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◆ [美] 亨利·詹姆斯 著

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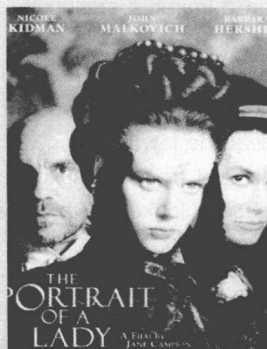
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The Portrait of a Lady



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Chapter 1

Under certain circumstances there are few hours in life more agreeable than the hour dedicated to the ceremony known as afternoon tea. There are circumstances in which, whether you partake of the tea or not—some people of course never do—the situation is in itself delightful. Those that I have in mind in beginning to unfold this simple history offered an admirable setting to an innocent pastime. The **implements** of the little feast had been disposed upon the lawn of an old English country-house, in what I should call the perfect middle of a splendid summer afternoon. The shadows on the perfect lawn were straight and angular; they were the shadows of an old man sitting in a deep wickerchair near the low table on which the tea had been served, and of two younger men strolling to and fro, in **desultory** talk, in front of him. One of them, from time to time, as he passed, looked with a certain attention at the elder man, who, unconscious of observation, rested his eyes upon the rich red front of his dwelling.

The house stood upon a low hill, above the river—the river being the Thames, at some forty miles from London. The house had a name and a history; the old gentleman taking his tea would have been delighted to tell you these things: how it had been built under Edward the Sixth, had offered a night's hospitality to the great Elizabeth, had been a good deal bruised and defaced in Cromwell's wars, and then, under the **Restoration**, repaired and much enlarged; and how, finally, after having been remodelled and disfigured in the eighteenth century, it had passed into the careful keeping of a shrewd American banker.

The old gentleman at the tea-table, who had come from America thirty years before, had brought with him, at the top of his baggage, his American **physiognomy**; and he had not only brought it with him, but he had kept it in the best order. He had a narrow, clean-shaven face, with evenly distributed features, and an expression of placid acuteness. It seemed to tell that he had been successful in life, but it seemed to tell also that his success had not been exclusive and invidious, but had had much of the inoffensiveness of failure. A beautiful **collie** dog lay upon the grass near his chair, watching the master's face almost as tenderly as the master contemplated the still more magisterial physiognomy of the house; and a little bristling, bustling terrier bestowed a desultory attendance upon the other gentlemen.

One of these was a remarkably well-made man of five-and-thirty, with a face as English as that of the old gentleman I have just sketched was something else; a noticeably handsome face, fresh-coloured, fair, and frank, with firm, straight features, a lively grey eye, and the rich adornment of a chestnut beard. This person had a certain

第一章

implement

[ˈɪmplɪmənt]

n. 工具, 器具

desultory

[ˈdesʌltəri]

adj. 散漫的, 不连贯的, 断断续续的

Restoration

[ˌrestə'reɪʃən]

n. (英国查理二世统治时期的)王政复辟, 复辟时代

physiognomy

[ˌfɪzi'ɒnəmi]

n. 面容, 相貌

collie

['kɒli]

n. 柯利狗 (一种源于苏格兰的长毛牧羊犬)

在某些情况下, 履行“下午茶”礼仪的那个小时是最令人心旷神怡的时光, 生活中能够与之媲美的时刻为数极少。有些时候, 不论你喝不喝茶——有些人当然是从来不喝的——这种场合本身便是令人愉悦的。在我为这个简单的故事揭开第一页的时候, 浮现在我心头的那些情景, 为一种无伤大雅的休闲活动提供了一幅绝妙的背景。在英国的一幢古老乡间别墅门前, 一场小型茶会所需的器具陈设在草坪上; 时值盛夏, 阳光绚丽的下午刚好过去一半, 我认为这是最为美妙的时刻。美丽的草坪上横卧着几条笔直而瘦削的黑影。其中一条属于一位老人, 他坐在一张扶手很高的柳条椅上, 旁边是矮小的茶几; 还有两条属于两位年轻人, 他们正在老人面前来回踱步, 偶尔闲谈几句。其中一人每当在老人身旁走过, 总要凝神瞧他一眼, 但老人没有发觉别人在注视他, 目光仍然停留在他的住宅正面的那堵华丽的红墙上。

