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George Eliot

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简介

在 19 世纪早期的英国僻静的乡村,生活有着一成不变的模式。四季交替,对于住在大房子里的乡绅及其全家和对于住在小草屋里的村民们来说都是一样的。任何新鲜和古怪的事情在像瑞福洛这样的村庄里都会遭到猜疑。

织工西拉斯·马南就很古怪。他独自居住,没人知道他的家庭情况。如果你不知道他的父母是谁你怎么能够信任他呢?他脸色苍白,眼神怪异,并且总是瞪着眼睛,因为他每天都要在织机上干很长时间的活,甚至星期天也干,而星期天他应该去教堂。他一定是魔鬼的朋友,村民们相互这么说。

可怜的西拉斯!他是一个忧伤、孤独的人,他唯一的朋友就是那些闪光的金币,那是他织布挣来的,被他藏在地板下面。但是变故总会发生,即使在瑞福洛这样安静的村庄里。乡绅的两个儿子之间有一个秘密,这导致争吵、抢夺,以及死亡。那是在一个下雪的夜晚,在离西拉斯的草屋不远的地方……

乔治·艾略特(1819—1880)是英国最伟大的小说家之一,她真名叫玛丽·安·埃文斯。她生前就以小说创作而著名,主要作品包括《织工马南》、《米德尔马奇》和《弗罗斯河上的磨坊》。

1

Silas Marner, past and present

In the early years of the nineteenth century, strange-looking little men were often seen on the country roads, usually with a heavy bag on their shoulders. They were linen-weavers, taking the linen they had woven to the women in the villages. Unlike the strong, healthy country people, they were small and thin, with tired white faces, bent backs and round shoulders. They were often shortsighted too, because they had to look so closely at their work. To the villagers the weavers looked almost foreign, and quite frightening. Where did they come from? Was it the devil who sent them? Who were their parents? How could you trust a man if you didn't know his father or mother? Country people used to be very suspicious of all strangers and travellers. They were also suspicious of clever people, people who could do something they themselves had not learnt to do. That is why the linen-weavers, who often moved from towns to live and work in the country, were considered strangers all their lives by their neighbours, and were sometimes very lonely as a result.

Silas Marner was one of these weavers. He lived in a small cottage near the village of Raveloe. Every day he worked at his loom in the cottage. The small boys of Raveloe had never heard the sound of a loom before, and sometimes they used to run up to his house to look quickly in at the window. If Silas noticed

1 马南的过去和现在



在 19 世纪初的英国,人们经常在乡村小路上看到一些小个子男人,扛着沉沉的大袋子,样子很古怪。他们是织布匠,在把织好的亚麻布送给乡下妇女。和健壮的乡下人不同,织工们身材瘦小而且脸色苍白,神情疲惫,曲背弯腰。由于用眼过度,他们中许多人眼睛都有些近视。在乡下人眼里,这些织布匠几乎算得上怪异,而且很吓人。乡下人疑惑不解:这些人是从哪里来的?是魔鬼派他们来的吗?他们的父母是谁呢?一个你不了解他父母的人,你怎么能信任呢?乡下人常常怀疑所有的陌生人和旅客。他们也怀疑那些聪明的人,那些会干一些乡下人自己不会做的事的人。因为这个原因,这些从城市搬到乡下干活、居住的织工终生都会被邻居认为是怪人,并因而感到很孤独。

西拉斯就是这些织工中的一个。他住在靠近瑞福洛村的一间小草屋里,每天在小屋里的织布机上干活。瑞福洛村的孩子们以前从没有听到过织布机的声音,所以经常到他的屋来扒窗户偷看。如果西拉斯发

linen *n.* a special kind of cloth (more like cotton than wool) 亚麻布。 **weaver** *n.* a person who make cloth 织工。 **bent** *a.* 弯曲的。 **suspicious** *a.* not believing or trusting someone 猜疑的,疑心的。 **loom** *n.* a machine for weaving cloth 织机。

them, he lifted his shortsighted eyes from the loom to stare at the boys. There was something terrible about his stare, which made the boys run away at once, screaming with fear. The villagers believed that Silas had an almost devilish power, which he could use to harm them if he wanted, and so they were all afraid of him. Raveloe was an important-looking village with a fine old church and a number of large farms. But it was at least an hour away from any other village, and very few strangers visited it, which explains why the villagers' opinions were so out of date.

Silas Marner had first come to Raveloe fifteen years before, as a young man. He and his way of life seemed very strange to the villagers. He worked long hours at his loom, and had no friends or visitors from the village or anywhere else. He never talked to his neighbours unless it was necessary for his work, and he never looked at any of the Raveloe girls. 'Who would want to marry him anyway?' the girls laughed to each other. 'Marry a dead man come to life again, with that unhealthy white skin and those insect-like eyes of his? Certainly not!'

