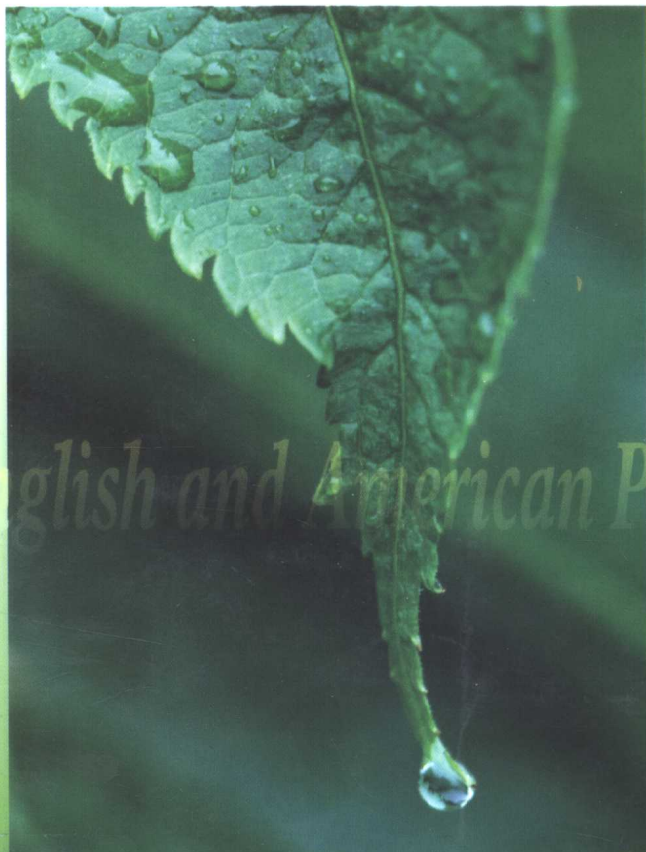


大学英语阅读文丛



English and American Prose

英美散文

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English and American Prose

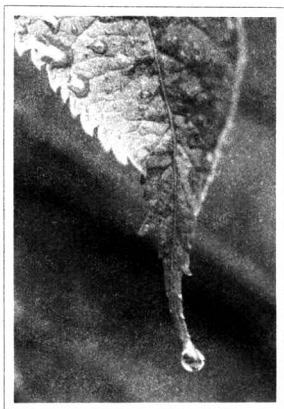
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English and American Prose

英美散文

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Read not to contradict and confute, nor to believe and take for granted, nor to find talk and discourse, but to weigh and consider. Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested; that is, some books are to be read only in parts; others to be read, but not curiously; and some few to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention. Some books also may be read by deputy and extracts made of them by others, but that would be only in the less important arguments and the meaner sort of books; else distilled books are like common distilled waters, flashy things

Reading makes a full man; conference a ready man; and writing an exact man

—*Francis Bacon*

读书时不可存心诘难作者，不可尽信书上所言，亦不可只为寻章摘句，而应推敲细思。书有可浅尝者，有可吞食者，少数则须咀嚼消化。换言之，有只须读其部分者，有只须大体涉猎者，少数则须全读，读时须全神贯注，孜孜不倦。书亦可请人代读，取其所作摘要，但只限题材较次或价值不高者，否则书经提炼犹如水经蒸馏、淡而无味矣。

读书使人充实，讨论使人机智，笔记使人准确。

——弗兰西斯·培根
(王佐良译)

前 言

在二十余年的教学和工作生涯中,阅读是我每天必做的事。这给我最深刻的体会是:有的书或文章令人留连忘返,爱不释手;有的令人过目不忘,感人至深;更有一些耐人寻味,使人恍然顿悟,终身受益。因此,我便萌发了把这些好文章编撰成书、和读者共享的念头,但真正做起来却颇感不易。其中最主要的原因是要兼顾这些文章的可读性、趣味性和实用性,使广大读者在鉴赏的同时又能提高阅读速度和理解能力。经过反复推敲,最终选中了45篇长度、难度适中的短文,期望英语学习爱好者和准备参加大学英语六级、全国公共英语五级及托福考试的朋友们能在鉴赏的同时提高阅读能力。

本书的文章都是当代英美报刊上的佳作、英美著名作家的经典作品及名人轶事。有的篇章能增加读者的知识,有的教人以哲理,有的令人捧腹大笑,有的催人泪下。读者会感到自己在遨游世界,在和名人对话,并受到启发和鞭策。