这幢房子矗立在一个小山岗上, 俯瞰下面的河流——那就是泰晤士河, 距离伦敦大约四十英里。这是一幢有名目、有来历的房子。那位正在用茶的老先生会兴致勃勃地告诉你: 这幢房子建于爱德华六世时期; 伟大的伊丽莎白女王曾在这里住过一夜; 在克伦威尔战争中, 它多处破毁, 满目疮痍, 直到王政复辟时期才被翻修和扩建; 到了十八世纪, 它又被改建, 变得十分丑陋; 最后, 它落入一位精明的美国银行家之手, 并得到他的精心保护。

坐在茶桌边的年迈绅士是三十年前从美国来的。除了自己的行李以外, 他还带来了一副美国人的相貌; 他不仅把它带来了, 还把它保存得好好的。他生得五官端正, 狭长的脸上刮得干干净净, 露出一一种安详而精明的神情。这张脸庞似乎在告诉人们, 他的一生是成功的, 但似乎也表示, 他的成功并不是一帆风顺、令人妒忌的, 而是伴随着很多次无碍大局的失败。一只漂亮的柯利狗躺在他座椅旁边的草坪上, 端详着主人的脸庞, 它的目光跟主人凝望那幢外表愈发威严的住宅的目光同样温柔; 还有一只长毛小猎狗, 不时漫不经心地围绕着另外两位绅士跑来跑去。

他们中的一人年约三十五岁, 风度翩翩, 长着一张英国式的脸庞, 与我刚才描绘的那位老先生的脸庞正好形成鲜明对照; 这是一张非常英俊的脸庞, 清新秀美, 神态坦诚, 脸上的线条笔挺有力, 灰色的眼睛充满生气, 下巴上缀有一簇浓密的栗色胡须。这个人容

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fortunate, brilliant exceptional look—the air of a happy temperament fertilised by a high civilisation—which would have made almost any observer envy him at a venture.

His companion, measuring the length of the lawn beside him, was a person of quite another pattern, who, although he might have excited grave curiosity, would not, like the other, have provoked you to wish yourself, almost blindly, in his place. Tall, lean, loosely and feebly put together, he had an ugly, sickly, witty, charming face—furnished, but by no means decorated, with a straggling moustache and whisker. As I have said, whenever he passed the old man in the chair, he rested his eyes upon him; and at this moment, with their faces brought into relation, you would easily have seen that they were father and son.

The father caught his son's eye at last, and gave him a mild, responsive smile. "I am getting on very well," he said.

"Are you cold?" his son inquired.

The father slowly rubbed his legs. "Well, I don't know. I can't tell till I feel."

"Perhaps some one might feel for you," said the younger man, laughing.

"Oh, I hope some one will always feel for me! Don't you feel for me, Lord Warburton?"

"Oh yes, immensely," said the gentleman addressed as Lord Warburton, promptly. "I am bound to say you look wonderfully comfortable."

"Well, I suppose I am, in most respects." And the old man looked down at his green shawl, and smoothed it over his knees. "The fact is, I have been comfortable so many years that I suppose I have got so used to it I don't know it."

"Yes, that's the bore of comfort," said Lord Warburton. "We only know when we are uncomfortable."

"It strikes me that we are rather particular," said his companion.

"Oh yes, there is no doubt we're particular," Lord Warburton murmured. "I should think you would be very unhappy with that shawl," he said, while his companion filled the old man's cup again.

"Oh no, he must have the shawl!" cried the other gentleman.

"It belongs to my wife," said the old man, simply.

"Oh, if it's for **sentimental** reasons—" And Lord Warburton made a gesture of apology.

"I suppose I must give it to her when she comes," the old man went on.

"You will please to do nothing of the kind. You will keep it to cover your poor old legs," said his son.

"Well, you mustn't abuse my legs," said the old man. "I guess they are as good as yours. Were you ever sick, Lord Warburton?"

Lord Warburton considered a moment. "Yes, sir, once, in the Persian Gulf."

"He is making light of you, daddy," said the other young man. "That's a sort of joke. He is sick of life; he was just telling me so; going on fearfully about it," said Lord Warburton's friend.

"Is that true, sir?" asked the old man gravely.

