

一碗面里的取经路：等妈妈下班的四十五分钟

四年级的小雨刚把《西游记》翻到最后一页。这天傍晚，妈妈在单位开会，要晚半小时才能到家。小雨看着厨房里的挂面，忽然想起书里唐僧师徒走了十四年才取到真经——她决定做一件自己的取经事：给妈妈煮一碗面，等妈妈回来吃。

她把这事分成三步，写在作业本背面：第一步烧水，第二步下面，第三步计时三分钟。六点二十，她按下电磁炉。水还没开，她跑回房间想把狮驼岭那一章再看一遍，书里的阴阳瓶太吓人，她看得入了迷。等听见水开的响声冲回厨房，锅里的面已经煮了不知多久，汤浑了，面成了一团，捞出来粘在一起，像一绺绳子。

小雨愣了几秒，差点哭。书里写孙悟空化缘回来发现师父被妖怪抓走，也没见哭。她把坨了的面倒掉，重新烧水。这一次她哪儿也不去，搬个凳子坐在厨房门口，盯着锅，心里数数。数到一百八十，关火，把面捞进碗里，浇上妈妈平时用的酱油和一小勺猪油。

七点半，门响了。妈妈一脸疲惫地进来，看见桌上那碗面，愣住了。她没问面是怎么煮的，坐下就吃。坨过的面口感发黏，妈妈却一根一根吃完，连汤都喝了。放下碗，她眼睛有点红，说：「这是妈妈吃过最香的面。」

小雨后来在作文里写：取经路上最难的不是打妖怪，是面坨了之后，再烧一锅水，火不灭。妈妈把这篇作文贴在冰箱上，贴了整整一个学期。

The Pilgrimage in a Bowl of Noodles: Forty-Five Minutes Waiting for Mom

Xiao Yu, a fourth grader, had just turned the last page of Journey to the West. That evening, Mom had a meeting at work and would be home half an hour late. Staring at the dried noodles in the kitchen, Xiao Yu suddenly remembered that the pilgrims had walked fourteen years to fetch the true scriptures - so she decided to undertake her own pilgrimage: cook a bowl of noodles for Mom and wait for her to come home and eat.

She broke it into three steps and wrote them on the back of her homework notebook: step one, boil the water; step two, put in the noodles; step three, time it for three minutes. At 6:20 she switched on the induction cooker. Before the water boiled, she ran back to her room to read the Lion Camel Ridge chapter again - the Yin-Yang Gourd in the book was so frightening that she got absorbed. By the time the boiling water called her back to the kitchen, the noodles had been cooking who knows how long: the soup went cloudy, the noodles clumped into one mass, and lifted out of the pot they stuck together like a rope.

Xiao Yu froze for a few seconds and nearly cried. The book says Sun Wukong came back from begging for food to find his master carried off by a demon, and he didn't

cry either. She dumped the clumped noodles and set fresh water to boil. This time she stayed put, dragged a stool to the kitchen doorway, sat down, watched the pot, and counted in her head. When she reached one hundred and eighty, she turned off the heat, lifted the noodles into a bowl, and poured over them the soy sauce and a spoonful of lard Mom usually uses.

At 7:30 the door sounded. Mom came in worn out, saw the bowl on the table, and froze. She didn't ask how the noodles had been made; she sat down and ate. Overcooked noodles turn sticky, but Mom ate them strand by strand and drank even the soup. Setting down the bowl, her eyes a little red, she said: 'These are the most delicious noodles Mom has ever eaten.'

Xiao Yu later wrote in a composition: the hardest part of the pilgrimage isn't fighting demons - it's boiling a second pot of water after the first one clumps, and never letting the fire go out. Mom taped that composition to the fridge, and it stayed there the whole semester.