那张夕阳里的照片

11月3日 星期二 晴

睡前，妈妈把手机递给我看。屏幕上是昨天傍晚的照片：一个男孩骑着一辆旧自行车，身子有点歪，车把上挂着的书包一鼓一鼓。背景是整条河堤路，夕阳把河水照得发亮。

照片是昨天放学后拍的。那天放学早，爸爸推着车，我们走回家旁边的河堤路。路上人少，两边的梧桐叶子黄了，风一吹，叶子贴着地面跑。太阳悬在河对岸的楼群上头，红得不刺眼。

头一回上车，我就摔了。右脚去够脚踏，够空了，车子往河那边歪，我跳下车，手掌蹭破了皮，膝盖陷进路边的草丛里。爸爸过来看我的手，说疼不疼。我说不疼。其实疼，可我不想说疼。

挪的过程中，对面来了一位骑车的老奶奶，她的车篮里放着两把青菜，铃铛都没按，从我身边稳稳地过去了。我盯着她的背影看了好久。她的背有点驼，可骑得笔直，像路上只有她一个人。我学着她的样子把腰挺直，手放松，车把居然不那么犟了。

后来我不再急着蹬，改成扶着车把往前挪，一只脚踩着地滑。挪了半个钟头，脚掌都磨热了。爸爸忽然说，上车，我看着你。他扶着后座跑起来，数着数，一、二、三，数到二十几的时候，我发现河面的光一直往前铺，风把刘海吹得翘起来。我不知道他什么时候松的手。

我骑到了妈妈跟前才刹住，手心里全是汗。妈妈蹲下来，手机对着我，说看前面，别看我。咔嚓一声，就是现在这张照片。照片里夕阳正好落在我骑过来的方向，把我的影子投在河堤路上，长长的。

现在看着这张歪歪扭扭的照片，我还能想起手掌蹭破的地方碰水时的那点疼，想起数到二十几时忽然变轻的车尾。昨天那一圈，我骑得不算好，可车轮是自己在往前走的。

睡觉。明天放学，我还要去河堤路。

The Photo in the Sunset

November 3, Tuesday, sunny.

Before bed, Mom handed me her phone. On the screen was yesterday evening's photo: a boy riding an old bicycle, body a little crooked, his schoolbag puffing out on the handlebars. Behind him ran the whole embankment road, the river shining under the sunset.

The photo was taken after school yesterday. School let out early. Dad pushed the bike, and we walked to the embankment road beside our neighborhood. Few people were out, the plane trees on both sides had yellowed, and the wind made leaves skim along the ground. The sun hung over the buildings across the river, red without glaring.

The first time I got on, I fell. My right foot missed the pedal, the bike tipped toward the river, and I jumped off. My palm scraped, and my knee sank into the

roadside grass. Dad checked my hand and asked if it hurt. I said no. It did hurt, but I did not want to admit it.

While I was shuffling along, an old lady on a bicycle came from the opposite direction. Her basket held two bunches of greens; she did not even ring her bell as she passed me. I watched her back for a long time. Her shoulders were slightly bent, yet she rode straight, as if she were the only person on the road. I straightened my own back the way she did, loosened my grip, and the handlebars suddenly stopped being stubborn.

After that I stopped rushing to pedal. I held the handlebars and pushed forward, one foot sliding on the ground. Half an hour passed, and the soles of my feet were hot. Suddenly Dad said, get on, I am right behind you. He held the back rack and started running, counting, one, two, three. When he reached the twenties, I noticed the light on the river stretching out ahead and the wind lifting my bangs. I never knew when he let go.

I did not brake until I reached Mom, my palms sweaty. She crouched, phone aimed at me, saying, look ahead, not at me. One click, and that is the photo I have now. In it the sunset sits exactly behind the direction I came from, throwing my long shadow onto the embankment road.

Looking at this crooked photo now, I can still feel the sting of my scraped palm touching water, and the moment the back of the bike suddenly went light around the count of twenty-something. Yesterday's lap was not perfect, but the wheels were moving on their own.

Time to sleep. Tomorrow after school, I am going back to the embankment road.