One of the villagers had had a strange experience with Silas. One evening he had discovered the weaver resting on a field gate, his eyes open but unseeing, and his body cold and hard, like a dead man's. After a few moments Silas appeared to wake up, said 'Good night', and walked away.

When this was discussed in the village, some people thought that Silas had had a fit. But others, like Mr Macey, the church

觉了,就会把近视眼从织布机上抬起来盯着孩子们。他的眼光中似乎有什么可怕的东西,孩子们马上惊叫着四散跑开。村里人有些怕他,因为大家相信西拉斯有着近乎魔鬼的力量,如果愿意他可以用来伤害他们。瑞福洛是一个很气派的村庄,有着很好的老式教堂和大片的农田。但由于离最近的邻村也有一个多小时的路程,很少有陌生人来,所以村里人的思想非常落后。

西拉斯·马南是15年前到瑞福洛来的,那时他还是一个小伙子。他和他的生活方式对瑞福洛的村民来说是那么神秘。他长时间在织布机上工作,没有朋友和客人。除非为了工作的事,他从不和邻居说话,也从不看一眼瑞福洛村的女孩子们。“有谁愿意嫁给他?”姑娘们互相开玩笑,“有谁愿意嫁给这个苍白得吓人,长着一双虫子一样眼睛的人?好像死人刚活过来一样!谁也不会愿意!”

一个村民目睹过一件怪事。一天晚上,他发现西拉斯在一个门口歇着,眼睛睁着但目光呆滞,身体又凉又硬,就像一个死人。过了一会儿,西拉斯看上去醒了过来,说了一句“晚安”,然后就离开了。

当村里人议论这件事的时候,有的人认为西拉斯是病了,但有的人,像教堂的执事

scream *v.* give a loud, sharp cry 尖叫。 **devilish** *a.* like a devil 魔鬼般的。 **insect** *n.* 昆虫。 **discuss** *v.* have conversation about, talk about 讨论。 **fit** *n.* a sudden illness, when a person is unconscious for a time (病的)发作。

clerk, refused to accept a medical explanation.

‘No, he isn’t ill, that weaver,’ said old Mr Macey, shaking his head knowingly. ‘If he had a fit, he’d fall down, wouldn’t he? I think his soul flies out of his body sometimes and that’s why he looks so strange. He doesn’t come to church, does he? And how does he know so much about medicines? You all remember how he made Sally Oates better, when the doctor himself could do no more for her. That’s the devil’s work, believe me!’

However, the housewives needed Silas to weave their linen, and they could find nothing wrong with his work. The years passed, and Raveloe villagers did not change their opinion of the weaver. At the end of fifteen years they said exactly the same things about him, but they believed them more strongly. They also said that he had saved up a lot of money since he had come to Raveloe.

Silas had come from a large town to the north of Raveloe. Here he had lived a very different life. Because he was one of a large number of weavers, he was not considered strange, and he belonged to an enthusiastic religious group. They met every Sunday at the chapel in Light Street. Once, at a chapel meeting, Silas had become unconscious and had sat without moving, hearing or seeing, for over an hour. This experience made him specially interesting to the rest of the group.

‘We should not call this strange unconsciousness a fit,’ the minister, Mr Paston, told them. ‘No, it’s much more than

麦西先生,拒绝接受这种医学的解释。

“不,那个织布匠不是病了,”麦西老先生有把握地摇着头说,“如果病了,他会倒下,对吧?我觉得他的灵魂有时会离开他的身体,所以他才会看起来那么奇怪。他不上教堂,对吧?而且他怎么会知道那么多医疗的事?你们都记得吧,医生都没办法,他却能让萨莉·奥茨好过一点。相信我,他那是妖术!”

然而不管怎样,主妇们需要西拉斯为她们织亚麻布,他的货无可挑剔。时间一年年过去,可人们对西拉斯的看法从来没有改变。15年后,人们仍在议论着同样的事,只不过更相信这些事了。同时他们还说西拉斯来瑞福洛以后已积攒了一笔可观的财富。

西拉斯是从瑞福洛北面的一个大镇子来的,在那里他过着与现在完全不同的生活。作为众多织工中的一个,他很平常,而且他属于一个活跃的宗教组织。教友们每个礼拜日都在日光街的小教堂集会。在一次集会中,西拉斯突然失去了知觉,坐在那里一动不动,听不到也看不到,长达一个多小时。这次经历使教友们觉得他很特别。

“我们不应该认为他这种奇怪的失去知觉是疾病,”牧师帕斯通先生告诉大家,“完

housewife *n.* woman directing household affairs 家庭妇女。**enthusiastic** *a.* having strong interest 积极的。**unconscious** *a.* 没有知觉的。**minister** *n.* (基督教的)牧师。**chapel** *n.* a room or building used for religious meetings 小教堂。

that. In that moment, when he is absent from us, our young friend Silas's soul is *open*, open to a possible message from God. I believe he has been chosen by God!'

