

[美] 霍桑 (Hawthorne, N.) 等 著
曾胡 译

英语短篇小说精粹

本书收录英语短篇小说名作十余篇，情节精妙，语言优美，充分展现了英语短篇小说的多彩魅力。

Selected English Short Stories
with Chinese Translation

Short Stories



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CHINA BOOK PUBLISHING HOUSE



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前言

说起来，这本书应该算是“命题作文”。自七八年前，译完托马斯·哈代的《卡斯特桥市长》后，就放下了译笔，将兴趣转到了古体诗的写作和中国古代建筑的研究方面，久矣夫不闻译事。一晃到了一年半前，中国书籍出版社的王平兄找到我，说是希望能译一些英语短篇小说的名篇，承他看得起，若拒绝就是不知好歹了，再说，也暗合我再译一定要是名作的决心，遂尔再作冯妇。

其实，我并不熟悉英语的短篇小说。自二十几岁率尔操觚，开始了我的文学翻译的生涯以来，翻的都是长篇小说，似乎没有翻译过短篇小说。记忆中看过的英语短篇，都是青少年时期读的译本，印象最深的，是马克·吐温的一部短篇小说集，谁译的，不记得了。只是记得当时笑痛了肚皮，其中就有本书中的那篇《卡拉韦拉斯县的名跳蛙》。几十年后，自己也动手翻译同样的作品，颇增人世沧桑的感慨。

本书的篇目，均出于王平兄之手，一把子交给了我，我也乐得偷懒，省去了编选的烦恼。但动起手来才发现，不多的十六篇小说，涵盖面竟然如此之广。有我熟悉的爱伦·坡、马克·吐温、霍桑、欧·亨利、海明威、毛姆、厄普代克、福克纳和乔伊斯，也有我不甚熟悉的D. H. 劳伦斯、哈姆林·加兰德、迪伦·托马斯、纳丁·戈迪默、卡森·麦克勒斯、安吉斯·威尔逊和弗吉尼亚·伍尔夫。从人望上讲，几乎囊括了十九、二十世纪的一流短篇名家。从地域上讲，不但有英美的名家，还有爱尔兰、威尔士，甚至南非的名家，并且有福克纳、戈迪默和海明威三位诺贝尔文学奖得主，以及两位普利策文学奖的得主（海

明威和厄普代克)。从写作风格上讲,有现实主义的作家,也有囁矢于上世纪二十年代的意识流的作家,如乔伊斯、福克纳、厄普代克和伍尔夫,尽管在本书中选取的多是他们的现实主义风格的作品,但伍尔夫的《邱园记事》确实是比较完整意义上的意识流作品,厄普代克的《私人考古学》和戈迪默的《掠夺》虽然算不上是意识流的写法,但却明显地带有非现实主义的现代派的特点。由此可见,本书篇目的选择,既凝练精致,又颇具开阖,由此可见王平兄的深厚功力和别具手眼。

前面讲过,我并不熟悉英语短篇小说,从一开始,就选择了长篇小说的翻译。为什么入手就搞长篇呢?其中的道理,我自己也不甚了了,也许很简单,年轻时,急于有所成就,于是,吃西瓜,拣大个儿,恐怕文人也不能例外,因此就选了容易成格局的、大个儿的长篇了。但这次一着手翻译这些短篇小说,马上就发现,这个活计和长篇的翻译还是有很大的不同。要之,长篇小说就是篇幅长,非几十万字不能了事,情节复杂,人物众多,场景丰富,对话繁密,翻译起来,其实是有些“偷手”的;也就是说,有许多地方,不必字字考究,是可以“混一混”的。依我的经验,最难译的是风光描写,往往不啻于译者写一篇风光散文。次难是大套的心理活动的描写,涉及欧美人的心理活动和国人差别较大,并往往有极富哲理性的思考,是最容易出现错译的地方。再次难是人物形象的描写,和传统写法的“但见那”、“有诗为证”不同,常常是长篇大套,不厌其细。要做到文笔洗练而准确,是有些难度的。除此之外,凡属情节推进的文字,或一般性的对话,翻起来似乎比较省力,比较好混。但短篇小说,少则三两千字,多则五六千字,万字以上的,就属罕见了。在这么小的篇幅里做文章,即使做不到字字珠玑,至少应该做到字字考究,这样,翻译出来的文字才好看;也就是说,译者几乎没有什么藏拙的余地,是没法混的。这对译者的功力是一个考验,翻译起来,往往觉得比译长篇要吃力得多,这些是我始料未及的。下面略谈一些甘苦。