"If it is, your son gave me no **consolation**. He's a wretched fellow to talk to—a

shawl

[ʃɔ:l]

n. 披肩, 围巾

sentimental

[.senti'menti]

adj. 感情的

consolation

[kɒnsə'leɪʃən]

n. 安慰

光焕发, 神采奕奕, 流露出一种优越感——一种因具有无忧无虑的天性且又受到高深文化的熏陶而形成的气质, 以至于几乎每一个看到他的人都会在无意之间对他产生嫉妒之情。

和他一起在草坪上踱来踱去的同伴, 则属于与他完全不同的另一种类型。此人虽然会激起别人强烈的好奇心, 但却不会像另一个那样, 使人几乎盲目地希望自己能够获得他的位置。他又高又瘦, 显得弱不禁风, 面庞苍白而丑陋, 但却充满机智、富有魅力。他蓄有唇髭和腮须, 但却乱蓬蓬的, 毫无美感。我已经说过, 每当他经过老人的座椅, 总要打量老人一下; 这时, 如果将他们两人的面孔进行一番比较, 你就不难发现, 他们是父子俩。

父亲终于察觉到了儿子的目光, 于是向他慈祥地微微一笑。“我很好,” 他说。

“您冷不冷?” 儿子问道。

父亲慢腾腾地揉搓着双腿。“唔, 我说不上来。我得感觉到了才能说呀。”

“也许别人可以替你感觉吧,” 年纪较轻的那位说道, 笑了起来。

“噢, 要是永远有人替我感觉就好啦! 你愿意替我感觉吗, 沃伯顿勋爵?”

“噢, 当然, 非常愿意,” 那位被称作沃伯顿勋爵的绅士立即回答道。“我得说, 您看上去舒服得很。”

“嗯, 我也这么想, 我各方面都挺舒服的,” 老人低头看着膝上的葱绿披肩, 把它铺平。“事实上, 我已经舒服了许多年了, 所以, 我想我已经习惯了, 以至于感觉不到舒服了。”

“是的, 那是对舒服的厌倦,” 沃伯顿勋爵说。“我们只有在不舒服的时候, 才会有所感觉。”

“这让我觉得我们非常与众不同,” 他的同伴说。

“噢, 是的, 毫无疑问, 我们是与众不同的,” 沃伯顿勋爵喃喃地说。当他的同伴为老人斟茶时, 他又说: “我想您裹着那条披肩一定很不舒服。”

“啊, 不行, 他不能拿掉那条披肩!” 另一位绅士叫了起来。

“它是我太太的,” 老人简单地说。

“噢, 如果是出于感情上的原因——” 沃伯顿勋爵打了一个手势, 表示抱歉。

“我想, 等她回来, 我得把它还给她了,” 老人继续说道。

“您最好还是别那么做。您应该留着它, 用来盖您那两条不中用的病腿,” 他的儿子说。

“嘿, 不准污蔑我的腿,” 老人说。“我看它们并不比你的差。沃伯顿勋爵, 你生过病没有?”

沃伯顿勋爵思忖了一下。“生过一回, 先生, 在波斯湾。”

“他是在哄您呢, 爸爸,” 另一位年轻人说。“那是一种玩笑。他得的是厌世病, 他刚才还在跟我讲呢; 他对生活充满了恐惧,” 沃伯顿勋爵的朋友说。

“先生, 这是真的吗?” 老人严肃地问道。

“如果是真的, 那么令郎可没有给我什么安慰。这样的家伙真

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regular cynic. He doesn't seem to believe anything."

"That's another sort of joke," said the person accused of cynicism.

"I am convinced there will be great changes; and not all for the better," said the old man.

"I quite agree with you, sir," Lord Warburton declared. "I am very sure there will be great changes, and that all sorts of queer things will happen. That's why I find so much difficulty in applying your advice; you know you told me the other day that I ought to 'take hold' of something. One hesitates to take hold of a thing that may the next moment be knocked sky-high."

"You ought to take hold of a pretty woman," said his companion. "He is trying hard to fall in love," he added, by way of explanation, to his father.

"The pretty women themselves may be sent flying!" Lord Warburton exclaimed.

"No, no, they will be firm," the old man rejoined; "they will not be affected by the social and political changes I just referred to. Make up to a good one and marry her, and your life will become much more interesting."

"If I marry an interesting woman, I shall be interested: is that what you say?" Lord Warburton asked. "I am not at all keen about marrying—your son **misrepresented** me; but there is no knowing what an interesting woman might do with me."

"I should like to see your idea of an interesting woman," said his friend.

"My dear fellow, you can't see ideas—especially such **ethereal** ones as mine. If I could only see it myself—that would be a great step in advance."

"Well, you may fall in love with whomsoever you please; but you must not fall in love with my niece," said the old man.

"I haven't the honour of knowing your niece," Lord Warburton said. "I think it is the first time I have heard of her."

"She is a niece of my wife's; Mrs. Touchett brings her to England."

