔盒，又舍不得用，改摆在书桌角上。那半块橡皮有淡淡的草莓味，闻

一下，就想起音乐课上没拆开的盒子。

第二天，石头抱着自己的礼物盒到学校，放到甜甜桌上。他说，你来拆，我们分。甜甜说，为什么呀，你昨天不是没拆成。石头说，所以才要今天拆，拆出来一半是你的，一半是我的。

盒子打开，里面是一把小口琴，七个白键。甜甜按了一个键，嘟，是do。石头按了一个，嘟，是mi。两个人一起按，声音小小的，像一首歌在教室里跑来跑去。

后来音乐课再传盒子，同学们敲鼓都敲得慢了些，好像都想让盒子停在石头手里。石头的口琴一点一点吹出了《小星星》，吹的时候他总从mi起头，因为那是甜甜先听见的音。

Half an Eraser and a Whole Song

On June 1st every child in the class got a gift box. Shitou's box was wrapped in cow-print paper. He shook it by his ear and heard a rustle, like a pocket of small stones. He wanted to open it at once, but the teacher said, gifts open in music class, so it counts as a gift the whole class shares.

In music class the teacher beat a drum and the children passed the boxes from hand to hand. When the drum stopped, the child holding a box opened it for everyone. The first was Xiaohu, inside was a whistle, he blew three notes and the class learned to call like birds. The second was Lanuo, inside was a jump rope, and everyone took a turn jumping.

The drum beat again and the boxes moved on. It stopped, and the box landed in Shitou's hands. He was about to open it when the teacher said, time is up, we continue next class. Shitou held the box a long time and never got his turn.

After class Shitou put the closed box at the bottom of his desk. His deskmate Tiantian saw it, opened her own box, took out a strawberry-shaped pink eraser, broke it in half down the middle, and pushed one half over. She said, here, this half is yours, now you have a present too.

Shitou kept the half eraser in the corner of his desk, unable to bear using it. It smelled faintly of strawberry, and the smell reminded him of the box he had not opened.

The next morning Shitou carried his gift box to school and set it on Tiantian's desk. He said, you open it, we share. Tiantian said, why, you missed your turn yesterday. Shitou said, that is exactly why I open it today, half is yours and half is mine.

Inside was a harmonica with seven little white keys. Tiantian pressed one and it sounded do. Shitou pressed another and it sounded mi. They pressed together, and the

sound was small, like a song running around the classroom.

Later, whenever music class passed the boxes, the children beat the drum more slowly, as if hoping it would stop in Shitou's hands. His harmonica played Twinkle Twinkle Little Star bit by bit, and he always started on mi, because that was the note Tiantian heard first.