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现代英文选评注

夏济安 评注



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The Bear

熊

William Faulkner

福克纳(1897—1962)是一个难读的作家,《熊》又是一篇难读的中篇小说。福克纳的艰涩,同近代诗的艰涩是同一种的性质,都是用不平常的字,再用字和字之间的不平常的结构来表现一个对于作者有特殊意义的世界。福克纳所描写的范围很狭,通常只是美国南部密西西比州的一个角落,但是这也就是他所认识的整个人生。他的世界是污秽而充满罪恶的,但仍不失其壮丽和光怪陆离的诱惑性。他的特别敏锐的感觉,和他对于这个世界强烈的爱好和憎恶,使他不得不创造一种特别的风格,作为他的工具。流利晓畅不是他的特点,他的作风是曲折的,沉郁的,粗犷的。他总是着力地描写,因此往往使人有浓得化不开之感。但是他又好细腻;他的粗野的句法里,载满了精细的观察和令人耳目一新的譬喻。福克纳是值得仔细研究的。下面所选的几句,在原文还不到一段。这几句所讲的,是人们如何地“谈熊色变”,拿这只怪物没有办法。这几句是比较笼统的描写,并不包含强烈的感觉上的反应,福克纳的长处还不能充分表现,但是读者从这里已经可以觉得一种可怕的野性的力量了。本篇选自《福克纳选集》(*The Portable Faulkner*)。

He realized later that it had begun long before that. It had already begun on that day when he first wrote his age in two ciphers and his cousin McCaslin brought him for the first time to the camp, the big woods, to earn for himself from the wilderness the name and state of hunter provided he in his turn were humble and enduring enough.

〔注〕He 是小说的主角 Issac McCaslin, 整篇小说是用他这个角度来写的,熊的可怕只是从这个少年的所闻所见里表现出来。

it: 猎熊这件事情。before that: that 指那天早晨。当地的人每年冬天要去猎这一头熊,小说开始是 Issac 十六岁时十二月的一个早晨。以

下是倒叙以前的事。

on that day when he first wrote his age in two ciphers: 他刚满十岁的时候。two ciphers 意为“两位数字”，一百以上就是 in three ciphers了。他满了十岁人家才让他去参加猎熊大会，但是事实上，大熊在这孩子出世以前就已经猖獗。when 所引起的子句有两个，中间由 and 连接。

his cousin: 照小说上看来，这个人 (McCaslin Edmonds) 年纪虽然比 Issac 大，辈分却比 Issac 小，大约是表侄之类，反正英文里，凡是远亲都可以算是 cousin 的。

woods 是 camp 的同位语。他的表侄把他带到猎人的营帐里去，带到大森林里去。

earn 的宾语是 name and state。“好让他 (infinitive phrase used as an adverb) 替他自己从这原野里挣来一个猎人的名声 (name) 和地位 (state)”。从小去实习，大了也可以成一个猎人。

provided 是连词 = if。他假如是相当的“虚心” (humble) 和肯吃苦 (enduring)，那么他也可以成为一个猎人。这本来是他表侄的打算。were 表示 subjunctive mood，他的表侄还不知道这个孩子是不是虚心，肯不肯吃苦。

in his turn: 别的猎人，都是从小被大人带到森林里去实习，虚心吃苦学出来的。现在“轮到”这位 Issac 了。

He had already inherited then, without ever having seen it, the big old bear with one trap-ruined foot that in an area almost a hundred miles square had earned for himself a name, a definite designation like a living man — the long legend of corn-cribs broken down and rifled, of shoats and grown pigs and even calves carried bodily into the woods and devoured, and traps and deadfalls overthrown and dogs mangled and slain, and shotgun and even rifle shots delivered at point-blank range with no more effect than so many peas blown through a tube by a child—a corridor of wreckage and destruction beginning back before the boy was born, through which sped, not fast but rather with the ruthless

and irresistible deliberation of a locomotive, the shaggy tremendous shape.

