

中英文对照

小贩 保罗

# PAUL The Peddler

美国青少年必读经典

[美] 霍瑞修·爱尔杰\著 曾毅\译

中国书籍出版社



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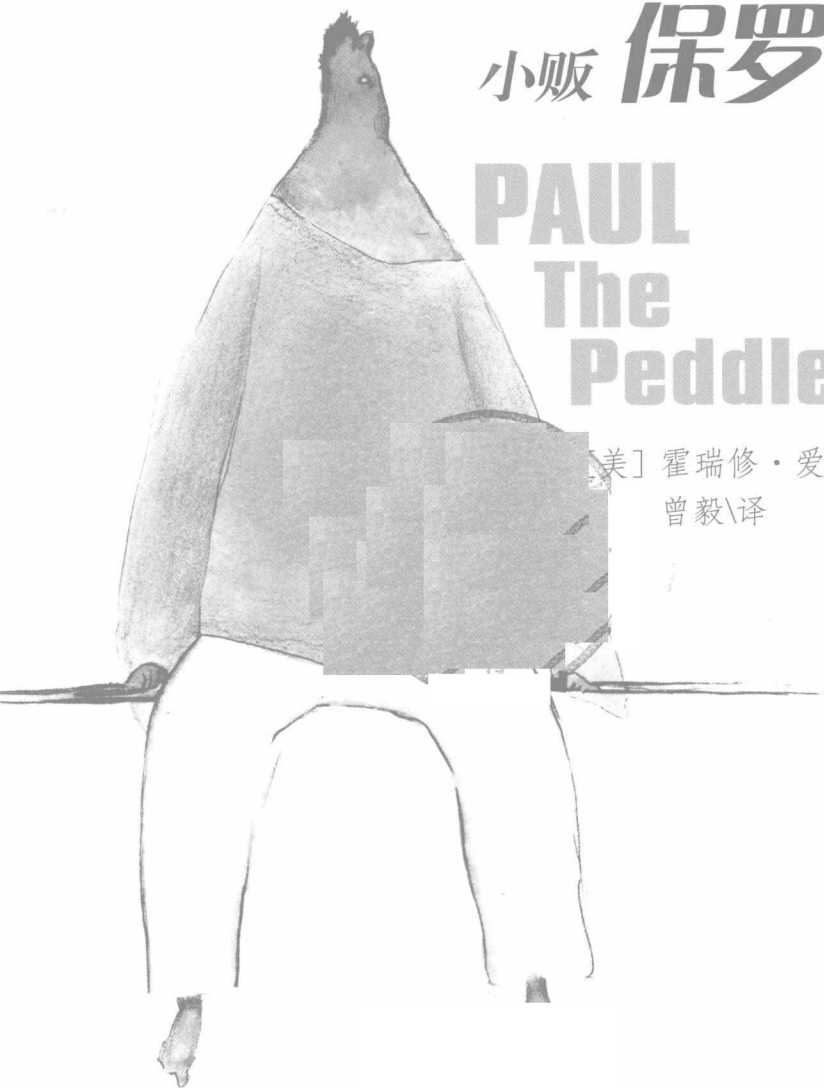
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*PAUL THE PEDDLER*

## CHAPTER I

### PAUL THE PEDDLER

"Here's your prize packages! Only five cents! Money prize in every package! Walk up, gentlemen, and try your luck!"

The speaker, a boy of fourteen, stood in front of the shabby brick building, on Nassau street, which has served for many years as the New York post office. In front of him, as he stood with his back to the building, was a small basket, filled with ordinary letter envelopes, each labeled "Prize Package."

His attractive announcement, which, at that time, had also the merit of novelty—for Paul had himself hit upon the idea, and manufactured the packages, as we shall hereafter explain—drew around him a miscellaneous crowd, composed chiefly of boys.

"What's in the packages, Johnny?" asked a bootblack, with his box strapped to his back.

"Candy," answered Paul. "Buy one. Only five cents."

"There ain't much candy," answered the bootblack, with a disparaging glance.

"What if there isn't? There's a prize."

"How big a prize?"

"There's a ten-cent stamp in some of 'em. All have got something in 'em."

Influenced by this representation, the bootblack drew out a five-cent piece, and said:

"Pitch one over then. I guess I can stand it." An envelope was at once handed him.

"Open it, Johnny," said a newsboy at his side. Twenty curious eyes were fixed upon him as he opened the package. He drew out rather a



## 第 1 章

# 小贩保罗

“幸运袋!5 美分一个!袋袋有奖!快来吧,小伙子们,来试试你们的运气!”