Then young Mr. Touchett explained. "My mother, you know, has been spending the winter in America, and we are expecting her back. She writes that she has discovered a niece, and that she has invited her to come with her."

"I see—very kind of her," said Lord Warburton. "Is the young lady interesting?"

"We hardly know more about her than you; my mother has not gone into details. She chiefly communicates with us by means of telegrams, and her telegrams are rather **inscrutable**. 'Changed hotel, very bad, **impudent** clerk, address here. Taken sister's girl, died last year, go to Europe, two sisters, quite independent.' Over that my father and I have scarcely stopped puzzling; it seems to admit of so many interpretations. Who is 'quite independent,' and in what sense is the term used?—and is it used in a moral or in a financial sense? Does it mean that they have been left well off, or that they wish to be under no obligations? or does it simply mean that they are fond of their own way?"

"Whatever else it means, it is pretty sure to mean that," Mr. Touchett remarked.

cynic

['sinik]

n. 愤世嫉俗者，玩世不恭者

misrepresent

['mis,reprɪzent]

vt. 误传，曲解

ethereal

[i'θiəriəl]

adj. 轻的，像空气的

inscrutable

[in'skru:təbl]

adj. 高深莫测的，难以理解的

impudent

[ɪmpjudent]

adj. 鲁莽的，无礼的

是可恶，没法跟他好好谈心——简直是玩世不恭。他似乎什么都不相信。”

“这又是一种玩笑，”那个被指责为玩世不恭者的人说道。

“我相信，世界会发生重大变化的，而且不会都向好的方面转变，”老人说。

“您的话我完全同意，先生，”沃伯顿勋爵宣称。“我敢肯定世界上会发生重大变化，各种千奇百怪的事情都有可能发生。正因为这样，我才感到很难奉行你的劝告——你记得吧，有一天你对我说，我应该‘抓住’一件东西。人们是不大愿意抓住一件可能马上就要被抛到九霄云外的东西的。”

“你应该抓住一个漂亮女人，”他的同伴说，然后又向父亲解释道：“他一心想要谈恋爱呢。”

“那些漂亮女人也许还自身难保呢！”沃伯顿勋爵叫道。

“不会的，不会的，她们是靠得住的，”老人回答。“我刚才提到的那些社会和政治变化，对她们是不会有影响的。去接近一个好女人，跟她结婚，你的生活就会变得有趣多了。”

“您是不是说，假如我娶了一个有趣的女人，我就会感到有趣？”沃伯顿勋爵问道。“我还压根儿不想结婚呐——令郎歪曲了我的观点。不过，一个有趣的女人对我有什么作用，现在还不得而知。”

“我倒很想看看你关于有趣女人的观念是什么样的，”他的朋友说。

“亲爱的伙计，观念是看不见的——更何况是我那些虚无缥缈的观念呢。要是我自己能看到它就好了——那可是一大进步呐。”

“好吧，你愿意爱谁，就去爱谁吧；不过可千万别打我外甥女的主意呀，”老人说。

“我还没有有幸认识您的外甥女呢，”沃伯顿勋爵说。“我想这是我第一回听人谈起她。”

“她是我妻子的外甥女，杜歌太太正在把她带到英国来。”

接着小杜歌先生解释道：“你知道，我母亲在美国过了一个冬天，我们正在等她回来。她写信说她找到了一个外甥女，已经邀请她一同到英国来。”

“明白了——她太好了，”沃伯顿勋爵说。“这位年轻女士是个有趣的女人吗？”

“我们跟你一样，对她一无所知；我母亲没有细谈。她主要用电报跟我们联系，她的电报又写得跟哑谜似的：‘已换旅馆，太糟，职员粗鲁无礼，寄此地址。携妹女，去年亡故，赴欧，有两姊，颇为独立。’这份电报把我们父子俩弄得一头雾水，它似乎可以有多种解释方式。是谁‘颇为独立’，‘颇为独立’又是什么意思？还有，这话是道德意义上的还是经济意义上的呢？是说她们得到了一笔可观的遗产，还是她们不希望依赖别人的接济？还是仅仅意味着她们喜欢按照自己的方式行事？”

“不论它还有什么别的意思，最后这一点是毫无疑问的，”杜歌先生评论道。

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"Will you at least let me know when your cousin arrives?" Lord Warburton asked.

"Only on the condition I have mentioned—that you don't fall in love with her!" Mr. Touchett declared.

"Ah, well," said Lord Warburton with a humour broader still, "perhaps, after all, she is not worth trying on!"