书中文章分别选自国外优秀散文集和各类报纸杂志。这些文章所描述的事情仿佛就发生在昨天,就发生在我们周围。在选编过程中,我未作任何改动,保持了它们的原汁原味。如富兰克林的《美腿和丑腿》一文。该文虽然落笔于两百多年

前,但读后使人受益匪浅,可见名人思想境界之卓尔不群。

英国著名的哲学家培根说过:“读书使人充实,讨论使人机智,笔记使人准确。(Reading makes a full man, conference a ready man, and writing an exact man.)”编者的最大心愿是希望广大读者在阅读本书文章的时候能感到充实,希望文中的哲理能使读者感到心悦诚服,精神振奋,受用终身,也希望文中的故事能给大家带来生活中的欢乐和克服困难的力量。

本书在编写过程中得到了刘纯豹教授和丁芳芳编辑的鼎力相助及郭廉彰副教授的全力支持,在此谨向他们致以诚挚谢意。

由于编者经验、水平和能力有限,加上时间仓促,书中疏漏之处在所难免,恳请广大读者不吝赐教。

编 者

2002 年 1 月

目 录

My Lost Aunt	1
Translating Blushes, Belches and Other	
Body Language	6
Around the Corner	10
Look Who's Talking to Themselves;	
Just about Everyone	13
A Clean Face for "Mona Lisa"?	17
The Monster	20
Pace Could Mean Gains or Portend Slide	28
How the Smallpox War Was Won	35
When Will They Ever Learn?	38
Getting to See the Invisible Woman	42
A Mother's Warning	47
The Mystery to Be a Good Writer	52
At the Frontlines: Foundation for International	
Community Assistance	56
The Greenhouse Effect	59
My Birthday Gift and My Obsession	62
Sunday Mornings	66
Second-Class Citizen	70
Nostalgia	73
Across the Street	75
"You Are My Dictionary"	79

Interlude	88
The Signature of God	91
On The Street	94
The Morning Life of the Gomes Twins	96
Museum Piece	107
Three Fragments	110
Nostalgia for Everything	113
Mint Snowball	116
A Match to the Heart	120
The Indian Mound	123
Japanese Style in Decision-Making	127
The Handsome and Deformed Leg	134
Drug Changes Shorten Heart Patients' Stay	139
How Do You Handle Everyday Stress?	144
What Makes a Leader? (Part I)	151
What Makes a Leader? (Part II)	158
What Makes a Leader? (Part III)	166
What Makes a Leader? (Part IV)	171
What Makes a Leader? (Part V)	175
What Makes a Leader? (Part VI)	180
Your Key to a Better Life	185
The Best of Times, The Worst of Times	192
Look for the Rusty Lining	198
The Key to Management	204
Pockety Women Unite?	210

My Lost Aunt

Maxine Hong Kingston

“You must not tell anyone,” my mother said, “what I am about to tell you. In China your father had a sister who killed herself. She jumped into the family well. We say that your father has all brothers because it is as if she had never been born.

“In 1924 just a few days after our village celebrated seventeen hurry-up weddings — to make sure that every young man who went ‘out on the road’ would responsibly come home — your father and his brothers and your grandfather and his brothers and your aunt’s new husband sailed for America, the Gold Mountain. It was your grandfather’s last trip. Those lucky enough to get contracts waved good-bye from the decks. They fed and guarded the stow-aways and helped them off in Cuba, New York, Bali, Hawaii. ‘We’ll meet in California next year,’ they said. All of them sent money home.

“I remember looking at your aunt one day when she and I were dressing; I had not noticed before that she had such a protruding melon of a stomach. But I did not think, ‘She’s pregnant’, until she began to look like other pregnant women, her shirt pulling and the white tops of her black pants showing. She could not have been pregnant, you see, because her hus-

band had been gone for years. No one said anything. We did not discuss it. In early summer she was ready to have the child, long after the time when it could have been possible.

“The village had also been counting. On the night the baby was to be born the villagers raided our house. Some were crying. Like a great saw, teeth strung with lights, files of people walked zigzag across our land, tearing the rice. Their lanterns doubled in the disturbed black water, which drained away through the broken bunds. As the villagers closed in, we could see that some of them, probably men and women we knew well, wore white masks. The people with long hair hung it over their faces. Women with short hair made it stand up on end. Some had tied white bands around their foreheads, arms, and legs.

