

【汉英珍藏本】
世界名家精品英汉对照系列·第二辑

◎国内最权威、最全面、最新版本 ◎世界无与伦比的杰作，影响
人类一百年的励志经典 ◎最伟大的故事献给所有积极向上的人



假如给我三天光明

Three Days To See

〔美〕海伦·凯勒自传 本书编委会 编译

出版社

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第一章

心灵的颤声,生命的强音





光明和声音

1880年6月27日,我出生在美国亚拉巴马州北部一个美丽宁静的小镇——塔斯喀姆比亚。

我的父系祖先来自瑞典,他们移民到美国后居住在马里兰州。说来有些不可思议,在更早的瑞士祖先中有一位是苏黎世最早的聋哑教育专家,他曾经写过一本关于如何教育聋哑人的著作。他怎会料到呢?自己竟然会有一个像我这样又盲又聋又哑的后代。每当我想到这里,心里就会禁不住大大地感慨一番,命运真是无法预知啊!我的祖父在到达亚拉巴马州后买了一片广袤而富饶的土地之后,整个家族就在此定居了下来。

我的祖父,也就是卡斯帕·凯勒的儿子,他来到亚拉巴马州之后,开垦了一片沃土并定居下来。当时的塔斯喀姆比亚镇是一个偏僻的地方,祖父每年都要从镇上骑马到760英里外的费城购置家里和农场所需的生活用品。每次在前往费城的途中,祖父总会给家里人写信报平安,他在信中将西部沿途的景观,以及旅途中所遭遇的人、事、物都描述得清楚且生动。时至今日,姑母还珍藏着他当时写的许多家信,祖父对旅途迷人风情的刻画,对当地生活的生动再现,就像在读一本历险小说一样,总是那么引人遐想,让人百读不厌。

我的祖母凯勒是拉斐特一名官员亚历山大·莫尔的女儿,她的祖父是维吉尼亚早期殖民政府长官并曾任皇家总督的亚历山大·斯波茨伍德,她还是罗伯特·李的堂姐。



我的父亲亚瑟·凯勒曾在南北战争时担任过南军上尉,我的母亲凯蒂·亚当斯是他的第二任妻子,要比他小上好几岁。母亲的祖父本杰明·亚当斯与苏姗娜·古德休结婚,多年来,一直居住在马萨诸塞州东北部的纽伯里波特市。他们在那里生下儿子查理·亚当斯,之后又迁居至阿肯色州的赫勒纳,他代表南方军队作战,后来被擢升为准将。南北战争爆发时,他与露茜·海伦·埃弗雷特成婚(与爱德华·埃弗雷特·黑尔博士同属于一个埃弗雷特家族),战争结束后,他们举家迁往田纳西州的孟菲斯。

在我尚未丧失听力和视力以前,我记得我们家的房屋很小,一间正方形的大屋和一间供仆人们居住的小屋。依照南方的习惯,往往会在自己的房屋边上再建一所附属的小宅,以备不时之需。南北战争过后,父亲也盖了这样一座屋子,就在他和我母亲结婚之后,住进了这个小屋。房屋虽小,却是个美丽的地方,整个房屋都被蔷薇和金银花围绕着,从花园中一眼望去,就像是用植物的藤架支起了一座凉亭。就连门廊也潜藏在偌大一个花丛之中,这简直就成了蜂鸟和蜜蜂的大乐园。