Chapter 2

While this exchange of pleasantries took place between the two, Ralph Touchett wandered away a little, with his little **rowdyish terrier** at his heels. His face was turned towards the house, but his eyes were bent, musingly, upon the lawn; so that he had been an object of observation to a person who had just made her appearance in the doorway of the dwelling for some moments before he perceived her. His attention was called to her by the conduct of his dog, who had suddenly darted forward, with a little volley of shrill barks, in which the note of welcome, however, was more sensible than that of defiance. The person in question was a young lady, who seemed immediately to interpret the greeting of the little terrier. He advanced with great rapidity, and stood at her feet, looking up and barking hard; whereupon, without hesitation, she stooped and caught him in her hands, holding him face to face while he continued his joyous demonstration. His master now had had time to follow and to see that Bunchie's new friend was a tall girl in a black dress, who at first sight looked pretty. Meantime the two other gentlemen had also taken note of the new-comer.

"Dear me, who is that strange woman?" Mr. Touchett had asked.

"Perhaps it is Mrs. Touchett's niece—the independent young lady," Lord Warburton suggested. "I think she must be, from the way she handles the dog."

"But where is my wife, then?" murmured the old man.

"I suppose the young lady has left her somewhere: that's a part of the independence."

The girl spoke to Ralph, smiling, while she still held up the terrier. "Is this your little dog, sir?"

"He was mine a moment ago; but you have suddenly acquired a remarkable air of property in him."

"Couldn't we share him?" asked the girl. "He's such a little darling."

Ralph looked at her a moment; she was unexpectedly pretty. "You may have him altogether," he said.

The young lady seemed to have a great deal of confidence, both in herself and in others; but this abrupt **generosity** made her blush. "I ought to tell you that I am probably your cousin," she murmured, putting down the dog.

“你的表妹到达以后，请你至少告诉我一声好吗？”沃伯顿勋爵问道。

“除非你遵守我刚才提出的条件——不打她的主意！”杜歌先生宣称。

“噢，好吧，”沃伯顿勋爵以一种更加风趣的口吻说道，“说不定她还值得我去做试验呢。”

第二章

rowdyish

[ˈraudiɪʃ]

adj. 粗暴的，喧闹的

terrier

[ˈteriə]

n. (动作敏捷的)小猎狗

他们两人这样互相打趣的时候，拉尔夫·杜歌漫步走到了一旁，那只叫个不停的小猎狗跟在他的脚后。他面对着那幢住宅，但双眼低垂，若有所思地盯着草地；这样，他恰好落入一个在片刻之前刚出现在房子门口的人的目光当中，而他却一直没有发现她。他的狗的行动引起了他对她的注意——只见它突然向前飞奔，同时发出一连串的尖叫声，但这些吠声所表达的不像是敌意，而更像是欢迎。那是一位年轻女士，她似乎立刻领会了小猎狗的问候。它飞一般地跑了过去，站在她脚边，昂起头，起劲地叫着。看到这种情形，她毫不迟疑地俯下身子，把它抱在手里，和它脸对着脸，让它继续表达欢快之情。它的主人趁这段时间跟了过去，这才发现班奇的新朋友是一位身材高挑的姑娘，穿着一件黑色外衣，一眼看去，显得俊俏秀丽。这时，另外那两位先生也注意到了这个新来的人。

“哎呀，那位陌生的女人是谁呀？”杜歌先生问道。

“也许那就是杜歌夫人的外甥女——那位独立的年轻女士吧，”沃伯顿勋爵提示道。“我想一定是她，看看她对待那条狗的样子就知道了。”

“那么，我的妻子在哪儿啊？”老人咕哝道。

“准是那位年轻女士把她给丢在什么地方啦，这也是一种独立的表现呢。”

姑娘手里仍然捧着那条小猎狗，微笑着对拉尔夫说：“这只狗是您的吗，先生？”

“刚才它还是我的，可是一转眼间它好像完全归你所有了。”

“我们一起做它的主人不行吗？”姑娘问道。“多可爱的小东西呀。”

拉尔夫看了她一会儿，没想到她这么漂亮。“你可以完全拥有它，”他说。

那位年轻女士看上去对她自己 and 别人都充满信心，但这突如其来的慷慨之举却使她脸红起来。“我应该告诉您，我或许是您的表妹，”她嗫嚅道，放下了狗。

generosity

[ˌdʒenəˈrɒsɪti]

n. 慷慨，大方

The Portrait Of A Lady

"Probably?" the young man exclaimed, laughing. "I supposed it was quite settled! Have you come with my mother?"