〔注〕 句子很长，但是本篇里还有一句长达一千六百字，比这一句要长十倍。那种长达一千六百字的、创纪录的句子，是要从感觉印象和回忆所交织的心理状态里反映出几十年的事情，那是不容易分析的。这里的一句实在并不难，很明显的可分成三节，节和节之间，有一破折号 (dash) 分隔开来(或联系起来)。

第一节: then 还是讲他十岁的时候，那时候他虽然从来没有 (without ever having) 看见过这头熊，却早已听惯了关于这头熊的事。中文的代名词总放在它所代的名词的后面，但是在英文里，代名词可以先见，名词可以后见，如这里的 it 和 bear。

inherited 是及物动词，它的宾语是 bear。动词和它的宾语之间，不管插多少 phrases 或 clauses，读者应该要注意的还是把它们的关系找出来。

inherited 原意是“继承”，但是这里这个解释要稍加更动，才安得上去。关于这头熊的事，已经成为一种传说 (legend: 此字见于第二节)。传说是世代相传的，成人们传给小孩子，小孩子好象继承祖业似地把这种传说好好保存。这里假如不说 had inherited，改用较普通的 had come to know of，那么就显不出这件事的严重性了。

trap: 捕兽机关。trap 同 ruined 这两个字这样一连结，可以省很多字：这头熊的一只脚是曾经给机关压伤的(从此它成了跛脚，很容易辨别它的脚迹)。

that 是关系代名词(代 bear)，引起一个 adjective clause。在这个句子里 that 是主语，had earned 是动词。name 是宾语。

designation 和 name 是同位语，意思也是一样的，不过第二字用以加强第一个字。山林里的野兽同猫和狗不同，人们不认识它们，不会给它们起名字的。但是这头熊却已经有了一个“固定的名称” (definite designation)，同一个人一样。这头熊的名字叫 Old Ben。

前面讲这个孩子，刚刚用过 to earn for himself，这里讲这头熊，又来了 had earned for himself，这种重复是作者故意的。当然作者要换几个字，未尝不可，但他故意让这几个平凡的字重复一次，衬托出下

面的精彩文章。

第二节: **legend** 是“传说”, 同本句 **inherited** 的宾语 **bear** 同位。
(但我们也可以说: **The bear had become a legend.**)

legend 下面是大熊历年的所作所为, 都是用“**of**+名词+过去分词”的形式构成的。可以下表示之:

名 词	过 去 分 词
(1) corn-cribs (玉蜀黍仓)	broken down (被撞毁), rifled (被搜劫)
(2) shoats (小猪), grown pigs (大猪), calves (小牛)	carried (被衔走), devoured (被吞吃) (bodily : 全身拖走, 不是衔去一条腿就够了。)
(3) traps , deadfalls (千斤闸之类的机关)	overthrown (被推翻)
(4) dogs (猎狗)	mangled (被打得遍体鳞伤), slain (被杀)
(5) shotgun (shots) (鸟枪弹), rifle shots (步枪弹)	delivered (被发射)

最后一项的意思: “在直接瞄准(**point-blank**) 的距离(**range**) 里所发出的这些枪弹, 效果(**effect**) 同小孩子从管子里吹出来的豆打在它身上一样。”大熊不为枪弹所伤。

第三节: **corridor** 和上节 **legend** 同位, 原意是“走廊”, 这里约相当于 **career** (生命的过程)。这许多年来大熊破坏了很多的东西(此处 **wreckage** 和 **destruction** 的意义可不分)。这种过程是在这小孩出世以前就开始的。

但是作者不要读者想象一个抽象的“过程”, 他要读者想象一个具体的“走廊”。这走廊又并不存在在空间里, 而是存在在时间里, 就是说走廊并不从某一个地方连到另一个地方, 而是从某一年连到另一年的。这许多年连成一个走廊, 在里面闯过了这一头大熊。读者假如能体会到这一层意思, 已经尝到一些近代诗的滋味了。

corridor 有一个以 **through which** 开头的 **adjective clause** 来形容它。这个从句的主语 **shape** 放在最后, 动词是 **sped** (**speed** “急行”

的过去式)。

那个急行的东西，当然就是那头熊，但是作者偏偏说是“毛茸茸的巨大的形体”(shaggy tremendous shape)。走得太快了，看不清楚，只好说是某种形状的形体了。