叫卖的是一个大约 14 岁的男孩,他站在纳色街一幢破砖房前,多年来这房子一直是纽约的邮局。此刻,这孩子正背对着这房子站在那儿,面前摆着一只小篮子,里面装着一摞信封,每张信封上都写着“幸运袋”的字样。

他的叫喊吸引了不少人,至少在那个时候,“幸运袋”还是一种新奇的玩意儿。这个点子是保罗自己想出来的,他还亲手制作了这些袋子,关于这一点,我们以后会详细说明。听到叫卖声之后,一大群人马上围上来,大多数都是男孩。

“哥们儿,袋子里装的什么?”一个擦鞋的小孩把工具箱往背上一甩,问道。

“糖果,”保罗答道,“买一袋吧,只要 5 美分。”

“糖果有什么了不起的。”擦鞋的孩子不屑一顾地说道。

“要是再加上奖金呢?”

“奖金?有多少?”

“有的有 10 美分的邮票,反正每个袋子里都有奖品。”

擦鞋小孩有点动心了,他掏出 5 美分的硬币,说道:

“那就给我一个吧,反正我也买得起。”话音未落,一个信封就递到他面前。

“打开看看,哥们儿。”他身边一个报童说道。十几双好奇





## PAUL THE PEDDLER

scanty supply of candy, and then turning to Paul, with a look of indignation, said:

"Where's the prize? I don't see no prize. Give me back my five cents."

"Give it to me. I'll show you," said the young merchant.

He thrust in his finger, and drew out a square bit of paper, on which was written— One Cent.

"There's your prize," he added, drawing a penny from his pocket.

"It ain't much of a prize," said the buyer. "Where's your ten cents?"

"I didn't say I put ten cents into every package," answered Paul.

"I'd burst up pretty quick if I did that. Who'll have another package? Only five cents!"

Curiosity and taste for speculation are as prevalent among children as with men, so this appeal produced its effect.

"Give me a package," said Teddy O'Brien, a newsboy, stretching out a dirty hand, containing the stipulated sum. He also was watched curiously as he opened the package. He drew out a paper bearing the words— Two Cents.

"Bully for you, Teddy! You've had better luck than I," said the bootblack.

The check was duly honored, and Teddy seemed satisfied, though the amount of candy he received probably could not have cost over half-a-cent. Still, he had drawn twice as large a prize as the first buyer, and that was satisfactory.

"Who'll take the next?" asked Paul, in a businesslike manner.

"Maybe there's ten cents in this package. That's where you double your money. Walk up, gentlemen. Only five cents!"

Three more responded to this invitation, one drawing a prize of two cents, the other two of one cent each. Just then, as it seemed doubtful whether any more would be purchased by those present, a young man, employed in a Wall street house, came out of the post office.

"What have you got here?" he asked, pausing.

"Prize packages of candy! Money prize in every package! Only five cents!"

的眼睛盯着他打开信封。擦鞋小孩取出来一看，不过是几块糖果而已，他不由得勃然大怒转身冲保罗叫道：

“奖金呢？压根儿就没有奖金。把 5 美分还我。”

“把袋子给我，我拿给你看。”年轻的小贩说。

然后他把手指伸进袋子，从里面取出一个方形小纸片，只见上面写着“1 美分。”

“给你！奖金！”保罗说着从自己口袋里拿出 1 美分。

“这也叫奖金？”小客人不满地说道，“10 美分的奖金在哪儿呢？”

“我可没说每个袋子里都有 10 美分呀！”保罗回答，“要是那样的话，我很快就破产了。谁还要再来一袋？只要 5 美分。”

事实上，孩子们也和大人一样，都有好奇心，也都喜欢投机，所以保罗的叫喊马上奏效。

“我也来一袋。”报童泰迪·奥本一边说着，一边伸出一只脏兮兮的手，手里攥着 5 美分。其他孩子目不转睛地盯着他打开信封，只见他取出了一张“2 美分”的纸片。

“你真走运，泰迪！手气比我好。”擦鞋小孩说。

奖金马上到手了，泰迪好像挺满意，虽说那几颗糖果可能还不值半美分，可不管怎样，他总算抽到了比第一个客人多一倍的奖金。

“谁买下一袋？”保罗一本正经地问道。

“很可能有 10 美分，这样你们就可以多挣一倍了。快来吧，只要 5 美分！”

又有三个孩子出手了，一个抽出 2 美分的奖金，另两个每人抽出了 1 美分。这情形让所有其他在场的孩子都开始犹豫了。正在这时候，恰好有一个在华尔街工作的男青年从邮局里走出来。

“什么好玩的？”他凑过来问道。

“糖果奖袋！每袋都有奖金！才 5 美分！”



## PAUL THE PEDDLER

"Give me one, then. I never drew a prize in my life."

The exchange was speedily made.

"I don't see any prize," he said, opening it.

"It's on a bit of paper, mister," said Teddy, nearly as much interested as if it had been his own purchase.

"Oh, yes, I see. Well, I'm in luck. Ten cents!"