英国著名意识流小说的奠基者之一弗吉尼亚·伍尔夫的《邱园记事》,是一篇很地道的意识流作品:是从一只昆虫的视角来看世界,没有完整的情节,模拟人的意识的流动性、不确定性、片段性、跳跃性以及时空的交错性。文字极其洗练而优美,构想诡谲,篇幅短小,像是一个精致的艺术品,其文字表达的精妙,往往让人读来不禁拍案叫绝,充分体现了作者高超的文字造诣。这样的小说译起来,不但要做到字字珠玑,而且争取要将原文的精妙表现出来,才感觉对得起作者。在本书中,这篇文字是我下力最大,译得最苦的一篇,几乎使出了浑身解数,深深体会到了短篇翻译之难;因此,也自觉是本书中译得最好的一篇。越说

越自鸣得意了，打住；是好是坏，还是请读者诸君评价吧。

厄普代克是美国的意识流小说的大家。很久很久以前，曾拜读过他的《兔子四部曲》中的一部，真正是看得昏头涨脑，莫名其妙，直到看了三遍，才算摸着点儿门道。原来在两三千字的文章中，写了好几代人的事，其间没有时间轨迹，硬转硬拐，只有拿出看侦探小说的精神，拼对雪爪鸿泥，才能搞清几代人的那点事儿。本书所选的《私人考古学》大体还是现实主义的写法，但带有强烈的后现代意蕴。就英语的语言结构而言，他的文字既精练，又精妙，有着他自己戛戛独造的语法构造，因而具有一种比通常的英语更“英语”的独特韵味。在别人用一句话的地方，他往往只用一个词，其凝练乃至于斯。由于中英两种语言结构性的差异，中文往往表达不出这样的简练，所以逼得人只好将他的一个词还原成一句话，或将一句简单的话，拉成长句，要加添好几个词，才能说明白。翻译的原则，一般认为，所谓“信”之一字，要尽可能做到在词汇的水平上也要忠于原文，非万不得已，不要添词或减词。准乎此，在翻译厄普代克的这篇作品时，对译者简直就是一种折磨：为了把话说明白，为了使小说像小说，而不是像论文，给人家添了那么多本来原文没有的词，一则觉得自己手段拙劣，二则觉得很对不起人家。

翻译之甘苦，就吐到这里吧。

最后再啰嗦几句。在翻译本书的过程中，忽一日，觉得应该把自认为处理得比较好的译句，或积年翻译的经验性技巧，以及处理复杂句子的一些体会，随手记下来。若干年前，慧林兄曾劝我写一本翻译理论或翻译学之类的书，当时似乎随便就应下来了。可随后一想，翻译是否真能成为一“学”，实在没把握，而且要搞成一门“学”，也实在是一件很吓人的事。至于翻译理论，好像有点儿像“小说写法”之类，有悖于我“文无定法”的理念，更是搞不得。于是束手如许之久，颇感愧对慧林兄。现在，我将这些翻译体会记下来，搞成个“实战战例”之类的东西，一以作为对有志于文学翻译的读者的芹献，一以与读者诸君和高明者切磋翻译技巧，定名为《翻译手记》，俟成书于异日，差堪告慰慧林兄了吧？