但是作者又不承认这头熊是走得快的(not fast)，他说它走得象火车头(locomotive)，火车头不是很快吗？作者偏偏不注意它的“快”，而要注意火车头的“不顾一切，往前直进”(ruthless: 无动于衷的; irresistible: 不可抵抗的)。他拿火车头比熊，可是又假定火车头是活的，火车头是“蓄意”要前进的(deliberation: 经过考虑后的行动)。这样一比，熊的走路姿态我们可以想象得出来了。但是作者并不说熊在森林里是这样走的，而说它是在“时间”里走路——这许多年它是这样闯过去的。

It ran in his knowledge before he ever saw it. It loomed and towered in his dreams before he even saw the unaxed woods where it left its crooked print, shaggy, tremendous, red-eyed, not malevolent but just big, too big for the dogs which tried to bay it, for the horses which tried to ride it down, for the men and the bullets they fired into it; too big for the very country which was its constricting scope.

〔注〕 大熊不但在时间里行走，也在我们小说的主人公的思想里占着很重要的地位，它在他的脑筋里(knowledge 姑且译成“脑筋”吧)奔跑。

before he ever saw it 使我们想起上一句里的 without ever having seen it。这好象是歌辞里的重复句(refrain)，作者有时是模仿音乐的技巧的。前面的 to earn for himself 和 had earned for himself，再前面的 it had begun 和 it had already begun 都有同样的作用。

loomed: 浮现着。大抵指模糊的可是大而可怕的东西。towered 的意义在这里同 loomed 差不多，但是这个字有两层特殊意义：一、象塔一样的高；二、所指的东西比较具体。

unaxed: 未经斧斤的。森林还没有经过砍伐。

print: 脚印。crooked: 歪曲的，因为大熊的一只脚是受伤的。where clause 的主语 it 有五个形容词形容它。五个之中，前两个 shaggy 和 tremendous 在上一句已经见过，三个是新添的，red-eyed, not malevolent

(并没有恶意, 并不存心害人), big (只是“大”而已)。

下面跟着几个平行的 **too big for ...** 的 phrase。

(1) 对于那些想阻挡它的猎狗, 它是太大了。bay 的意思不单是 bark at, 也有 bring it to bay (使陷入困境) 之意。

(2) ride it down: 赶上它 (指骑马的人)。

(3) 对于人和他们所放射的枪弹, 它也太大了。

(4) 对于这个区域 (country), 它也太大了。constricting: 限制它的。scope: 范围。very 当 adjective 用, 指“就是”这一个区域。

四层意思, 一层比一层紧, 在修辞学称为 climax (渐进法)。最后说出那个地方根本容纳不了它。前面讲 legend 的地方, 也是用的渐进法。

The Whistle

寒 笛

Eudora Welty

本文是尤多拉·韦尔蒂(1909—)所著短篇小说集《绿幕》(*A Curtain of Green*)里的一篇。韦尔蒂女士是美国南部密西西比州人,已经有四十年以上的写作历史。她的短篇小说剪裁经济,勾画生动,笔触轻灵,含意丰富,堪入世界名作之列。

Night fell. The darkness was thin, like some sleazy dress that has been worn and worn for many winters and always lets the cold through to the bones. Then the moon rose. A farm lay quite visible, like a white stone in water, among the stretches of deep woods in their colorless dead leaf. By a closer and more searching eye than the moon's, everything belonging to the Mortons' might have been seen—even to the tiny tomato plants in their neat rows closest to the house, gray and featherlike, appalling in their exposed fragility. The moonlight covered everything, and lay upon the darkest shape of all, the farmhouse where the lamp had just been blown out.