"Ten cents!" exclaimed several of the less fortunate buyers, with a shade of envy.

"Here's your prize, mister," said Paul, drawing out a ten-cent stamp from his vest pocket.

"Well, Johnny, you do things on the square, that's a fact. Just keep the ten cents, and give me two more packages."

This Paul did with alacrity; but the Wall street clerk's luck was at an end. He got two prizes of a penny each.

"Well," he said, "I'm not much out of pocket. I've bought three packages, and it's only cost me three cents."

The ten-cent prize produced a favorable effect on the business of the young peddler. Five more packages were bought, and the contents eagerly inspected; but no other large prize appeared. Two cents was the maximum prize drawn.

Their curiosity being satisfied, the crowd dispersed; but it was not long before another gathered. In fact, Paul had shown excellent judgment in selecting the front of the post office as his place of business. Hundreds passed in and out every hour, besides those who passed by on a different destination. Thus many ears caught the young peddler's cry—"Prize packages! Only five cents apiece!"—and made a purchase; most from curiosity, but some few attracted by the businesslike bearing of the young merchant, and willing to encourage him in his efforts to make a living. These last, as well as some of the former class, declined to accept the prizes, so that these were so much gain to Paul.

At length but one package remained, and this Paul was some time getting rid of. At last a gentleman came up, holding a little boy of seven by the hand.

“给我来一袋！我还从没抽过奖呢！”

交易很快完成了。

“我可没发现有什么奖金啊！”他打开信封看了一眼，然后说道。

“是张小纸片，先生。”泰迪表现出一幅很关注的样子，好像是他自己买了这个奖袋。

“哦，没错，我看见啦。哈，真走运。10 美分！”

“10 美分！”另外几个没那么幸运的买主嚷开了。

“给您奖金，先生。”保罗一边说着，一边从自己内衣口袋里摸出了一枚 10 美分的硬币。

“嗯，小伙子，你做事很公平。这 10 美分归你了，再给我两个奖袋吧。”

保罗爽快地把两个奖袋子递给了他。不过这位华尔街职员的气运好像用完了，每只袋子里只有 1 美分的奖金。

“你看，”他说，“还是很划算嘛，3 袋只花了 3 美分。”

刚才 10 美分的奖金无疑给小贩的生意招揽了不少客人。接着又有 5 个奖袋出手了，虽然每个人都热切地期盼着结果，可是大奖始终再没有出现。最多的也就是两美分了。

好奇心满足以后，人群渐渐四散开来，可没多久小贩旁边又聚集了一群人。老实说，挑邮局前面的地段来做生意，真是明智的选择。每个小时都有上百人从邮局进进出出，还有不少路人从这里经过。来来往往的人们听着少年小贩的叫卖声“来买幸运袋啊，5 美分一个！”于是就有人来买了。大多数是出于好奇，也有的是被小贩那种神气十足的派头吸引了，想助他一臂之力。无论是出于好奇还是被小贩吸引，客人们都没有把奖金领走，大都重新买了奖袋，保罗也因此赚了不少。

最后，只剩一袋了，保罗也打算收摊了。终于有位绅士领着一个七岁大的小男孩迎面走过来。



## PAUL THE PEDDLER

"Oh, buy me the package, papa?" he said, drawing his father's attention.

"What is there in it, boy?" asked the gentleman.

"Candy," was the answer.

Alfred, for this was the little boy's name, renewed his entreaties, having, like most boys, a taste for candy.

"There it is, Alfred," said his father, handing the package to his little son.

"There's a prize inside," said Paul, seeing that they were about to pass.

"We must look for the prize by all means," said the gentleman.

"What is this? One cent?"

"Yes sir"; and Paul held out a cent to his customer.

"Never mind about that! You may keep the prize."

"I want it, pa," interposed Alfred, with his mouth full of candy.

"I'll give you another," said his father, still declining to accept the proffered prize.

Paul now found himself in the enviable position of one who, at eleven o'clock, had succeeded in disposing of his entire stock in trade, and that at an excellent profit, as we soon shall see.

Business had been more brisk with him than with many merchants on a larger scale, who sometimes keep open their shops all day without taking in enough to pay expenses. But, then, it is to be considered that in Paul's case expenses were not a formidable item. He had no rent to pay, for one thing, nor clerk hire, being competent to attend to his entire business single-handed.

All his expense, in fact, was the first cost of his stock in trade, and he had so fixed his prices as to insure a good profit on that. So, on the whole, Paul felt very well satisfied at the result of his experiment, for this was his first day in the prize-package business.

"I guess I'll go home," he said to himself. "Mother'll want to know how I made out." He turned up Nassau street, and had reached the corner of Maiden lane, when Teddy O'Brien met him.

"Did you sell out, Johnny?" he asked.