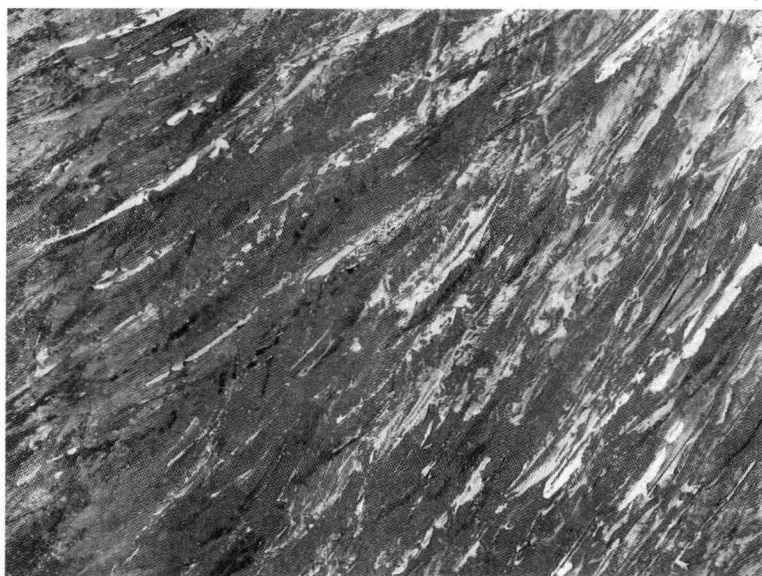
曾胡

2012年5月24日，于三亚洲际酒店

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The Minister's Black Veil

A PARABLE

Nathaniel Hawthorne

The sexton stood in the porch of Milford meeting-house, pulling **lustily** at the bell-rope. The old people of the village came stooping along the street. Children, with bright faces, tript merrily beside their parents, or mimicked a graver gait, in the conscious dignity of their Sunday clothes. **Spruce** bachelors looked sidelong at the pretty maidens, and fancied that the Sabbath sunshine made them prettier than on weekdays. When the throng had mostly streamed into the porch, the sexton began to toll the bell, keeping his eye on the Reverend Mr. Hooper's door. The first glimpse of the clergyman's figure was the signal for the bell to cease its summons.

"But what has good Parson Hooper got upon his face?" cried the sexton in astonishment.

All within hearing immediately turned about, and beheld the semblance of Mr. Hooper, pacing slowly his **meditative** way towards the meeting-house. With one accord they started expressing more wonder than if some strange minister were coming to dust the cushions of Mr. Hooper's pulpit.

"Are you sure it is our parson?" inquired Goodman Gray of the sexton.

"Of a certainty it is good Mr. Hooper," replied the sexton. "He was to have exchanged pulpits with Parson Shuter of Westbury; but Parson Shuter sent to excuse himself yesterday, being to preach a funeral sermon. "

The cause of so much amazement may appear sufficiently slight. Mr. Hooper, a gentlemanly person of about thirty, though still a bachelor, was dressed with due clerical neatness, as if a careful wife had **starched** his band, and brushed the weekly dust from his Sunday's garb. There was but one thing remarkable in his appearance. **Swathed** about his forehead, and hanging down over his face, so low as to be shaken by his breath, Mr. Hooper had on a black veil. On a nearer view, it seemed to consist of two folds of crape, which entirely concealed his features, except the mouth and chin, but probably did

教长的黑面纱

一个寓言^①

纳撒尼尔·霍桑

lustily

[ˈlʌstɪli] *adv.*

拼命地，精力充沛地

spruce

[spruːs] *adj.*

外表整洁的，漂亮的

meditative

[ˈmedɪtətv] *adj.*

沉思的，冥想的，
爱思考的

starch

[sta:tʃ] *vt.*

浆（衣服等）

swathe

[sweið] *vt.*

缠，绕，包扎

米尔福德教堂的司事站在教堂的门廊里，使劲地扯开钟绳。老人们沿着街道弯着腰走过来。满脸欢快的孩子兴高采烈地走在父母的身边，有的一本正经地学着庄重的步态，有意显摆着节日盛装的庄重。衣冠楚楚的单身汉们心猿意马地从侧面望着少女们的脸庞，觉得她们在安息日的阳光里比平日里显得更俏丽。人群差不多都进了门廊后，司事就慢条斯理地敲起了钟，眼睛盯着牧师胡珀先生的房门。教区长的现身，就是停止召集钟声的信号。