Silas's best friend at chapel was William Dane, a serious young man who was, some people thought, a little too sure of his own goodness and cleverness. Silas, however, could see no fault in him, and trusted his friend completely. They remained good friends, when Silas became engaged to a young woman, Sarah, who belonged to the same chapel. In fact Silas was delighted that Sarah did not mind if William joined them sometimes on their Sunday walks.

Strangely, when Silas had his fit at the chapel meeting, William was the only one who disagreed with the minister.

'To me it looks more like the devil's work than God's,' William had said. 'Look deep into yourself, friend Silas. Is there any evil hiding in your soul?'

Silas was hurt that his friend doubted him, and he began to be worried, too, about Sarah. She seemed to be showing signs of dislike towards him, but when he asked her about it, she did not give him any answer.

At that time one of the chapel leaders was dangerously ill, and because he had no family, some of the young men offered to sit with him at night. One night Silas was sitting alone at the old man's bedside. Time seemed to pass slowly in the quiet, dark room. But suddenly he realized that the man was no longer breathing. He was dead.

全不是这样。他的意识离开我们的时候，我们年轻的朋友西拉斯的灵魂打开了，去接受上帝的信息。我相信是上帝选择了他。”

西拉斯在教会最要好的朋友是威廉·戴恩，一个严肃的年轻人，有的人认为他对自己的聪明善良未免太有把握。但是西拉斯却不认为他的朋友有任何缺点，他完全信任威廉。当西拉斯与同教会的年轻女子萨拉订婚以后，威廉还是他最要好的朋友。西拉斯很高兴萨拉不介意俩人的礼拜日散步有时有威廉在场。

奇怪的是，在西拉斯发病以后，威廉却是唯一一个不同意牧师观点的人。

“依我看不像是上帝倒像是魔鬼干的，”威廉说，“好好看看你自己，西拉斯，我的朋友，是不是有魔鬼隐藏在你的灵魂里？”

被好朋友怀疑使西拉斯很伤心，同时，他也开始为萨拉担起心来。萨拉似乎开始显得有点不太喜欢他了。可当西拉斯问起来，她却又什么也不说。

这个时候，一位教会的长老生了重病。因为他没有家室，教会的年轻人就轮流在晚上陪伴他。一天晚上，西拉斯独自一人陪坐在老人的床边。在黑暗而安静的屋子里，时间似乎过得很慢。突然，西拉斯意识到老人已经停止了呼吸，已经死了。

absent *a.* being away 离开的。**delighted** *a.* happy, pleased 高兴的。**sign** *n.* 征兆，迹象。

'Strange!' thought Silas. 'His body's cold! He's been dead for some time! Why didn't I notice? Perhaps I've had another fit. And it's already four o'clock in the morning. Why hasn't William come? He promised he'd come at two o'clock!' He hurried out of the house to call the doctor and the minister, and then went to work as usual, still wondering why William had not arrived.

But that evening, after work, William came to his room, with the minister. They were both looking very serious.

'You must come to the chapel at once,' said Mr Paston.

'But why?' asked Silas, looking unhappily at them.

'You will hear when you get there,' was the only answer.

Then, in the chapel, Silas stood alone, in front of all the people who were once his friends. The room was silent. There was a pocket-knife in the minister's hand.

'Where did you leave this knife?' he asked.

Silas was trembling at this strange question. 'I don't remember,' he answered.

'Silas, Silas, you must confess!' cried the minister. 'Tell us the truth! This knife, *your* knife, was found at the dead man's bedside, and the bag of church money, which I saw there myself only yesterday, has gone!'

Silas did not speak for a moment. Then he said, 'God knows I did not steal the money. Search my room—you won't find the money. I'm not a thief.'

'You were the only one in our dead friend's house last

“奇怪!”西拉斯想,“他的身体已经凉了。他已经死了一会儿了!我怎么没有注意?我可能又犯病了。已经是早上4点了,威廉为什么还没有来换班?他说会在2点钟到的!”他跑出屋去喊大夫和牧师,然后像平时一样去工作,他一直不明白为什么威廉没有按时来换班。

这天晚上下班以后,威廉和牧师一起来到了西拉斯的屋子。两个人都很严肃。

“你必须马上到教堂去。”帕斯通先生说。

“为什么?”西拉斯不太高兴地看着他们。

“到那儿你就知道了。”这是唯一的回答。

然后,在教堂里,西拉斯独自一人站在他以前的朋友们面前。屋里很静。牧师的手里拿着一把小刀。

“你把这把刀放在哪儿了?”他问。

西拉斯被这个奇怪的问题吓了一跳。
“我不记得了。”

“西拉斯,西拉斯,你必须坦白!”牧师叫道,“向我们坦白事实!你的这把刀是在死者的床旁发现的,而且教会的钱袋也不见了,我昨天还看见它在那里!”