“哎，爸爸，给我买个幸运袋好不好？”小男孩一边说着，一边把父亲的注意力引到保罗那里。

“袋子里装着什么好东西呀，小伙子？”这位绅士问道。

“糖果。”保罗回答道。

那个名叫阿尔弗莱德的小男孩，又开始央求爸爸给他买糖。就像所有的男孩子一样，他也很喜欢吃糖。

“糖果来了，阿尔弗莱德。”父亲一边说着，一边把袋子递给小家伙。

“里面还有奖金哩。”眼见他们俩就要离开，保罗赶紧说道。

“那咱们得好好找找。”绅士说道，

“瞧，这是什么？1美分？”

“是的，先生。”保罗把1美分递给对方。

“没关系！你留着好啦！”

“我要，爸爸。”阿尔弗莱德抢着说道，嘴巴里塞满了糖。

“我另外给你。”父亲说道，仍然不肯拿这一美分奖金。

保罗对自己今天的经营成果满意极了，刚到11点，他的幸运袋就全都卖光了，而且利润也不错——我们在后面还会谈到这一点。

保罗的生意甚至比那些在大商场的商贩们做得还要好。有的时候，这些商场开业一天也赚不了什么钱，有时候甚至连成本都赚不回来。当然，保罗并不需要什么成本。起码他不用付租金，而且也不需要去雇人，他自己一个人就能忙得过来。

所以实际上，保罗的全部成本就是进货花的钱，等到把价钱定好以后，他就能大赚一笔。所以总的来说，保罗对自己的生意很是满意——毕竟，这才只是第一天。

“该回家了，”保罗自言自语道，“妈妈一定开始担心我了。”他走出纳索大街，来到梅登巷的拐角处，碰到了泰迪·奥本。

“怎么样，保罗，卖完了吗？”泰迪问道。

"Yes," answered Paul.

"How many packages did you have?"

"Fifty."

"That's bully. How much you made?"

"I can't tell yet. I haven't counted up," said Paul.

"It's better'n sellin' papers, I'll bet. I've only made thirty cents the day. Don't you want to take a partner, Johnny?"

"No, I don't think I do," said Paul, who had good reason to doubt whether such a step would be to his advantage.

"Then I'll go in for myself," said Teddy, somewhat displeased at the refusal.

"Go ahead! There's nobody to stop you," said Paul.

"I'd rather go in with you," said Teddy, feeling that there would be some trouble in making the prize packages, but influenced still more by the knowledge that he had not capital enough to start in the business alone.

"No," said Paul, positively; "I don't want any partner. I can do well enough alone."

He was not surprised at Teddy's application. Street boys are as enterprising, and have as sharp eyes for business as their elders, and no one among them can monopolize a profitable business long. This is especially the case with the young street merchant. When one has had the good luck to find some attractive article which promises to sell briskly, he takes every care to hide the source of his supply from his rivals in trade. But this is almost impossible. Cases are frequent where such boys are subjected to the closest espionage, their steps being dogged for hours by boys who think they have found a good thing and are determined to share it. In the present case Paul had hit upon an idea which seemed to promise well, and he was determined to keep it to himself as long as possible. As soon as he was subjected to competition and rivalry his gains would probably diminish.



“是的。”保罗回答道。

“卖了多少?”

“五十袋。”

“真棒，赚了多少钱?”

“不清楚，我还没算出来呢。”保罗说道。

“肯定比卖报纸赚得多，我敢说。我今天一共才赚了 30 美分。你打算找人合伙吗，我的朋友?”

“不，我不需要。”保罗说道，他有充足的理由相信自己不应该那样做。

“那我可要自己做了。”遭到拒绝以后，泰迪明显有些不高兴了。

“那你就去干吧，反正也没人拦你!”保罗说道。

“可我还是想跟你合伙。”泰迪突然想到做幸运袋生意并不是件容易的事情，而且他自己也还没有攒出足够的本钱，于是就继续央求保罗道。

“不行。”保罗斩钉截铁地说道，“我一个人就能把生意做好，不想跟人合伙。”

泰迪的做法并没有让他感到意外。大多数在街道谋生的孩子都很肯干，并从他们的父辈们那里继承了敏锐的商业眼光，所以谁也不可能长久垄断一个赚钱的行当，更别说是个年轻的街头小商贩了。因此一旦有人发现了一些好赚钱的生意，他就会小心翼翼地保护自己的进货秘密，尽量不让其他人知道。可话又说回来，这个世界上没有不透风的墙。很多人都往往对自己身边的小伙伴防不胜防，这些“小侦探”有时会花上好几个小时去追踪他，一心想看看他到底是怎么做成生意的。所以当保罗想到这种赚钱方法的时候，他就一定要把这个秘密尽可能长时间地保护起来——一旦有竞争对手加入，他的收入就会立即减少。