凯勒老宅离我们这蔷薇小屋不过几步而已,以前整个家族曾居住在那里。由于被茂密的树木、绿藤所包围,所以邻居们都称我们家为“绿色家园”。这里简直成了我童年时代的天堂。

在莎莉文小姐到来之前,我经常独自一人摸索着围成方型的坚硬的黄杨木树篱,慢慢行走在庭园里,凭自己的嗅觉寻找刚刚绽放的紫罗兰和百合花,深深地吮吸着那一股清新的芳香。当遇到心情不好时,我也会独自到这里来寻求慰藉,我会把火热的脸埋在沁人心脾的树叶和草丛里,让清凉的气息渗进我烦躁不安的心里来。置身于这个绿色花园里,真是让人感到心旷神怡。这里有爬在地面上延伸的卷须藤和低垂的茉莉,还有一种叫做蝴蝶荷的花,特别罕见的一种植物。因为它那容易掉落的花瓣像极了蝴蝶的翅膀,所以曰其美名为蝴蝶荷。这种花会散发出一阵阵甜丝丝的气味。可是在花园里最可爱美丽的还是蔷薇,我在北方是不曾见过哪个花房中有让人如此赏心悦目的蔷薇花的。这是一种爬藤蔷薇,到处攀爬,它那长长的绿色枝条一串又一串地倒挂在门廊上,散发着芬芳,却没有一点尘世烟火的气息。每当清晨,未干的朝露会沐浴在它的身上,摸上去是那样柔软、那样高洁,使人深深陶醉在其中。让我不禁常想,上帝御花园里的那些曝光兰,也不过如此吧!

像大多数人一样,我生命的伊始也是简单且淡泊的,从呱呱坠地降临到这个世间,到观察这个世界再到开始人生之旅,就像每个家庭迎接第一个孩子的诞生时一样,大家满心欢喜。为了给第一个孩子起一个满意的名字,大家都绞尽脑汁地将这事挂在心上,每个人都要插上一句嘴。我父亲希望以他最尊敬的祖先的名字



“米德尔·坎培儿”作我的名字,母亲则想用她母亲的闺“海伦·艾培丽特”。最后,大家接受了她的建议,以她母亲的名字来命名。但是后来在抱着我去教堂的途中,过度紧张和兴奋的父亲竟把这个名字给忘了。所以,以至当牧师问起“这个婴儿叫什么名字”时,父亲一下子将“海伦·亚当斯”这个名字脱口而出。这样一来,我就不是以外祖母的名字为名,而成了“海伦·亚当斯”了。



家人告诉我,在我还处在婴儿时期的时候,就显露出了争强好胜的性格,强烈的好奇心,倔强的我会非常固执地去模仿大人们的一举一动。所以,在6个月大的时候,我就可以发出“噎!噎!噎!”的声音,还会说:“你好”,这引起了别人很大的兴趣和注意力。我甚至在1岁以前就学会了“水”这个字。在我生病之后,尽管其他的发音都已经遗忘了,但是我却仍然能够发出这个字的音,直到后来,学会拼读这个字,我告别了这种只能“咿咿呀呀”发音的阶段。

家人还告诉我,我在刚满周岁的时候就学会了走路。母亲把我从浴盆中抱出来,放在她的膝上。突然间,我注意到那忽隐忽现,一闪一闪的阳光透过轻风起舞的树叶将影子投射在光滑的地板上,我禁不住从母亲的腿上滑下来,摇摇摆摆地向它追赶而去。待这一股冲劲过后,我就跌倒在地,哭着央求母亲将我抱起来。

但是好景不长,春光里的鸟鸣欢笑,歌声盈耳。夏日里的到处果香飘飘和蔷薇弥漫,待到草黄叶红时,深秋已至。三个美好的季节就这样匆匆流逝,但这一切却在一个活蹦乱跳、咿呀学语的幼童心里留下了美好的记忆。第二年,阴郁又可怕的2月到来时,我突然生病了。病魔夺走了我的视觉和听觉,让我又重回婴儿般的蒙昧之中,医生们诊断的结果,是急性的胃充血以及脑充血,他们宣布我已无药可救,然而,一天清晨却出现了奇迹,我忽然发起的高烧和它无端的到来一样,突然地退了下来。家人的万分欣喜在脸上溢于言表,但包括医生在内的所有人,哪会想到,我将永远不能用我的眼睛和耳朵去感受这个美妙的世界了。我至今仍然依稀记得那场大病,尤其记得母亲在我高烧不退、忍受着痛苦的煎熬时,温柔地在我身边抚慰着我,让我鼓起所有的勇气度过一切恐惧。我还记得,高烧过后,我不得不避开我一度十分喜欢的那些射向墙角的阳光,因为,那时的我眼睛干枯炙热,又疼痛。后来,视力一天不如一天,我对阳光的感觉也渐渐地模糊不清了。

