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On Memory



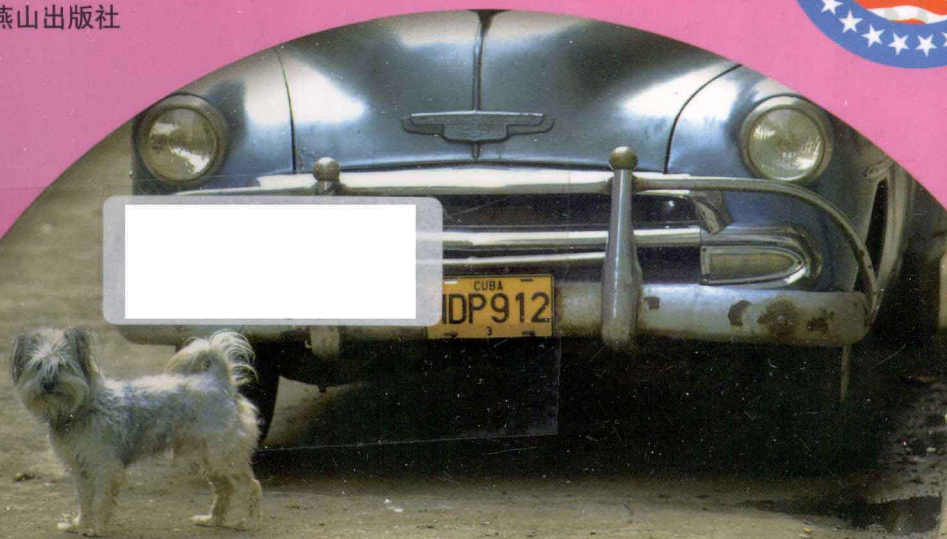
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刘彦军 高华军◎主编

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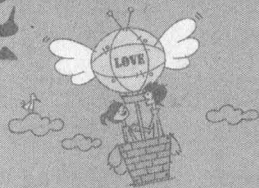
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本系列丛书在编著过程中,由于时间仓促,工作量大,未能及时与部分所选文章的作者一一取得联系,本着对书稿质量的追求,又不忍将美文割爱,故冒昧地将文章选录书中。

请有关作者在见到本书后,主动与我们联系。



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饥饿

佚名

可能不会有人相信,我已经4天没吃饭了。

刚开始是一天吃4个烧饼,或者两个小面包;后来由4个减成了两个,再后来又由两个减成了一个,最后简直穷得连买开水的一个铜板也没有了。没办法,饥饿时就站在自来水管的龙头下,把嘴张开,拧开水龙头,让水灌进嘴里,喝了一肚子水,撑得饱饱的,但凉水进肚子后,肚子里又冷又痛,那滋味有多难受,根本无法用语言形容。

我为什么会穷到这个地步呢?因为那个时候,学校里发生了一些事情,许多同学被抓进捕房去了,许多同学搬了家,也有些同学回去了,厨房不肯赊账,他不愿意再开饭给我们吃了。我那时一边援救被捕的同学,一边还要筹备自己的生活费,忙得头昏眼花、疲惫不堪。

如果有的时候实在饿得不能忍受了,我才会跑到春潮书店去借钱。如果遇到康农和抚华两人在店里,他们就可以借给我三块五块的,但这样的好运气是很少的,他们并不是经常在店里待着。

我最快乐的一天来到了,我的《从军日记》出版了!春潮书店的大门口贴着一张用各种不同颜色写的又鲜明又动人的广告,我充满着好奇心,走了进去,也像一个普通的顾客一样,从书架上抽出来一本鲜红的《从军日记》,封面是丰子恺先生的女儿画的小兵骑牛。但我没有买它,因为我知道,如果我向她要,至少可以无条件地得到10本的。

“我没有钱用了,请你付几块钱的版税给我好吗?”趁着店里没有买主的时候,我有些不好意思地小声问那位管账的。

“我不能给你,版税一年只能结算两次,现在还不到时候,我怎么付给你呢?”