"Yes, half-an-hour ago."

"And has she deposited you and departed again?"

"No, she went straight to her room; and she told me that, if I should see you, I was to say to you that you must come to her there at a quarter to seven."

The young man looked at his watch. "Thank you very much; I shall be **punctual**." And then he looked at his cousin. "You are very welcome here," he went on. "I am delighted to see you."

She was looking at everything with an eye that **denoted** quick perception. "I have never seen anything so lovely as this place," she said. "I have been all over the house; it's too enchanting. Is one of those gentlemen your father?"

"Yes, the elder one—the one sitting down," said Ralph.

The young girl gave a laugh. "I don't suppose it's the other. Who is the other?"

"He is a friend of ours—Lord Warburton."

"Oh, I hoped there would be a lord; it's just like a novel!"

She remained standing where they had met, making no offer to advance or to speak to Mr. Touchett, and while she lingered in the doorway, slim and charming, her **interlocutor** wondered whether she expected the old man to come and pay her his respects. American girls were used to a great deal of **deference**, and it had been intimated that this one had a high spirit. Indeed, Ralph could see that in her face.

"Won't you come and make acquaintance with my father?" he nevertheless ventured to ask. "He is old and infirm—he doesn't leave his chair."

"Ah, poor man, I am very sorry!" the girl exclaimed, immediately moving forward. "I got the impression from your mother that he was rather—rather strong."

Ralph Touchett was silent a moment. "She has not seen him for a year."

They had come by this time to where old Mr. Touchett was sitting, and he slowly got up from his chair to introduce himself.

"My mother has arrived," said Ralph, "and this is Miss Archer."

The old man placed his two hands on her shoulders, looked at her a moment with extreme **benevolence**, and then gallantly kissed her.

"It is a great pleasure to me to see you here; but I wish you had given us a chance to receive you."

"Oh, we were received," said the girl. "There were about a dozen servants in the hall. And there was an old woman **curtseying** at the gate."

"We can do better than that—if we have notice!" And the old man stood there, smiling, rubbing his hands, and slowly shaking his head at her. "But Mrs. Touchett doesn't like receptions."

"She went straight to her room."

"Yes—and locked herself in. She always does that. Well, I suppose I shall see her next week." And Mrs. Touchett's husband slowly resumed his former posture.

punctual

['pʌŋktʃuəl]

adj. 准时的, 守时的

denote

[di'neut]

vt. 指示, 表示

interlocutor

[intə'lɒkjʊtə(r)]

n. 对话者, 谈话者

deference

[di'ferəns]

n. 顺从, 尊重

benevolence

[bi'neveləns]

n. 善心, 仁爱

curtsey

['kɜ:tsi]

vi. 行屈膝礼

“或许?”年轻人叫道,大笑起来。“我想这是肯定的吧!你是和我母亲一起来的吗?”

“是的,半小时之前到的。”

“她把你搁在这儿,又走了吗?”

“不,她直接到自己的房间去了。她还告诉我,要是我见到你,就转告你一声,务必在六点三刻的时候到那里去见她。”

年轻人看了看表。“非常感谢,我一定准时去。”然后他望着他的表妹,继续说:“非常欢迎你到这里来,我很高兴见到你。”

她用那双灵敏的眼睛打量着周围的一切。“我从没见过这么美丽的地方,”她说。“我刚才在整个房子里绕了一圈,真是太迷人了。那两位先生中有一位是你父亲吧?”

“是的,年纪较大的那一位——坐在椅子上的,”拉尔夫说。

年轻姑娘笑了起来。“我知道不是另外那位。另外那位是谁呢?”

“他是我们的一个朋友——沃伯顿勋爵。”

“啊,我以前就希望这里有一位勋爵呢;这简直就像小说一样!”