“看好心的胡珀牧师的脸成啥色儿啦？”司事惊叫了起来。

听到这话的人马上转过身来，上下打量着胡珀先生；只见他一副沉思冥想的样子，慢条斯理地朝教堂走来。他们齐刷刷地盯着他，那表情与其说是似乎看到了一位陌生的牧师在拂拭胡珀先生布道坛上的灰尘，倒不如说是感到大惑不解。

“你肯定这就是咱们的牧师吗？”古德曼·格雷问司事道。

“当然是好心的胡珀先生啦，”司事答道，“他就要和韦斯特伯利的舒特牧师对调了；不过，舒特牧师昨天捎信儿来道歉，说他要去做一个葬礼上去布道。”

这番本能够让人吃惊的话似乎并没有受到足够重视。胡珀先生是一位文质彬彬的人，三十岁上下，虽然还是个单身汉，但一身修洁，恰是一副牧师风度，好像有一位太太将他的领子浆得硬挺，每周都把他的礼拜制服刷一遍灰尘似的。他的外表只有一处非同寻常：他的额头上裹着一块布，垂到脸上，呼吸使那块布不停地抖动。胡珀先生戴着一块黑面纱。再离近些，可以看到面纱似乎是由两层绉纱做的，将他的五官全部遮住，只露出了嘴和下巴，但是，

not **intercept** his sight farther than to give a darkened aspect to all living and inanimate things. With this gloomy shade before him, good Mr. Hooper walked onward, at a slow and quiet pace, stooping somewhat and looking on the ground, as is customary with abstracted men, yet nodding kindly to those of his parishioners who still waited on the meeting-house steps. But so wonder struck were they, that his greeting hardly met with a return.

"I can't really feel as if good Mr. Hooper's face was behind that piece of crape," said the sexton.

"I don't like it," muttered an old woman, as she hobbled into the meeting-house. "He has changed himself into something awful, only by hiding his face."

"Our parson has gone mad!" cried Goodman Gray, following him across the **threshold**.

A rumor of some unaccountable phenomenon had preceded Mr. Hooper into the meeting-house, and set all the congregation **astir**. Few could refrain from twisting their heads towards the door; many stood upright, and turned directly about; while several little boys clambered upon the seats, and came down again with a terrible racket. There was a general **bustle**, a rustling of the women's gowns and shuffling of the men's feet, greatly at variance with that hushed repose which should attend the entrance of the minister. But Mr. Hooper appeared not to notice the **perturbation** of his people. He entered with an almost noiseless step, bent his head mildly to the pews on each side, and bowed as he passed his oldest parishioner, a white-haired great-grandsire, who occupied an arm-chair in the center of the aisle. It was strange to observe, how slowly this **venerable** man became conscious of something singular in the appearance of his pastor. He seemed not fully to partake of the prevailing wonder, till Mr. Hooper had ascended the stairs, and showed himself in the pulpit, face to face with his congregation, except for the black veil. That mysterious emblem was never once withdrawn. It shook with his measured breath as he gave out the psalm; it threw its obscurity between him and the holy page, as he read the Scriptures; and while he prayed, the veil lay heavily on his uplifted **countenance**. Did he seek to hide it from the dread Being whom he was addressing?

Such was the effect of this simple piece of crape, that more than one woman of delicate nerves was forced to leave the meeting house. Yet perhaps the pale-faced congregation was almost as fearful a sight to the minister, as his black veil to them.

intercept

[,ɪntə'sept] *vt.*

拦截, 截断

threshold

['θreʃhəʊld] *n.*

门槛, 门口

astir

[ə'stə:] *adj.*动起来的, 轰动 (或
骚动) 起来的

bustle

['bʌsl] *n.*

喧闹, 忙乱

perturbation

[,pɜ:tə'beɪʃən] *n.*

不安, 烦扰

venerable

['venərəbl] *adj.*值得尊敬的, 受崇
敬的, 德高望重的

countenance

['kauntənəns] *n.*

脸, 面孔, 面容

也许除了这面纱对一切有生命和无生命的事物都是这一副死模活样的面目外, 它并没有挡住他的视线。好心的胡珀先生戴着这令人沮丧的遮布, 缓慢而安详地走过来, 略略弯下腰, 看着地面, 仿佛心不在焉, 但却和气地冲着那些仍然等在教堂台阶上的教区居民们点点头。不过, 他们还没有从惊惑中缓过劲来, 竟没有向他回礼。