感觉也一天天变得模糊起来。直到有一天，我睁开双眼，眼前竟然是一片黑暗，那一刻让我觉得就像在噩梦中一样，我感到惊慌失措，那种巨大的悲哀是我永远也难以忘怀的。渐渐地，我对周围的一片静寂和黑暗，已习以为常，忘记了那个并不是这样的曾经，直到她——我的老师莎莉文小姐的到来。她为我打开了心灵的另一双眼睛，她减轻了我内心的负担，重唤起我对世界的希望，点燃了我心中摇曳的烛光。虽然我拥有过的光明和声音只有 19 个月，但我却仍然可以清晰地记得——宽广的绿色家园、蔚蓝的天空、青翠的草木、争奇斗艳的鲜花儿，所有这些一点一滴都已铭刻在我的心上，永驻在我心中。



Light And Voice

I was born on June 27th, 1880, in Tuscumbia, a little town of northern Alabama.

The family on my father's side is descended from Caspar Keller, a native of Switzerland, who settled in Maryland. One of my Swiss ancestors was the first teacher of the deaf in Zurich and wrote a book on the subject of their education—rather a singular coincidence, though it is true that there is no king who has not had a slave among his ancestors, and no slave who has not had a king among his.

My grandfather, Caspar Keller's son, 'entered' large tracts of land in Alabama and finally settled there. I have been told that once a year he went from Tuscumbia to Philadelphia on horseback to purchase supplies for the plantation, and my aunt has in her possession many of the letters to his family, which give charming and vivid accounts of these trips.

My Grandmother Keller was a daughter of one of Lafayette's aides, Alexander Moore, and granddaughter of Alexander Spotswood, an early Colonial Governor of Virginia. She was also the second cousin to Robert E. Lee.

My father, Arthur H. Keller, was a captain in the Confederate Army, and my mother, Kate Adams, was his second wife and many years younger. Her grandfather, Benjamin Adams, married Susanna E. Goodhue, and lived in Newbury, Massachusetts, for many years. Their son, Charles Adams, was born in Newburyport, Massachusetts, and moved to Helena, Arkansas. When the Civil War broke



out, he fought on the side of the South and became a brigadier-general. He married Lucy Helen Everett, who belonged to the same family of Everetts as Edward Everett and Dr. Edward Everett Hale. After the war was over, the family moved to Memphis, Tennessee.

I lived, up to the time of the illness that deprived me of my sight and hearing, in a tiny house consisting of a large square room and a small one, in which the servant slept. It is a custom in the South to build a small house near the homestead as an annex to be used on occasion. Such a house my father built after the Civil War, and when he married my mother they went to live in it. It was completely covered with vines, climbing roses and honeysuckles. From the garden it looked like an arbour. The little porch was hidden from view by a screen of yellow roses and Southern smilax. It was the favourite haunt of humming-birds and bees.

The Keller homestead, where the family lived, was a few steps from our little rose-bower. It was called 'Ivy Green' because the house and the surrounding trees and fences were covered with beautiful English ivy. Its old-fashioned garden was the paradise of my childhood.

Even in the days before my teacher came, I used to feel along the square stiff boxwood hedges, and, guided by the sense of smell, would find the first violets and lilies. There, too, after a fit of temper, I went to find comfort and to hide my hot face in the cool leaves and grass. What joy it was to lose myself in that garden of flowers, to wander happily from spot to spot, until, coming suddenly upon a beautiful vine, I recognized it by its leaves and blossoms, and knew it was the vine which covered the tumble-down summerhouse at the farther end of the garden! Here, also, were trailing clematis, drooping jessamine, and some rare sweetflowers called butterfly lilies, because their fragile petals resemble butterflies' wings. But the roses—they were loveliest of all. Never have I found in the greenhouses of the North such heart-satisfying roses as the climbing roses of my southern home. They used to hang in long festoons from our porch, filling the whole air with their fragrance, untainted by any earthy smell, and in the early morning, washed in the dew, they felt so soft, so pure, I could not help wondering if they did not resemble the asphodels of

God's garden.

