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英语文学精选书系



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马琳 编选
王义国 等译

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WITH
CHINESE TRANSLATION
English

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Of Love



Of Love

Francis Bacon

The stage is more beholding to love, than the life of man. For as to the stage, love is ever matter of comedies, and now and then of tragedies; but in life it doth much **mischief**: sometimes like a **siren**, sometimes like a fury. You may observe, that amongst all the great and worthy persons (whereof the memory remaineth, either ancient or recent) there is not one, that hath been transported to the mad degree of love: which shows, that great spirits, and great business, do keep out this weak passion. You must except, nevertheless, Marcus Antonius, the half partner of the empire of Rome, and Appius Claudius, the decemvir, and **lawgiver**; whereof the former was indeed a **voluptuous** man, and **inordinate**; but the latter was an **austere** and wise man: and therefore it seems (though rarely) that love can find entrance, not only into an open heart, but also into a heart well fortified, if watch be not well kept. It is a poor saying of Epicurus, *Satis magnum alter alteri theatrum sumus*; as if man, made for the contemplation of heaven and all noble objects, should do nothing but kneel before a little idol and make himself a subject, though not of the mouth (as beasts are), yet of the eye; which was given him for higher purposes. It is a strange thing, to note the excess of this passion, and how it braves the nature and value of things; by this, that the speaking in a perpetual **hyperbole**, is comely in nothing but in love. Neither is it merely in the phrase; for whereas it hath been well said, that the arch-flatterer, with whom all the petty flatterers have intelligence, is a man's

论爱情

弗朗西斯·培根

弗朗西斯·培根 (1561~1626), 英国著名作家、思想家和政治家。著有《亨利七世统治时期的历史》、《新工具》等学术著作, 影响深远。《论说文集》为其散文代表作, 语言晓畅, 说理透彻, 受到世人的广泛推崇。本文即选自该书。

舞台比人生更受惠于爱情。因为在舞台上, 爱情总是喜剧的素材, 偶尔还是悲剧的素材, 而在生活中, 爱情却很是惹事招祸, 有时像一位妖妇^①, 有时像一位复仇女神^②。你可能会注意到, 在所有的伟大而又值得敬重的人当中 (不论是古人还是今人, 只要是人们还记得的), 没有一个是 在恋爱中激动得发狂的: 可见伟大的人物和伟大的事业确能把这种软弱的激情拒之门外。然而你却必须把马可·安东尼^③和亚壁·克劳狄^④排除在外, 安东尼是罗马帝国的一半的统治者, 克劳狄是罗马十大执政官之一和立法者; 在这两人当中, 前者确实是一个好色而无度的人, 而后者则是一个严肃而明智的人: 因而如果不警惕的话, 那么爱情也就似乎不仅能够进入敞开的 心脏, 而且也能进入壁垒森严的心脏 (尽管这是罕见的)^⑤。伊壁鸠鲁^⑥说过一句蹩脚的话: “人可以在邻居那儿发现一个足够大的舞台。”好像生来 本 当沉思地注视天空和一切高尚的对象的人, 竟只会跪在一个小小的偶像的面前, 使自己成为一个臣服者, 尽管不是受制于嘴 (野兽就是受制于嘴), 却也是受制于眼睛, 而之所以给他眼睛, 本来是为了更为高贵的目的的。一个值得注意的奇怪的事情就是, 这种激情是过分的, 它向事物的性质和价值挑战, 而这又是因为, 总是以夸张来说话, 只有在爱情中才适当。它的适当不仅仅是在用语上; 这是因为, 尽管昔人说的好, 为首的

mischief

[ˈmɪʃɪf]

n. 伤害, 祸害

siren

[ˈsaɪərən]

n. 迷人的女子, 妖妇

lawgiver

[ˈlɔːɡɪvə]

n. 立法者

voluptuous

[vəˈlʌptjuəs]

adj. 好色的, 纵欲的

inordinate

[ɪˈnɔːdɪnət]

adj. 无节制的, 过度的

austere

[ɔːstɪə]

adj. 严肃的, 稳重的

hyperbole

[haɪˈpəːbəli]