她仍然站在他们相遇的地方,没有表示要往前走,或者向杜歇先生问好。看到这位亭亭玉立的少女一直停留在门口,和她谈话的人不禁感到纳闷,心想莫非她还在等老人前来向她致意不成。美国姑娘习惯于受人奉承,何况这一位显然颇为自命不凡。的确,拉尔夫可以从她的脸上看出这一点。

“你愿意过来和我父亲认识一下吗?”他还是大胆地提出了这个问题。“他年老体弱——他从不离开椅子。”

“啊,可怜的人,真抱歉!”姑娘叫道,立刻向前走去。“我从你母亲那里得到的印象是他的身体还相当——相当强壮。”

拉尔夫·杜歇沉默了一会儿。“她已经有一年没见到他了。”

这时他们已经来到老杜歇先生坐的地方,后者慢慢地从椅子上站了起来,以便做自我介绍。

“我母亲已经到了,”拉尔夫说。“这位是阿彻小姐。”

老人把双手放在她的肩上,十分慈祥地凝视了她一会儿,然后彬彬有礼地亲吻了她一下。

“在这里见到你真是太高兴了;不过,要是你给我们机会来迎接你就更好了。”

“啊,已经有人迎接过我们了,”姑娘说。“客厅里有十几个仆人呢。一位老妇人还在大门口行屈膝礼来着。”

“我们本来可以做得更好的——假如我们事先得到消息的话!”老人微笑着站在那里,一面搓着双手,一面朝她缓缓摇头。“不过杜歇夫人不喜欢别人来欢迎她。”

“她直接到自己的房间去了。”

“是啊——还把她自己锁在里面。这是她的老脾气。好吧,到下个星期我总该见到她了。”于是杜歇夫人的丈夫慢慢地恢复了原来的姿势。

The Portrait Of A Lady

"Before that," said Miss Archer. "She is coming down to dinner—at eight o'clock. Don't you forget a quarter to seven," she added, turning with a smile to Ralph.

She had been looking all round her again—at the lawn, the great trees, the reedy, silvery Thames, the beautiful old house; and while engaged in this survey, she had also narrowly **scrutinized** her companions. Her impressions were numerous, and they were all reflected in a clear, still smile. "I have never seen anything so beautiful as this," she declared. "How old is your house? Is it Elizabethan?"

"It's early **Tudor**," said Ralph Touchett.

She turned toward him, watching his face a little. "Early Tudor? How very delightful! And I suppose there are a great many others."

"There are many much better ones."

"Don't say that, my son!" the old man protested. "There is nothing better than this."

"I have got a very good one; I think in some respects it's rather better," said Lord Warburton, who as yet had not spoken but who had kept an attentive eye upon Miss Archer.

He bent towards her a little smiling; he had an excellent manner with women. The girl appreciated it in an instant; she had not forgotten that this was Lord Warburton. "I should like very much to show it to you," he added.

"Don't believe him," cried the old man; "don't look at it! It's a wretched old barrack—not to be compared with this."

"I don't know—I can't judge," said the girl, smiling at Lord Warburton.

In this discussion, Ralph Touchett took no interest whatever; he stood with his hands in his pockets, looking greatly as if he should like to renew his conversation with his newfound cousin.

"It's most **unaccountable** that we should never have known you," he said.

Miss Archer hesitated a moment. "It was because there had been some disagreement between your mother and my father, after my mother's death, which took place when I was a child. In consequence of it, we never expected to see you."

"Ah, but I don't embrace all my mother's quarrels—Heaven forbid!" the young man cried. "You have lately lost your father?" he went on, more gravely.

"Yes; more than a year ago. After that my aunt was very kind to me; she came to see me, and proposed that I should come to Europe."

"I see," said Ralph. "She has **adopted** you."

"Adopted me?"

The girl stared, and her blush came back to her, together with a momentary look of pain, which gave her interlocutor some alarm. He had under-estimated the effect of his words. Lord Warburton, who appeared constantly desirous of a nearer view of Miss Archer, strolled toward the two cousins at the moment, and as he did so, she rested her startled eyes upon him. "Oh, no; she has not adopted me," she said. "I am not a **candidate** for adoption."

scrutinize

['skrutiːnaɪz]

vt. 细察

Tudor

['tjuːdə]

adj. (英国)都铎王朝
(1485~1603)的

unaccountable

['ʌnə'kaʊntəbl]

adj. 无法解释的

adopt

[ə'dɒpt]

vt. 收养

candidate

['kændɪdɪt]

n. 候选人, 注定(理应)
遭遇某种命运的人

“不必等到那个时候,”阿彻小姐说。“她会下来吃晚饭的——在八点钟。别忘了六点三刻,”她微笑着转向拉尔夫,补充道。

她再次环视四周——那片草坪,那些大树,那条芦苇丛生、银光闪闪的泰晤士河,那幢美丽的老宅;她一面观察这些景物,一面悄悄地打量她的同伴们。她获得了极为丰富的印象,它们全都反映在一丝明朗、安详的微笑之中。“我还从来没有见过这么美丽的地方,”她说。“这幢房子有多长的历史了?是伊丽莎白时代的吗?”