〔注〕 sleazy: 稀薄的。黑夜比作一件不能御寒的敝衣。lets 的主语是关系代名词 that, the cold 是它的宾语。through 是副词,作用和 pass through 相同,“让它穿过”, to 是介词。

visible (清楚可辨)是 complement, 形容主语 farm (田庄)。田庄之在月色之中,犹如水中白石,这样比说“月色如水”要高明一筹。

stretch 原意是一长条, stretches 并不是几条,而是绵延不断的一块或一片;一片深林。leaf 在这里是 collective noun, 即等于 leaves。colorless: 黑、白、灰,皆为无色。

the Mortons' 在文法上称为 absolute genitive, 把后面应该跟的名

词 house (莫顿夫妇的家)省掉了。这一句是被动语态，又是虚拟式。我们不知道有没有一只眼睛，可以比月亮看得更仔细，更能洞察一切，假如有的话，莫顿家每一样东西都可“被”(即句首之 By)它看见了。这只眼睛应该是小说家的眼睛。

但是作者并没有列举他们家里的东西，在横线之后只举了一件东西：番茄田。替番茄防冻是本篇的主题，别的东西自可以不提，写短篇小说不得不注意描写上的经济。

even to 的 to = as far as: 每样东西都可以看见，即小至小小的番茄秧，也可以看见。后面跟着几个形容 tomato plants 的字。feather-like: 象羽毛似的，指番茄的茎叶而言。fragility: 脆弱。exposed: 暴露(在寒夜中)的，番茄这样的暴露着，使人惊心(appalling)。

the farmhouse 是 the shape 的同位语。

Inside, Jason and Sara Morton were lying between the quilts of a pallet which had been made up close to the fireplace. A fire still fluttered in the grate, making a drowsy sound now and then, and its exhausted light beat up and down the wall, across the rafters, and over the dark pallet where the old people lay, like a bird trying to find its way out of the room.

[注] pallet: 稻草所铺成的床。铺(made up)在火炉附近(close)。

grate: 火炉里的铁格子。drowsy: 催眠的。exhausted: 无力的。把火炉里的光比作一只寻出路的鸟，可称妙绝。动词用 beat 也妙，譬喻还没有点明以前，单凭这个动词，已经显出有一样东西在东碰西撞了。fluttered: 跳动，用于火可以，用于鸟也可以。rafters: 屋椽。

The long-spaced, tired breathing of Jason was the only noise besides the flutter of the fire. He lay under the quilt in a long shape like a bean, turned on his side to face the door. His lips opened in the dark, and in and out he breathed, in and out, slowly and with a rise and fall, over and over, like a conversation or a tale—a question and a sigh.

[注] long-spaced: 两声鼾声之间停顿得很长。bean: 这里是

附有豆荚的豆子。turned on his side: 侧着身。turned 是过去分词。

in and out he breathed = he breathed in and out. rise and fall: 起伏。最后一句句子的节奏, 也模仿鼾声的起伏。

Sara lay on her back with her mouth agape, silent, but not asleep. She was staring at the dark and indistinguishable places among the rafters. Her eyes seemed opened too wide, the lids strained and limp, like openings which have been stretched shapeless and made of no more use. Once a hissing yellow flame stood erect in the old log, and her small face and pale hair, and one hand holding to the edge of the cover, were illuminated for a moment, with shadows bright blue. Then she pulled the quilt clear over her head.

〔注〕 lay on her back: 仰天而卧。agape: 张着(嘴)。indistinguishable: 分辨不清楚的。opened 是过去分词, 形容主语。the lids strained and limp 是 nominative absolute phrase, “眼皮绷紧的又是软的 (limp)。”她的眼睛就“象两个窟窿, 张大得已经不成形状, 而且给弄得不再有什么用处了”。在“which” clause 里, 有两个动词, have been stretched 和 (have been) made; shapeless 和 of no more use 都形容主语 which。

第四句又是描写火光: 一下子她的脸、头发和捏住被单边缘的一只手都给照亮了。火是嘶嘶作响 (hissing) 的黄色火焰, 笔直地 (erect) 立在(炉子里的)陈旧的木柴 (log) 上。

hold 作不及物动词用, 有 cling (紧附) 的意义, 所以 holding to 比 holding (及物动词) 可能捏得更紧。末一句的 clear 是副词, 解作 completely, 把被单拉上, 把头全盖没了。

Every night they lay trembling with cold, but no more communicative in their misery than a pair of window shutters beaten by a storm. Sometimes many days, weeks went by without words. They were not really old—they were only fifty; still, their lives were filled with tiredness, with a great lack of necessity to speak, with poverty which may have bound them like a disaster too great for discussion but left them still

separate and undesirous of sympathy. Perhaps, years ago, the long habit of silence may have been started in anger or passion. Who could tell now?