n. 夸张法

self; certainly, the lover is more. For there was never proud man thought so **absurdly** well of himself, as the lover doth of the person loved; and therefore, it was well said, that it is impossible to love, and to be wise. Neither doth this weakness appear to others only, and not to the party loved; but to the loved most of all, except the love be reciproque. For it is a true rule, that love is ever rewarded, either with the reciproque, or with an inward and secret contempt. By how much the more, men ought to beware of this passion, which loseth not only other things, but itself. As for the other losses, the poet's relation doth well figure them: that he that preferred Helena, quitted the gifts of Juno and Pallas. For whosoever **esteemeth** too much of **amorous** affection, quitteth both riches and wisdom. This passion hath his floods in very times of weakness; which are great prosperity, and great adversity; though this latter hath been less observed: both which times kindle love, and make it more fervent, and therefore show it to be the child of **folly**. They do best, who, if they cannot but admit love, yet make it keep quarters; and sever it wholly from their serious affairs, and actions, of life: for if it check once with business, it troubleth men's fortunes, and maketh men, that they can no ways be true to their own ends. I know not how, but martial men are given to love: I think, it is but as they are given to wine; for **perils** commonly ask to be paid in pleasures. There is in man's nature, a secret inclination and motion, towards love of others, which, if it be not spent upon some one or a few, doth naturally spread itself towards many, and maketh men become humane and **charitable**; as it is seen sometime in friars. Nuptial love maketh mankind; friendly love perfecteth it; but **wanton** love corrupteth and embaseth it.

absurdly

[əb'sɜ:dli]

adv. 荒唐地, 可笑地

esteemeth

[i'sti:məθ]

v. 尊重, 看重

amorous

[æməərəs]

adj. 爱的, 爱情的

folly

['fɒli]

n. 愚笨, 愚蠢

peril

['peril]

n. 危险, 危害

charitable

[ˈtʃærɪtəbl]

adj. 慈悲的, 慈善的

wanton

['wɒntən]

adj. 淫荡的, 淫乱的

阿谀奉承者——所有的小阿谀奉承者都与那个为首的阿谀奉承者互通信息——就是人的自我, 但无可否认, 情人是更大的阿谀奉承者^⑦。因为再骄傲的人, 也不会像情人对所爱的人那样, 看好自己到了滑稽可笑的程度; 因而昔人说得好: “又要恋爱又要明智是不可能的。”这个弱点也并非仅仅是旁人看得出来而被爱的一方看不出来, 而是除非那个爱是相互的, 否则被爱的一方尤其能看得出来。因为一个普遍适用的惯例就是, 爱的报偿要么就是回报, 要么就是内心的秘而不宣的轻蔑。由此可见, 人们更应该提防这种激情, 因为它不仅会失去别的东西, 还会失去激情自身! 关于别的东西的丧失, 诗人荷马讲的故事把它们精彩地表现出来了: 那个宁可要海伦的人, 放弃了朱诺和帕拉斯的礼物^⑧。因为不论是谁, 只要他过于看重爱的感情, 也就既放弃了财富也放弃了智慧。这种激情恰好在软弱的时候泛滥成灾, 所谓软弱的时候, 也就是春风得意的时候和身陷逆境的时候, 尽管后者不那么为人们所注意: 不论是春风得意还是身陷逆境都燃起爱情之火, 并使它更为炽热, 由此足见爱情是愚蠢的孩子。做得最好的是那些人, 他们即使不能不承认爱, 也能把爱置于恰当的限度之内, 并且把它与他们的生活的严肃的事务和行动完全分离开来; 因为一旦爱干涉工作, 爱就会扰乱人们的好运, 使得人们没有办法忠实于他们自己的目的。我不知道为什么军人容易堕入情网。我以为, 这只不过和他们有爱饮酒的癖好一样; 因为危险通常要求用享乐来做出偿付。在人性之中, 有一种爱他人的秘而不宣的倾向和意愿, 这种倾向和意愿如果没有用在某个人或者几个人的身上, 也就自然普及于众人, 使得人们变得仁爱而慈悲, 有时可以见到托钵修会修士就是如此。夫妇之爱创造了人类, 朋友之爱改善了人类, 但淫荡的爱则腐蚀和贬低了人类。

(王义国 译)

Of Studies

Francis Bacon

Studies serve for delight, for **ornament**, and for ability. Their chief use for delight, is in privateness and retiring; for ornament, is in discourse; and for ability, is in the judgment and **disposition** of business. For expert men can **execute**, and perhaps judge of particulars, one by one; but the general counsels, and the plots and marshalling of affairs, come best from those that are learned. To spend too much time in studies is **sloth**; to use them too much for ornament, is affectation; to make judgment wholly by their rules, is the humor of a scholar. They perfect nature, and are perfected by experience: for natural abilities are like natural plants, that need **pruning** by study; and studies themselves do give forth directions too much at large, except they be bounded in by experience. Crafty men **contemn** studies, simple men admire them, and wise men use them; for they teach not their own use; but that is a wisdom without them, and above them, won by observation. 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

