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.