

The Fireflies Isak Dinesen

Here in the highlands, when the long rains are over, and in the first week of June nights begin to be cold, we get the fireflies in the woods.

On an evening you will see two or three of them, adventurous lonely stars floating in the clear air, rising and lowering, as if upon waves, or as if curtseying. To that rhythm of their flight they lighten and put out their diminutive lamps.

You may catch the insect and make it shine upon the palm of your hand, giving out a strange light, a mysterious message, it turns the flesh pale green in a small circle round it. The next night there are hundreds and hundreds in the woods.

For some reason they keep within a certain height, four or five feet, above the ground. It is impossible then not to imagine that a whole crowd of children of six or seven years, are running through the dark forest carrying candles, little sticks dipped in a magic fire, joyously jumping up and down, and gambolling as they run, and swinging their small pale torches merrily. The woods are filled with a wild frolicsome life, and it is all perfectly silent.

螢火蟲

六月的頭一個星期，漫長的雨季過後，晚上的天氣便逐漸轉冷。在這高原上，在樹林裡，我們開始看到了點點的螢火蟲。

在忽然的一個晚上，你會看到兩三點初探人間的孤星，在清空中飄浮，忽高忽低的，像隨着波浪起伏，又像在屏膝行禮。她們身上的小燈就依着那高，低，的節奏時隱時現。你可以把一隻抓來放在手裡，讓她的光在掌中綻開。她那奇異的亮芒把掌心周圍映照成一小圈的淡綠，像隱含着某種神秘的訊息。到了第二天的飛晚，成千上萬的螢火蟲便在林間出沒了。

不知什麼緣故，她們都只在離地面大概四、五呎的地方活動。看着她們，總叫人以為一大羣只有六、七歲的孩子，秉着燭光，在漆黑的樹林裡四處奔奔，她們互相追逐嬉戲，自得其樂的樣是着手中細小的淡，的光，這些光就如蠟，了，魔，亮，光的一根根小火棒。整個樹林剎時充滿了透着歡欣的原始的生命，周遭却仍舊是一比寂靜。