“我真的没想到好心的胡珀先生会把脸藏在那块黑纱后面。” 司事说道。

“我不喜欢那块黑面纱,” 一位老太太一边步履蹒跚地走进教堂, 一边嘟嘟囔囔地说, “他就这么把脸藏起来, 把自个儿弄得有点让人害怕。”

“咱们的牧师疯啦!” 古德曼·格雷喊道, 他跟脚迈进了门槛。

胡珀先生还没进教堂, 令人不可捉摸的流言就传开了, 让信众们骚动不安。几乎没人能忍得住不回头向门口望; 许多人干脆站起来, 直截了当地转过身去; 有几个小孩子爬上了座位, 又尖叫着跌了下来。教堂里乱作一团, 女人的衣服窸窣作响, 男人们慢慢地挪着脚步, 和平日里牧师进来时的一片阒寂大不相同。但胡珀先生却没注意他的教民的不安。他几乎是脚步无声地走了进来, 向两侧的座位席轻轻地地点了点头。当路过一位最年长的教民时, 他弯了弯身子; 那人是一位须发皤然的祖父辈老人, 坐在过道中间的一把扶手椅上。说来真怪, 这位年高德劭的老人对他的牧师的脸上冒出那么个东西却显得颇为麻木。胡珀先生走上台阶, 出现在布道坛上, 与他的教众面对面, 当然, 设使那面纱不算数的话; 直到此时, 那老人似乎才意识到了普遍的不安情绪。那神秘的标志一次也没掉下来。在他诵读赞美诗时, 面纱随着他呼吸的节奏摇动着; 在他读《圣经》时, 它就在他与那神圣的纸页间神秘地摇荡着; 当他祈祷时, 面纱严严实实地盖在他仰起的脸上。难道他想千方百计地把自己的脸在他所称颂的上帝面前藏起来?

这就是那方朴素的黑面纱的效果: 不止一位神经纤弱的女人不得不离开了教堂。每当他那黑面纱向着教众时, 他们几乎都脸色苍白地面对着他。

Mr. Hooper had the reputation of a good preacher, but not an energetic one: he strove to win his people heavenward, by mild persuasive influences, rather than to drive them thither, by the thunders of the Word. The sermon which he now delivered was marked by the same characteristics of style and manner as the general series of his pulpit oratory. But there was something, either in the sentiment of the discourse itself, or in the imagination of the auditors, which made it greatly the most powerful effort that they had ever heard from their pastor's lips. It was tinged, rather more darkly than usual, with the gentle gloom of Mr. Hooper's **temperament**. The subject had reference to secret sin, and those sad mysteries which we hide from our nearest and dearest, and would fain conceal from our own consciousness, even forgetting that the **omniscient** can detect them. A subtle power was breathed into his words. Each member of the congregation, the most innocent girl, and the man of hardened breast, felt as if the preacher had crept upon them, behind his awful veil, and discovered their hoarded **iniquity** of deed or thought. Many spread their clasped hands on their bosoms, There was nothing terrible in what Mr. Hooper said—at least, no violence; and yet, with every tremor of his melancholy voice, the hearers quaked, And unsought **pathos** came hand in hand with awe. So sensible were the audience of some unwonted attribute in their minister, that they longed for a breath of wind to blow aside the veil, almost believing that a stranger's visage would be discovered, though the form, gesture, and voice were those of Mr. Hooper.

