风灌进后背的那一刻

车把从歪到直只有一瞬，链条的咔哒声忽然变得均匀，风灌进后背，我听见自己笑出了声。那是傍晚六点的光景，院口的路灯刚亮。可三天前，我还蹲在自家门槛上，赌气说这辈子不碰自行车。

事情得从那一声闷响说起。爸爸扶着后架，我蹬得飞快，以为学会了，就喊他松手。他真松了。车头猛地一摆，前轮碾上一颗石子，我连人带车栽进院墙根的沙堆里，车蹬子磕在小腿肚上，青了一大块。沙子嵌进掌心的破皮处，我咬着牙没哭，眼泪却先掉下来。那辆蓝漆掉光的旧车压在我腿上，我觉得它沉得像一头牛。

那天晚上我坐在门槛上剥毛豆，膝盖不敢弯。爸爸把车推进杂物间，没吭声。半间屋都是他擦链条的声音，油布在铁锈上蹭过去，一下，又一下。我剥毛豆的手停了停，耳朵一直听着。

第二天爸爸没提骑车的事，只把车擦了一遍，链条上了油。傍晚他把车推到院口，拍拍后座，说就练慢的，不求快。他两只手都扶在后架上，我骑得极慢，慢到脚能随时落地。他跟着我走，一步不落。拐过第二个弯时，他的一只手不知何时撤掉了，只剩一点风贴着后颈。我不敢回头看，怕一回头车就歪，只是踩，一下，又一下。

等我终于回头，爸爸站在十几步外，背着手，像什么都没做过。路灯把他的影子拉到车前轮底下。我又骑了一圈，这一圈我敢单手扶把，敢按那半响的车铃。铃声响出去，把墙根底下打盹的猫惊跑了。进院门时我把车支好，回头看他，他正弯腰擦车链子，头也没抬，可我看见他嘴角压不住地往上翘。

小腿上那块青紫一周才退。如今每次跨上车，我都会先想起那声闷响，再想起风灌进后背的那一瞬。摔的那一下和骑起来的那一下，原来是同一天学会的。

The Moment Wind Poured Into My Back

The handlebar straightened in a single moment. The clicking of the chain turned even, wind poured into my back, and I heard myself laugh out loud. It was six in the evening, the street lamp at the yard gate had just come on. But three days earlier, I had been squatting on our doorstep, stubbornly declaring that I would never touch a bicycle in my life.

It began with a dull thud. Dad was holding the rear rack while I pedaled fast, sure I had learned it, and I shouted at him to let go. He did. The front swung hard, the front wheel ran over a pebble, and I plunged bike and all into the sand pile by the yard wall. The pedal struck my calf and left a big bruise. Sand worked into the scraped skin of my palm. I gritted my teeth and did not cry, but the tears fell first. That old bike with its blue paint worn off lay on my legs, heavy as a cow.

That evening I sat on the doorstep shelling edamame, afraid to bend my knee. Dad pushed the bike into the storage room without a word. The whole half-room filled with

the sound of him wiping the chain, the oily cloth rubbing over the rust, once, and once again. My shelling hand paused, and my ear kept listening.

The next day Dad never mentioned riding. He only wiped the bike down and oiled the chain. At dusk he pushed it to the yard gate, patted the seat, and said we would practice slow, no rush. Both his hands stayed on the rear rack. I rode extremely slowly, slow enough that my feet could drop to the ground at any moment. He walked along, one step behind me never lost. Around the second turn, one of his hands withdrew at some point without my noticing, leaving only a little wind against the back of my neck. I did not dare look back, afraid the bike would tip if I turned my head. I just pushed the pedals, once, and once again.

When I finally looked back, Dad stood a dozen steps away with his hands behind his back, as if he had done nothing. The street lamp stretched his shadow under my front wheel. I rode one more circle. In this circle I dared hold the bar with one hand and press that half-ringing bell. The sound startled a dozing cat at the foot of the wall. At the yard gate I propped the bike up and turned to look at him. He was bending over, wiping the chain, head down, but I saw the corner of his mouth refusing to stay level.

The bruise on my calf took a week to fade. Now, every time I swing a leg over the seat, I first remember that dull thud, then the moment wind poured into my back. The fall and the riding, it turns out, were learned on the same day.