“At first they threw mud and rocks at the house. Then they threw eggs and began slaughtering our stock. We could hear the animals scream their deaths—the roosters, the pigs, a last great roar from the ox. Familiar wild heads flared in our night windows; the villagers encircled us. Some of the faces stopped to peer at us, their eyes rushing like searchlights. The hands flattened against the panes, framed heads, and left red prints.

“The villagers broke in the front and the back doors at the same time, even though we had not locked the doors against them. Their knives dripped with the blood of our animals. They smeared blood

on the doors and walls. One woman swung a chicken, whose throat she had slit, splattering blood in red arcs about her. We stood together in the middle of our house, in the family hall with the pictures and tables of the ancestors around us, and looked straight ahead.

“At that time the house had only two wings. When the men came back, we would build two more to enclose our courtyard and a third one to begin a second courtyard. The villagers pushed through both wings, even your grand-parents’ rooms, to find your aunt’s, which was also mine until the men returned. From this room a new wing for one of the younger families would grow. They ripped up her clothes and shoes and broke her combs, grinding them underfoot. They tore her work from the loom. They scattered the cooking fire and rolled the new weaving in it. We could hear them in the kitchen breaking our bowls and banging the pots. They overturned the great waist-high earthenware jugs; duck eggs, pickled fruits, vegetables burst out and mixed in acrid torrents. The old woman from the next field swept a broom through the air and loosed the spirits-of-the-broom over our heads. ‘Pig.’ ‘Ghost.’ ‘Pig,’ they sobbed and scolded while they ruined our house.

“When they left, they took sugar and oranges to bless themselves. They cut pieces from the dead animals. Some of them took bowls that were not broken and clothes that were not torn. Afterward we swept

up the rice and sewed it back up into sacks. But the smells from the spilled preserves lasted. Your aunt gave birth in the pigsty that night. The next morning when I went for the water, I found her and the baby plugging up the family well.

“Don’t let your father know that I told you. He denies her. Now that you have started to menstruate, what happened to her could happen to you. Don’t humiliate us. You wouldn’t like to be forgotten as if you had never been born. The villagers are watchful.”

Whenever she had to warn us about life, my mother told stories that ran like this one, a story to grow up on. She tested our strength to establish realities. Those in the emigrant generations who could not reassert brute survival died young and far from home. Those of us in the first American generations have had to figure out how the invisible world the emigrants built around our childhoods fits in solid America.

注释

1. contract [ˈkɒntrækt] *n.* 合同, 契约
2. stowaway [ˈstəʊəweɪ] *n.* 偷渡者
3. a protruding melon of a stomach 呈西瓜状向外突出的腹部
4. ..., her shirt pulling and the white tops of her black pants showing ... , 她的衬衫绷得太紧而撕裂开, 黑色长裤上的白色裤腰露了出来。
5. saw [sɔː] *n.* 锯子
6. smear [smɪə] *v.* 弄脏, 弄污

7. wing [wɪŋ] *n.* 边屋
8. loom [lu:m] *n.* 织布机
9. earthenware ['ɜ:θnweə] *n.* 〈总称〉陶器
10. jug [dʒʌg] *n.* 大壶,罐,盂
11. acrid ['ækrɪd] *a.* 辛辣的,腐蚀性的
12. pigsty ['pɪgstɑɪ] *n.* 猪圈
13. menstruate ['menstruəɪt] *vi.* 行经,来月经
14. reassert [ˌrɪ:ə'sə:t] *vt.* 再坚持

Translating Blushes, Belches and Other Body Language

Karen S. Peterson

How does your body do that? And for heaven's sake — why?

Take blushes, for example. They're genetic, a legacy from mom or dad.

During stress, the mouth gets warm and dry, triggering a "blush" message to the brain. To prevent an embarrassing glow — when you're about to tell a whopper, for example — suck an ice cube. The drop in temperature stops the action.

Blushes are just one of 400 "feelings" or quirky ways your body uses to talk to you, says Dr. Alan P. Xenakis. He reviews about 60 in his new *Why Doesn't My Funny Bone Make Me Laugh?* (Villard, \$ 18).