At the close of the services, the people hurried out with indecorous confusion, eager to communicate their pent-up amazement, and conscious of lighter spirits, the moment they lost sight of the black veil. Some gathered in little circles, huddled closely together, with their mouths all whispering in the centre; some went homeward alone, wrapt in silent meditation; some talked loudly, and **profaned** the Sabbath-day with ostentatious laughter. A few shook their sagacious heads, intimating that they could penetrate the mystery; while one or two affirmed that there was no mystery at all, but only that Mr. Hooper's eyes were so weakened by the midnight lamp, as to require a shade. After a brief interval, forth came good Mr. Hooper also, in the rear of his flock. Turning his veiled face from one group to another, he paid due **reverence** to the hoary heads, saluted the middle-aged with kind dignity, as their friend and spiritual guide, greeted the young with mingled authority and love, and laid

temperament
[ˈtempərəmənt] *n.*
气质, 性格, 性情

omniscient
[ɒmˈnɪʃənt] *n.*
无所不知的人, 上帝

iniquity
[iˈnikwəti] *n.*
罪恶, 罪孽

pathos
[ˈpeɪθɒs] *n.*
悲怜, 哀婉, 怜悯

profane
[prəˈfeɪn] *vt.*
亵渎, 冒犯

reverence
[ˈrevərəns] *n.*
尊敬, 崇敬, 尊重

胡珀先生有着好牧师的名声, 但他不是一位感情激越的传道士: 靠的是循循善诱去赢得人们向往天国, 而不是靠《圣经》福音的雷霆言语令人向善。眼下他的布道仍然遵循他一贯的温和的布道作派。然而, 这里有着某种东西, 使牧师双唇里吐出的话显得比往日更有力, 这或许是由于布道文本本身的力量, 或许是出于听众的想象。这东西似有若无, 再加上胡珀先生那温文而忧郁的气质, 比往日显得更加浓重。这东西与隐秘的罪有关, 是神秘而又令人神伤的东西, 我们将它们瞒着我们最密切、最亲近的人, 瞒着自己的意识, 乃至忘记了上帝是会发现它们的。它是一种渗入语言的微妙的力量。每一位教众, 大多数天真的少女, 胸膛厚实的汉子们, 都觉得那传教士仿佛慢慢地渗进了他们的身体, 从他那令人生畏的面纱后面, 窥见了他们行为和思想中藏纳的邪恶。许多人将紧攥的双手按在胸口上。胡珀先生的话一点儿都不可怕——至少没有激烈的言辞, 但他那忧郁的嗓音令人发抖, 让人心旌摇摇, 敬畏有加, 又令人油然而生感伤。听众们总觉得牧师身上有某种非同寻常的东西, 他们渴望来一阵风掀开那面纱, 相信会看到一个陌生人的面孔, 尽管他的身形、姿态和嗓音, 分明是胡珀先生本人。

仪式一结束, 人们乱哄哄地拥了出来, 迫不及待地交流他们的错愕之情; 一旦看不到那黑面纱后, 都觉得松了口气。有的人聚成小圈圈, 扎作一堆, 在圈子里窃窃私语; 有的人独自向家里走去, 陷入了沉思冥想; 有的人则大声地交谈着, 怪笑着嘲讽安息日。有几个人自以为是地摇着脑袋, 显出一副能看穿其中奥秘的样子。有一两个人则坚称根本就没有什么秘密, 只是胡珀先生半夜看书, 眼睛让灯晃坏了, 需要有个东西挡挡。过了不一会儿, 好心的胡珀先生也跟着一帮人随后来了。他将戴着面纱的脸从一伙人转向另一伙人, 一如既往地同老年人表示敬意, 亲切而庄重地向中年人致敬; 作为年轻人的朋友和精神导师, 他则带着威严和慈爱和他们打招呼, 又把手放在

his hands on the little children's heads to bless them. Such was always his custom on the Sabbath-day. Strange and **bewildered** looks repaid him for his courtesy. None, as on former occasions, aspired to the honour of walking by their pastor's side. Old Squire Saunders, doubtless by an accidental **lapse** of memory, neglected to invite Mr. Hooper to his table, where the good clergyman had been wont to bless the food, almost every Sunday since his settlement. He returned, therefore, to the parsonage, and, at the moment of closing the door, was observed to look back upon the people, all of whom had their eyes fixed upon the minister. A sad smile **gleamed** faintly from beneath the black veil, and flickered about this mouth, glimmering as he disappeared.

