

## 河灯的温柔——中元节的夜晚记忆

那天是农历七月十五，中元节。天色刚刚暗下来，村头的小河边已经聚满了人。河面很静，月光倒映在水中，像一层薄纱。母亲递给我一盏莲花灯，柔声说：“放河灯是为了给祖先引路，也寄托平安的愿望。”

我低头看着那盏小灯，灯芯里闪着微弱的光，纸做的莲花瓣被晚风轻轻吹动，带着淡淡的蜡香。我小心翼翼地蹲下身，把它放在水面上。灯轻轻一晃，顺着水流慢慢漂走。母亲站在我身边，双手合十，嘴里轻声祈祷。我也跟着闭上眼，心中默默许下心愿：希望家人健康，希望祖先安宁。

放灯的人越来越多，河面上渐渐亮起了一片灯海。红的、粉的、黄的莲花灯在水上漂荡，像星星落进了河里。孩子们追着跑，指着水面兴奋地喊：“看，那盏是我的！”大人们则默默注视着，脸上是温和的笑意，也有淡淡的怀念。

爷爷在我小时候就常说：“灯，是给灵魂照路的。人活着，也需要光。”我那时听不太懂，现在才明白，那光不只是给亡灵的安慰，更是给活人的希望。每一盏河灯，都是我们对生命与记忆的告白。

夜色深了，河灯已经漂得很远，只剩下几盏还在闪烁。风轻轻吹过，水面泛起一层细浪。我忽然觉得时间也在这一刻慢下来。母亲拉着我的手，笑着说：“走吧，祖先看见了。”我点点头，心里暖暖的，仿佛那一盏盏灯，也在为我照亮回家的路。

## The Gentle Glow of River Lanterns — A Memory of the Ghost Festival Night

It was the fifteenth day of the seventh lunar month—the Ghost Festival. As night fell, people gathered by the small river at the edge of our village. The river was calm, the moonlight shimmering on its surface like a silver veil. My mother handed me a lotus-shaped lantern and said softly, “We float river lanterns to guide our ancestors’ spirits and to pray for peace.”

I looked down at the little lantern in my hands. Its flame flickered gently, the paper petals swaying in the night breeze, carrying a faint scent of wax. I crouched carefully and placed it on the water. It rocked slightly, then drifted away with the current. My mother stood beside me, palms pressed together in silent prayer. I closed my eyes too and wished quietly—for my family’s health, for my ancestors’ peace.

More and more people came to release their lanterns, and soon the river glowed with a sea of light. Red, pink, and yellow lotus lamps floated like fallen stars. Children ran along the riverbank shouting, “Look, that one’s mine!” while adults watched silently, smiles mingled with traces of nostalgia.

My grandfather used to tell me, “A lantern lights the way for souls—and for the

living, it gives hope.” I didn’ t understand it back then, but now I do. Each lantern is not just a comfort for the departed, but also a declaration of love and remembrance for the living.

As the night deepened, the lanterns drifted farther downstream, their lights dimming into the distance. A soft breeze rippled the water’ s surface. Time seemed to slow in that moment. My mother took my hand and smiled, “Let’ s go. The ancestors have seen it.” I nodded, feeling warmth rise in my chest—as if those lanterns were gently lighting my way home, too.