Most of the quirks — from "butter-flies" in the stomach to yawns — are normal. Xenakis explores some scary, serious ones but dwells on the funny. His goal: to get people relaxed about their bodies and "receptive to health care information." From his panoply of peculiarities:

► **Goose bumps.** They're a legacy from a Neanderthal ancestor whose body hair rose to trap heat and to look like the toughest kid on the prehistoric

block.

► **Yawns.** They fill the body's need for fresh oxygen and can often seem contagious. Our evolutionary ancestors used them to warn each other of danger.

► **Burping.** The biggest cause is swallowing air. An hour of stress will cause the swallowing of five balloons' worth of air; 10 minutes of chewing gum brings in enough air for one glorious belch.

Additional facts, tidbits, anecdotes, cures and trivia about the body:

► **Cravings.** When a pregnant woman craves pickles, it's probably because she needs salt to retain water—and she needs that increased water when she is carrying a child.

► **Heartburn.** When you next have heartburn—a backing up of fatty acids from the stomach—flap your arms like a bird. “When it comes to putting out pyrosis (heartburn), the flying exercise often takes off when most antacids leave us grounded.”

► **Hiccups.** Nobody really knows why they happen. They usually stop in a few minutes, whether you try a cure or not. However, the *Guinness Book of World Records* records one case that lasted 60 years.

► **Tickles.** Tickling is caused by stimulating fine nerve endings beneath the surface of the skin. Psychology is a big part of the tickle game. If you like and trust the tickler, you open yourself up to enjoying the tickles. But if you try too hard to overcome

the urge to laugh, you can actually make the experience unpleasant. You block the tickling sensation and confuse the same nerve fibers that respond to pain.

► **Thirst.** One of the greatest examples of the body regulating itself. The body is 70% water. When it feels deprived, the brain sends a message to your salivary glands to stop doing their thing. The resulting thirst sends you to the designer water bottle.

Did you also know that laughter releases natural chemical painkillers; chicken soup can cure a hang-over?

注释

1. for heaven's sake 天哪(口语,用以强调疑问或请求)
2. legacy ['legəsi] *n.* 遗产,遗传
3. trigger ['trigə] *v.* 引起,触发
4. whopper ['wɒpə] *n.* 弥天大谎(口语)
5. quirky ['kwɜ:kɪ] *a.* 古怪的
6. dwell on 详细说明
7. panoply ['pænəpli] *n.* 全副穿戴(本文指全套理论)
8. peculiarity [pi,kju:lɪ'erəti] *n.* 特性,怪癖
9. Goose bumps *n.* 鸡皮疙瘩
10. Neanderthal [ni'ændətɑ:l] *n. & a.* 尼安德塔人(的)
11. yawn [jɔ:n] *v.* 打呵欠
12. contagious [kən'teidʒəs] *a.* 会感染的

13. burp [bɜ:p] v. 打噎(俚语)
14. tidbit ['tɪdbɪt] n. 有趣的新闻
15. anecdote ['ænɪkdəʊt] n. 趣闻, 秘闻
16. cure [kjʊə(r)] n. 治疗用的药物
17. trivia ['trɪvɪə] n. (无关紧要的)烦事, 琐事
18. craving ['kreɪvɪŋ] n. 渴望
19. crave [kreɪv] v. 渴望得到, 迫切需要
20. pickle ['pɪkl] n. 腌菜, 盐卤, 腌汁
21. heartburn ['hɑ:tɜ:n] n. 胃灼热, 心口灼热
22. pyrosis [paɪə'rəʊsɪs] n. (医)胃灼热, 心口灼热
23. ... the flying exercise often takes off when most antacids leave us grounded. 飞跃锻炼常使症状消失而抗酸药却无济与事。(原义: 飞跃锻炼使我们起飞, 抗酸药却把我们困在地面)。
24. antacid [ænt'æsɪd] n. 抗酸剂, 解酸药
25. hiccup ['hɪkʌp] v. & n. 打嗝, 打嗝声
26. tickle ['tɪkl] n. 痒, 呵痒
27. deprived [dɪ'praɪvd] a. 丧失的
28. salivary ['sælvərɪ] a. 唾液的, 分泌唾液的
29. gland [glænd] n. 腺(医学)
30. painkiller ['peɪn,kɪlə] n. 止痛药
31. hangover ['hæŋ,əʊvə(r)] n. 宿醉(过量饮酒后的不适反应)