〔注〕 communicative: 喜与人交谈的, 形容主语 they。受暴风雨打击的两扇百叶窗, 即使有个别的反应, 也不会互相交谈, 这一对老夫妇虽然生活困苦, 也不互相交谈, 两个活人的话并不比两扇窗的话更多一些 (no more ... than)。went by = passed。

他们的生命充满了三件东西: 第一是“疲倦”; 第二是“没有说话的需要” (filled with a lack: 充满了一种缺乏——好象是不通的, 这样把两个意义相反的字联在一起, 修辞学上称为“矛盾修饰法” oxymoron, 中文也有这种说法, 例如“公开的秘密”); 第三是“贫穷”。

poverty 后跟着一个 adjective clause。在这个子句里, 作者就她写作的时候 (故用现在式的辅助动词 may), 去猜想当时的情形 (故用完成式不定词 have bound 和 have left)。贫穷把他们老夫妻俩联系 (bound 是 bind 的过去分词) 在一起, 可能如同一个灾祸一样 (同受灾者命运相同); 灾祸太大了, 用不着再去讨论它。但是贫穷使得他们俩仍旧是彼此分离的, 而且是不希望别人来同情的。(separate 和 undesirous 两个形容词都是 objective complements。)

末一句, 作者猜想他们什么时候开始互相不交谈的。这个沉默的习惯可能很多年 (years 前面不必加 many 也可表示很多年) 前就开始了。怎样开始的呢? 可能有一次在生气的时候, 两人不说话, 以后就一直不说话了 (passion = violent anger)。但是现在谁知道呢?

She was so tired of the cold! That was all it could do any more—make her tired. Year after year, she felt sure that she would die before the cold was over. Now, according to the Almanac, it was spring But year after year it was always the same. The plants would be set out in their frames, transplanted always too soon, and there was a freeze When was the last time they had grown tall and full, that the cold had held off and there was a crop?

〔注〕 第二句的 it 代 the cold。make 是省去了 to 的不定式。

Almanac: 历本。虽然交了春，天还是很冷。交了春，番茄苗要从苗圃里移植到田里去。但是年年总是如此，移植 (transplanted) 得太早了，一夜春寒，可能把番茄全冻死，辅助动词用 would 表示过去屡次发生的事。set out = planted (此解根据 Thorndike-Barnhart: Comprehensive Desk Dictionary)。frames: 番茄太重，番茄树枝支持不起，需搭架子来扶助。

年年种的番茄，都在春天冻死，她已记不起哪一年的番茄是种活的。末一句是 Sara 自己问自己，上一回是什么时候，番茄苗(they)长得又高，结得又满，寒冷不来侵犯(hold off = keep at a distance)而有收获呢？

Like a vain dream, Sara began to have thoughts of the spring and summer. At first she thought only simply, of the colors of green and red, the smell of the sun on the ground, the touch of leaves and of warm ripening tomatoes. Then, all hidden as she was under the quilt, she began to imagine and remember the town of Dexter in the shipping season. There in her mind, dusty little Dexter became a theatre of almost legendary festivity, a place of pleasure. On every road leading in, smiling farmers were bringing in wagonloads of the most beautiful tomatoes. The packing sheds at Dexter Station were all decorated—no, it was simply that the May sun was shining. Mr. Perkins, the tall, gesturing figure, stood in the very centre of everything, buying, directing, waving yellow papers that must be telegrams, shouting with great impatience. And it was he, after all, that owned their farm now. Train after train of empty freight cars stretched away, waiting and then being filled. Was it possible to have saved out of the threat of the cold so many tomatoes in the world?

〔注〕这一段是回忆五月间收购番茄时的盛况（就是番茄有收成的那一年），运用视觉 (colors)、嗅觉 (smell)、触觉 (touch) 的描写，正同上文凄凉寒夜作一对照。

all hidden as she was under the quilt = though she was all hidden under the quilt.