“我等不到结算版税的时候了,今天我非预支几块不可。我如果不到万不得已的时候,也决不会向你催讨的。你肯定不信,我连回去搭电车的钱都没有,来的时候也是跑着

来的。”

在这样向他诉苦时,饥饿之火在我的腹内燃烧着,让我忘记了什么是羞耻,好像一点儿也不觉得难为情。但他只是冷冷地一笑,似乎并不同情我,倒是有一个小伙计对我很好,他对我说:“你多等一会儿吧,买你的书的人一定不少,等一会儿收进多少钱,你就都拿去好了。”

管账的用愤怒的眼神斜视着小伙计,但因为看到我在旁边,他便没有说什么,只是用手把算盘敲得很重。

于是我充当临时的店员,对于进来买《从军日记》的青年,我都愿意亲自将书递给他。但对方并不知道我就是那本书的作者,有几个顾客还嫌我包得不好,表现出很生气的样子,小伙计正想告诉他我是谁时,我连忙使了个眼色让他别说,弄得那位顾客莫名其妙地打量了我很久,然后悻悻然地离去。

令我意想不到的,快到黄昏的时候,我居然拿到了5块钱。回来的路上,我不再搭三等车了,趾高气扬地跑进了头等车,那位售票员指着前面一节车对我说:“到三等车去吧!”他大概看见我穿的衣服太破旧,以为一定是个坐不起头等车的穷光蛋。我忙把5块钱的钞票拿在手里,故意向他示威:“喂,找钱来吧!”他这才低下头不做声了。

我上车后,遇到一个青年坐在我的旁边,他竟然在看《从军日记》,还大胆地向我宣传,要我去买一本来看看,我对他说:“我不赞成女人当兵,所以也不喜欢看这本书。”

他听了非常不高兴,竟骂我思想顽固。

“20世纪的女性不应该这样开倒车的!”他气愤地说。

我故意和他辩论了很久,全车厢的人都把注意力转向了我们。车子驶到卡德路,我就下来了。我兴奋得跑去找光光,她和元真现在也很穷,都快没法过日子了,我的到来让她们很高兴,并且猜想我一定拿到了钱。我立刻给了她们两块钱,还剩两块多钱,就请她们在一个小馆子里吃了顿饭,等到我回去的时候,身上又只剩几毛钱了。

但我并不难过,反而很开心,我觉得吃了一顿饱饭,至少可以抵3天。我也是在这个时候学会喝酒的。一个人到了越穷困的时候,便越不看重金钱了,我总是很不理解那些视钱如命的守财奴,为什么半文钱也不肯花,要这样对自己。我只要精神上得到满足就好,物质生活哪怕再艰苦,也不能丝毫影响我的思想和意志。有时候我会分些钱给穷困的朋友用,或者跑到馆子里大吃大喝一顿,或者买许多我爱吃的虾米、牛肉干、鸭肫肝和糖果

回来。没钱的时候,就一个人跑去马路上喝西北风,躲在亭子间里喝自来水,或者索性蒙在被窝里睡两天,看看有趣的小说,以度过这段可怕的日子。

如果有人问我:“饥饿的滋味怎么样?”我会立刻干脆地回答他:“你如果想知道的话,请你4天不吃一点东西,饿一下试试吧。”老实说,饥饿的确比死还要难受,比受了任何巨大深刻的痛苦还要苦。当你听到肠子饿得咕咕叫时,好像有一条巨蛇要从你的腹内咬破了皮肉钻出来一般;有时你饿得头昏眼花,刚想坐起来又倒下去了,想要走路,腿却又酸又软的,拖也拖不动;有时一口口的酸水从肚子里翻上来,使你总想呕吐,但又什么都吐不出来;更有时饿得实在受不了了,真想在自己的臂膀上咬下一块肉来吞下去时,我才真正相信了古时候“易子而食”的故事,还有现在有些地方把死人的肉煮来当饭吃的惨事。

我虽然很穷困,但我却有着铮铮傲骨,始终不屈服,不向有钱的人低头,更不像别人认为的:女人的出路就是找个有钱的丈夫。

饥饿加深了我对现实社会的认识,加强了我顽强地活下去的勇气,从此我要更加努力奋斗,为了自己,也为了千千万万和我同样在饥饿线上挣扎着的青年男女。

Hunger

Anonymous

Believe it or not, I've been starving for four days on end.

At first, I ate nothing but four ~~baked cakes~~ or two small buns per day, then I cut them down by half and then by another half, until I didn't even own a copper for buying boiled water. When I was thirsty, I would stand under a tap and let its running water pour down my throat through my wide-open mouth. I felt bloated. There was a pain and chill in my stomach. I cannot tell you enough how miserable I was.

How did it come that I had been reduced to such poverty? It was because the school where I studied had got into trouble. Many students had been arrested and taken to the police station. Some students had moved house and some had gone home. The school canteen was closed because it refused to serve meals on credit. While trying to rescue the arrested fellow students, I meanwhile had to find enough money to pay my living expenses. So I was terribly busy.