西拉斯半晌说不出话来。终于他说:
“上帝知道我没有偷钱。去搜查我的房间吧——你们不会找到钱。我不是贼。”

“威廉告诉我们他突然病了,不能去接

promise *v.* 许诺, 发誓。
pocket-knife *n.* 随身携带的小折刀。
confess *v.* *to tell the truth about something wrong that you have done* 供认, 坦白。

night, when the money was stolen,' said Mr Paston. 'William tells us he was suddenly ill, which prevented him from coming to take your place. We will search your room.'

And when they went to Silas's room, William found the missing bag, now empty, under Silas's bed.

'Silas, my friend,' cried William, 'confess your crime to us now! Send the devil away from your soul!'

Silas turned to the man he had always trusted. 'William, in the nine years since we've been friends, have I ever told you a lie? But God will prove the truth.'

As he looked at William, he suddenly remembered something, and reddened. He said in a trembling voice, 'The knife wasn't in my pocket last night!'

'I don't know what you mean,' replied William coldly.

In the strange little world of the Light Street chapel, they did not believe in the law or judges. They thought only God knew the answers, so they agreed to draw lots to decide what had happened. They all went down on their knees to ask for God's help in finding the truth. Silas knelt with them, sure that God would prove his honesty. There was silence, as the minister took one of the papers out of the covered box.

'*The lots say that Silas Marner has stolen the money,*' he said. 'You will leave the chapel, Silas Marner, and you will not be accepted back until you confess your crime.'

Silas listened in horror. At last he walked over to William Dane and said firmly, 'I lent you my knife, you know that.'

你的班,所以你是昨天晚上唯一在我们死去的朋友房间的人,就是那时钱被偷了,”帕斯通先生说。“我们要搜查你的房间。”

到了西拉斯的房间,威廉在西拉斯的床底下发现了丢失的、已经空了的钱袋。

“西拉斯,我的朋友,”威廉喊道,“快向我们认罪吧!把你灵魂中的魔鬼赶走吧!”

西拉斯转向这个他曾经信赖的朋友。“威廉,在我们做朋友的9年里我有没有对你说过谎?上帝会证明事实。”

看着威廉,西拉斯突然想起来了什么,脸红起来。“刀子昨晚不在我的兜里!”西拉斯颤抖地说。

“我不明白你的意思,”威廉冷冷地回答。

在日光街小教堂这个奇特的小世界里,人们不相信法律和法官。他们认为只有上帝知道事情的答案,所以他们一致同意通过抽签来判断到底发生了什么。于是大家都跪下祈求上帝帮助查出事实真相。西拉斯和大家一同跪着,他相信上帝会证明他是诚实的。牧师从盖着的盒子里抽出一张纸的时候,屋子里一片寂静。

“签上说是西拉斯·马南偷了钱,”他说,“西拉斯·马南,你得离开教堂。在你认罪前,我们不会再接纳你。”

西拉斯恐怖地听着。最后他走到威廉·戴恩的面前坚定地说:“我把刀子借给你了,你

prevent *v.* stop or hinder 防止,阻止。**tremble** *v.* shake involuntarily 发抖,颤抖。**draw lots** 抽签。

You stole the money, while I was having a fit, and you've blamed me for it. But perhaps you'll never be punished, since there is no God who takes care of the good and punishes the bad, only a God of lies.

'You hear, my friends?' said William, smiling sadly. 'This is the voice of the devil speaking.'

Silas went home. The next day he sat alone for the whole day, too miserable to do anything. On the second day the minister came to tell him that Sarah had decided she could not marry him. Only a month later, Sarah married William Dane, and soon afterwards Silas Marner left the town.

At Raveloe, Silas shut himself away in his cottage. He did not want to think about the disaster he had experienced. He could not understand why God had refused to help him. But now that his trust in God and his friends had been broken, he did not feel strong enough to build up that trust again, in a new church and with new friends. From now on, he would live in a dark, loveless, hopeless world.

All that was left to him was his weaving, and he sat at his loom seven days a week, working all the daylight hours. In the town he had earned less, and had given much of his money to the chapel, for the old, the poor, and the sick. But now he began to earn more than ever before, and there was no reason for him to give away any of it. He was often paid for his linen in gold. He discovered that he liked holding the shining coins in his hand and looking at their bright faces.