The beginning of my life was simple and much like every other little life. I came. I saw. I conquered, as the first baby in the family always does. There was the usual amount of discussion as to a name for me. The first baby in the family was not to be lightly named, every one was emphatic about that. My father suggested the name of Mildred Campbell, an ancestor whom he highly esteemed, and he declined to take any further part in the discussion. My mother solved the problem by giving it as her wish that I should be called after her mother, whose maiden name was Helen Everett. But in the excitement of carrying me to church my father lost the name on the way, very naturally, since it was one in which he had declined to have a part. When the minister asked him for it, he just remembered that it had been decided to call me after my grandmother, and he gave her name as Helen Adams.

I am told that while I was still in long dresses I showed many signs of an eager, self-asserting disposition. Everything that I saw other people do I insisted upon imitating. At six months I could pipe out 'How d'ye,' and one day I attracted every one's attention by saying 'Tea, tea, tea' quite plainly. Even after my illness I remembered one of the words I had learned in these early months. It was the word 'water,' and I continued to make some sound for that word after all other speech was lost. I ceased making the sound 'wah-wah' only when I learned to spell the word.

They tell me I walked the day I was a year old. My mother had just taken me out of the bath—tub and was holding me in her lap, when I was suddenly attracted by the flickering shadows of leaves that danced in the sunlight on the smooth floor. I slipped from my mother's lap and almost ran toward them. The impulse gone, I fell down and cried for her to take me up in her arms.



These happy days did not last long. One brief spring, musical with the song of robin and mocking—bird, one summer rich in fruit and roses, one autumn of gold and crimson sped by and left their gifts at the feet of an eager, delighted child. Then, in the dreary month of February, came the illness which closed my eyes and ears and plunged me into the unconsciousness of a new-born baby. They called it acute congestion of the stomach and brain. The doctor thought I could not live. Early one morning, however, the fever left me as suddenly and mysteriously as it had come. There was great rejoicing in the family that morning, but no one, not even the doctor, knew that I should never see or hear again.

I fancy I still have confused recollections of that illness. I especially remember the tenderness with which my mother tried to soothe me in my waking hours of fret and pain, and the agony and bewilderment with which I awoke after a tossing half sleep, and turned my eyes, so dry and hot, to the wall, away from the once loved light, which came to me dim and yet more dim each day. But, except for these fleetings memories, if, indeed, they be memories, it all seems very unreal, like a nightmare. Gradually I got used to the silence and darkness that surrounded me and forgot that it had ever been different, until she came—my teacher—who was to set my spirit free. But during the first nineteen months of my life I had caught glimpses of broad, green fields, a luminous sky, trees and flowers which the darkness that followed could not wholly blot out. If we have once seen, 'the day is ours, and what the day has shown.'

记忆深处的童年

我几乎记不起来关于生病之后几个月的事情了。只隐约记得我常坐在母亲的腿上,或是紧拉住母亲的裙角,跟着母亲忙里忙外地做家务。渐渐地,我开始用手抚摸感触着各种物体,揣摩着各种动作,用这种方法我学会了表达自己想说的,想做的很多东西。我渴望与人交流,于是开始做一些简单的动作。把别人往我这里拉表示“来”,推表示“去”;摇头表示“不”,点头表示“是”。当我想吃面包时,我就模仿切面包、涂奶油的动作。当我想要在晚饭时吃冰淇淋时,我会缩着脖子打几个冷战表示冰冷的感觉。母亲也竭尽所能地让我了解她的意思,我总是能够清楚地知道母亲想要什么,并跑到楼上或其他地方给她拿来。说实话,是我母亲的慈爱和智慧才让我的心在漫长的黑夜里得到了所有光明。

随年龄的日益增长,我慢慢地明白了很多关于自己的事。5岁时,我学会了把洗衣店送回的洗好的衣服叠好并收起来,还能辨认出哪几件是自己的,并给他们分类。从母亲和姑母的梳洗打扮中,我知道她们要外出,就央求她们带上我。亲戚朋友来串门时,我总被叫来接见客人;他们走时,我挥手向他们告别,因为我还依稀记得这种手势所表示的含义。记得有一次,家里有几位先生即将来拜访我母亲,从开门和其他的一些声音中,我知道了他们的来到。于是,我趁着家人不注意时,跑到母亲的房间,学着其他人的样子在镜子前梳妆,往头上抹油,在脸上擦粉,把面纱用发夹固定在头发上,然后垂下面纱,轻盖在脸上。我还找了一件宽大