Pressed by hunger, I would visit Chunchao Bookstore every day to seek a loan of money. When Kang Nong or Fu Hua was there, I would have no problem in borrowing a couple of silver dollars from them. But I seldom found them in the store and the clerks of course had no say in this matter.

I was beside myself with joy the day when I found my book *The Diary of a Woman Soldier* published at long last. Pasted up at the door of the bookstore was an eye-catching colourful poster advertising the book. I went into the store full of curiosity, and, as an ordinary customer would do, took from the shelf a copy of the book, which had on its bright-red front cover a cartoon drawn by Feng Zikai's daughter portraying a little woman

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soldier riding on a cow. I didn't buy it for I knew I was entitled as its author for at least ten complimentary copies.

"I need money badly. May I have a few dollars now out of the royalties on my book?" Seeing no customers around, I whispered to the cashier with embarrassment.

"No, not now. Royalty payments are made only twice a year. How could I pay you ahead of time?" 版权

"I just can't wait. Today you've got to give me an advance of a few dollars. I wouldn't be here bothering you if I could help it. Believe me, I can't even afford the streetcar fare going back home. I came here on foot."

The uncontrollable desire for food burning within me, I ignored all propriety and poured out my complaints without feeling ashamed. The cashier seemed apathetic, smiling sardoninay young clerk, however, was kind enough to tell me. "You just need to wait a little while. I'm sure your book will sell quick. Soon you can take all the money that comes from today's sale of it."

The cashier cast an angry sidelong glance at the young clerk, but he had to keep silent in my presence and worked his abacus with a vengeance.

I volunteered to serve as a temporary clerk, ready to hand the book in person to any young customer who wanted to buy it. They often had no idea that I was the author of the book. Some didn't like the way I did the wrapping and looked somewhat displeased. The young clerk was about to tell a customer who I was when I immediately stopped him by tipping him a wink. The young man was confused and, after looking me up and down for a while, walked off in sulky silence. 白眼

To my great surprise, I got as much as five dollars towards evening. On my way home, I travelled first class in a streetcar instead of third class. The moment I stepped into it, chin up and chest out, the conductor barked pointing to the front compartment, "Third class in the front!" Judging by the way I was dressed, he must have thought I was too poor to travel first class. I quickly showed him the fiver in my hand and demanded by way of a protest, "Hey, give me my change!" He was silent, lowering his head. 昂首阔步

A young man sitting beside me happened to be reading my *The Diary of a Woman Soldier*. He boldly recommended me the book and advised me to go and buy a copy for myself. I replied, "I don't like this book because I don't think it's good for a woman to be a soldier."

He was much annoyed at my remark and called me a diehard.

"A 20th century woman shouldn't go against the trend of the times!" said he angrily.

I purposely kept up the argument till it attracted the attention of all passengers. After I got off the streetcar at the Carter Road stop, I hurried excitedly to call on Guang Guang. Being hard up, she and Yuan Zhen were immensely pleased to see me, guessing I must have brought some money with me to share with them. I quickly gave them two dollars and spent the remaining two dollars and something, treating them to dinner at a small eatery. I returned home with only a few cents left. But I didn't care, because I knew I had had a full meal to keep me three days without feeling hungry.

It was also at this time that I started to take to drinking. The poorer one is, the more he looks upon money as dirt. I often wonder why a miser should be so rigid in self-denial, even grudging to spend every single cent for himself. All I seek is inner joy. The material life, however hard it is, will never affect my mind and my will. When I have money, I'll share it with friends in need, or go to a restaurant to eat and drink to my heart's content, or buy and bring home many things I like to eat, such as dried shrimps, dried roast beef, salted duck's gizzard and liver, and candies. When I'm broke, I'll go strolling around the streets alone on an empty stomach, or shut myself up in my small room with nothing to eat, or lie in bed sleeping for a couple of days or reading an interesting novel, just to while away the terrible long days.

If I'm asked what it is like to be hungry, my answer is prompt and clear-cut, "Keep starving yourself for four days, my dear friend, and you'll know." Honestly, hunger is even more painful than death. It is the greatest of all human sufferings. When you hear your own stomach rumbling with hunger, you'll feel as if a large snake were trying to gnaw its way out of your belly. Sometimes, you feel so giddy that you cannot rise from your bed no matter

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