"How strange," said a lady, "that a simple black veil, such as any woman might wear on her bonnet, should become such a terrible thing on Mr. Hooper's face!"

"Something must surely be amiss with Mr. Hooper's intellects," observed her husband, the physician of the village. "But the strangest part of the affair is the effect of this **vagary**, even on a sober-minded man like myself. The black veil, though it covers only our pastor's face, throws its influence over his whole person, and makes him ghost-like from head to foot. Do you not feel it so?"

"Truly do I," replied the lady; "and I would not be alone with him for the world. I wonder he is not afraid to be alone with himself!"

"Men sometimes are so," said her husband.

The afternoon service was attended with similar circumstances. At its conclusion, the bell tolled for the funeral of a young lady. The relatives and friends were assembled in the house, and the more distant acquaintances stood about the door, speaking of the good qualities of the deceased, when their talk was interrupted by the appearance of Mr. Hooper, still covered with his black veil. It was now an appropriate emblem. The clergyman stepped into the room where the corpse was laid, and bent over the coffin, to take a last farewell of his deceased parishioner. As he stooped, the veil hung straight down from his forehead, so that, if her eye-lids had not been closed for ever, the dead maiden might have seen his face. Could Mr. Hooper be fearful of her glance, that he so hastily caught back the black veil? A person, who watched the interview between the dead and living, **scrupled** not to affirm, that, at the instant when the clergyman's features were disclosed, the corpse had slightly

bewildered

[bi'wildəd] *adj.*

困惑的，不知所措的

lapse

[læps] *n.*

记错，过失

gleam

[gli:m] *vi.*

发微光，闪烁，流露

vagary

['veigəri] *n.*

古怪行为，变幻莫测

scruple

['skru:pl] *v.*

有顾虑，良心上感到不安

孩子们的头上，为他们祝福。这些都是他在安息日的老习惯。回报他的却是古怪而又困惑的表情。人们没有像往日那样，以与他们的牧师比肩而行而感到荣幸。年老的乡绅桑德斯无疑是记性偶然出了毛病，竟忘了邀请胡珀先生到家里吃饭；自打这位好心的牧师到这里任职起，几乎每个星期天都要到他家的饭桌上为进餐祝福的。于是，他回到了牧师宅邸，在关门的那一刻，他回头望了望大伙儿，那些人全都目不转睛地盯着他们的牧师呢。黑面纱的后面流露出一丝淡淡的苦笑，在他的身影消失的刹那，微微地掠过他的嘴角。

“太怪啦，”一位太太道，“就那么一块普普通通的黑面纱，跟女人帽子上的一样，可戴在胡珀先生的脸上，咋那么吓人呢！”

“胡珀先生的脑子准是出毛病了，”她丈夫说，他是村里的大夫，“不过最怪的是，那副怪模怪样让村里人都乱套了，连我这个脑子那么清楚的人也躲不过。那块黑面纱往咱们的牧师脸上一盖，他整个人都变了，从头到脚鬼气拂拂的。你没觉得吗？”

“可不是吗，”太太答道，“我可不愿单独和他在一起。我纳闷，他会不会连他自己都怕自己呢！”

“人有时候会这样的。”她丈夫说。

下午的仪式差不多是在同样的气氛中进行的。仪式结束时，为一位年轻姑娘敲起了丧钟。亲友们集中在屋里，关系较远的熟人则站在门口，谈论着逝者的美德；仍然戴着黑面纱的胡珀先生刚一露面，他们的谈话便戛然而止了。面纱倒是和这场合很相配。牧师走进了摆放着遗体的房间，向棺材俯下身去，为这位逝去的教友作最后的道别。他俯下身去的时候，面纱是直直地垂下的，倘若那位死去的女人没永远合眼的话，她准定能看到他的脸庞。莫不是胡珀先生害怕她的眼光，才匆忙把面纱往后掩住？有个人注意到了生者与死者之间面对面的这一时刻，便立时断言说，那一瞬间牧师的脸露了出来，虽然死者