“是都铎王朝早期的,”拉尔夫·杜歇说道。

她转过身来,向他的脸上看了一眼。“都铎王朝早期的?多好啊!我想这样的房子一定还有好多吧。”

“还有很多房子比这要好得多。”

“不要这么说,我的孩子!”老人抗议道。“没有比这更好的啦。”

“我就有一幢非常好的房子;我想,在某些方面,它比这一幢更好,”沃伯顿勋爵说。他一直没有开口,但是他一直在密切地注视着阿彻小姐。

他略微向她弯了弯腰,面带微笑;他在女人面前向来保持着温文尔雅的姿态。这立刻赢得了姑娘的好感。她没有忘记这是沃伯顿勋爵。“我非常愿意带您参观一下,”他补充道。

“别信他的话,”老人喊道。“不要去看!不过是一座破旧的营房——哪里能和这里相比?”

“我不知道啊——我没有办法判断,”姑娘说,朝沃伯顿勋爵微微一笑。

对这番争论,拉尔夫·杜歇毫无兴趣。他手插裤兜站在那里,似乎很想和他新认识的表妹继续他们的谈话。

“实在搞不明白,我们怎么会一直不认识你,”他说。

阿彻小姐犹豫了一会儿,说:“那是因为,我的母亲在我还是个孩子的时候就去世了,从那以后,你的母亲和我的父亲就一直意见不合。由于这个原因,我们从来不曾指望见到你们。”

“噢,我可不会总是支持我母亲跟人家吵架的——上天禁止我那么做!”年轻人嚷道。“你父亲最近过世了吧?”他语气沉重地继续问道。

“是的,有一年多了。在那之后,姨妈对我非常好;她来看我,并且提议我应该到欧洲来。”

“我明白了,”拉尔夫说。“她收养了你。”

“收养了我?”

姑娘盯着他,脸上的红晕又出现了,伴随着短暂的痛苦神色,这使对方有些惊慌,他没有料到自己的话竟会产生这样的影响。这时,一心想要在近处看看阿彻小姐的沃伯顿勋爵也漫步朝兄妹俩走来。当他走过来的时候,她将充满惊愕的目光移向了他。“啊,不,她没有收养我,”她说。“我也不是等待别人来收养的人。”

The Portrait Of A Lady

"I beg a thousand pardons," Ralph murmured. "I meant—I meant—" He hardly knew what he meant.

"You meant she has taken me up. Yes; she likes to take people up. She has been very kind to me; but," she added, with a certain visible eagerness of desire to be explicit, "I am very fond of my liberty."

"Are you talking about Mrs. Touchett?" the old man called out from his chair. "Come here, my dear, and tell me about her. I am always thankful for information."

The girl hesitated a moment, smiling. "She is really very benevolent," she answered; and then she went over to her uncle, whose mirth was excited by her words.

Lord Warburton was left standing with Ralph Touchett, to whom in a moment he said—

"You wished a while ago to see my idea of an interesting woman. There it is! "

Chapter 3

Mrs. Touchett was certainly a person of many **oddities**, of which her behaviour on returning to her husband's house after many months was a noticeable **specimen**. She had her own way of doing all that she did, and this is the simplest description of a character which, although it was by no means without benevolence, rarely succeeded in giving an impression of softness. Mrs. Touchett might do a great deal of good, but she never pleased. She was virtually separated from her husband, but she appeared to perceive nothing irregular in the situation. It had become apparent, at an early stage of their relations, that they should never desire the same thing at the same moment. Then she went to live in Florence, where she bought a house and established herself; leaving her husband in England to take care of his bank. She usually came once a year to spend a month with her husband. At fixed intervals she paid a visit to her own country; but this last one had been longer than any of its predecessors.

She had taken up her niece—there was little doubt of that. One wet afternoon, some four months earlier than the occurrence lately narrated, this young lady had been seated alone with a book. To say that she had a book is to say that her solitude did not press upon her; for her love of knowledge had a fertilising quality and her imagination was strong. There was at this time, however, a want of lightness in her situation, which the arrival of an unexpected visitor did much to dispel. The visitor had not been announced; the girl heard her at last walking about the **adjoining** room. It was an old house at **Albany**—a large, square, double house, with a notice of sale in the windows of the parlour. The girl had been in the house, at different periods, as a child; in those days her grandmother lived there. Then there had been an absence of ten years,