

双 语 美 文 阅 读 书 系

The scrott of life

生命卷轴

无尽的爱

主编: 张德玉

"相亲相爱,由头情老。

这是我们许下的诺言。

年始的我们,夏怀着一颗纯真的心,

相互对望、彼此藏中只有对方

名少年末.

我们曾在那些淡漠的夜里追溯着昨日的记忆, 也曾用充满爱意的双眼展望过未来……

内蒙古人民出版社

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平淡生活的艺术

理查徳・沃克尔默

九月的一个下午,我们五对夫妇沿着缅因州的萨科河泛舟而下,享受着夏日的最后一抹金色阳光。吃着草的小鹿摇摆着它们白色的尾巴,望着我们这只小船队漂过。傍晚时分,我们扎起帐篷,烤过牛排,舒服地躺在营火周围,睡眼朦胧地望着满天的繁星。有人拨动吉他,唱起一首古老的摇滚歌曲:"这是使你简单生活的礼物,这是使你自由的礼物。"

结束了我们的田园之旅、我们当然又要回到清还贷款、工作和琐碎生活的世界中。"这是使你简单生活的礼物。"我发现我会在心烦的时候哼唱这首歌,"这是使你自由的礼物。"我是多么渴望那种简单的生活啊。但是能从哪里找到呢?

"琐碎的生活耗费了我们的生命。简单化、简单化。"亨利·戴维·梭罗的这句名言从蒸汽船、牛拉犁的时代就广为流传,也一直萦绕在我耳边。然而,就连梭罗自己,也只在瓦尔登湖畔的小屋里生活了两年。而且亨利没有妻子,没有孩子,没有工作,永远也不会为多变的利率抵押等琐事的烦扰。

我的生活充斥着琐事,似乎我的格言就是:"复杂化,复杂化。"而且我 发现并非只有我一人这样。但是有一天,我想简单化生活的想法被彻底颠覆 了。

当时,我正在拜访一位物理学家,他的办公塔耸立在他在伊利诺斯州的农田里。透过试验用的粒子加速器的窗户,在牧场下方的远处、我们看到一个占地几英里的大圈。他说:"这是一种时间机器。"这种加速器能让物理学家研究类似于创世纪后那一刻的情形。他解释说,那时的宁宙较为简单,或许只是一个由一种力和一种微粒组成的小点。而如今宇宙间存在着多种力量、多种不同的微粒,并包含一切:从恒星、星系到插公英,大象以及济蒸的诗。

从那个塔楼上我开始明白:复杂性是上帝的计划之一。

我们在内心里对他们有了认知。我们会用贬抑的口吻说他是一个"笨蛋"。 任何人都不想被别人认为是"头脑简单"的人。

然而,我们对复杂性视而不见,这是很危险的事情。我曾经买过一处住宅。 太满意它的地理位置了,以至于无意中忽略了检查它可能存在的不足。买下 它之后,我才发现,它需要绝缘、铺顶、新的供热系统、新窗户、新的污水 处理系统,等等。于是,那座老房子成了一个负担,费用远远超过了我所能 支付的限度。而精神的代价更高,这都是由于我拒绝重视复杂性造成的

就算是一项普通的财政支付,也不会简单——你的保险单实际包含哪些项目?但是,与道德问题相比较而言,经济问题本身还是较为简单的。

10 岁那年的一个午后,我发现自己成了放学后一群男孩子的领导者。我明白自己得起快让他们高兴起来,否则,我这个首领可当不了多久。就在那时,我看到了乔。

就他的年龄而言,乔是一个少年巨人。他们一家是从欧洲移民来的,他 还带着轻微的口音。

我说:"咱们抓住他!"

于是, 我的这支"野蛮人军队"就把乔包围了起来。有人拿了他的帽子, 我们就抢着它玩。乔"逃"回了家, 而作为战利品, 我带走了他的帽子。

当晚,我家门铃响了。是乔的父亲,一个满脸愁容、带着浓重口音的农民。 他是来向我要回乔的帽子的,我羞怯地给了他。"请不要捉弄乔,"他认真地说,"他患有哮喘,一旦发病,就很难恢复。"

我的心情变得很沉重。次日晚上,我去了乔的家。他正在花园翻土,我 走近他时,他警惕地望着我。我问能否帮他的忙。他说:"好吧。"此后,我 常会去帮他,我们成了好朋友。

我向成人世界走近了一步。我所看到的可能发生的一切事情,在我的心里乱得像一团丝网。红线是邪恶的可能,它只要求你对他人的痛苦视而不见。白线是同情。我可以支配连接起所有的线——关键是看我如何决定。我发现了其中的复杂性,和其中存在的一个选择与成长的机会。责任就是它的代价。

或许, 那就是我们渴望简单生活的理由吧。在某种程度上, 我们都想做孩子, 让别人背起责任那沉重的包袱。

我们如同小麦一样, 生长在这里, 等待成熟。为了智力上的成熟, 我们

尽可能大量纳入世界的复杂;为了道德上的成熟,我们经历各种抉择;为了精神上的成熟,我们睁大双眼去看创世纪的无数细节。

一个午后,我在院中捡起一片枫叶。近看它是黄色的,有红色的斑点。 拿到一臂远的地方再看时,它就是橘黄色的了。它的颜色取决于我怎么看它。

这片树叶怎样终其一生,怎样将阳光和二氧化碳转化为有机物,对于这些我只略知一二。我知道植物呼出氧气,而我们和其他动物吸入氧气,同时我们呼出的二氧化碳又被植物吸入而使其得以成长。我还知道,这片树叶的每一个细胞都有一个包含化学物质 DNA 的核,它上面记录了枫树成长和运行的指令。科学家知道的远远多于我所知道的。然而,他们的知识,也只是对一棵枫树复杂性的认识迈出的一小步。

我想我开始明白简单意味着什么。它并不意味着我们向世界的缤纷复杂蒙上自己的双眼,或避免使我们成熟的选择。"简单化,简单化。" 梭罗的意思是简化我们自身。

要实现这一目标、我们可以这样做。

集中精力于更深层次的事物、简单的生活未必就是要住木屋,种豌豆,而是拒绝将我们的生命浪费在琐事上。一位教授曾教给了我一个集中精力的秘诀,关掉电视,阅读伟大的著作。它们会开启你的智慧之门。

在人生之旅中脚踏实地,一步一个脚印。以前,我遇到过一对天生失明的年轻夫妇,他们有一个三岁的女儿和一个婴儿,两个孩子视力都很正常。对这样的父母来说,一切事情都是复杂的;给婴儿洗澡、了解女儿的行踪、修剪草坪等。然而,他们的生活却充满了欢声笑语。我问那位妈妈,她是如何知道活泼女儿的行踪。"我把小铃铛系在她的鞋上了。"她微笑着说。

"当婴儿也会走路时,你该怎么办呢?"我问。

她笑着说:"每件事都那么复杂,因此我不会考虑如何解决它,除非问题迫在眉睫。我一次具做一件事!"

削减我们的欲望。英国杰罗姆·克拉卜克·杰罗姆是一位小说家,也是一位剧作家。他在写作时就能抓住问题的真谛。他写道:"让你的生命之舟轻装前行,只载你必需的东西——一个平常的家和单纯的欢乐,一两个真正的朋友,你爱的人和爱你的人,一只猫,一条狗,一支烟斗,足够的食品、衣物和水。水的备有量要比需要的还多,因为口渴是件很危险的事。"

不久前,我飞回家去看望住院的父亲,他患了一种吞噬脑细胞的病。我

万分焦虑;治疗?疗养所?费用?

他虚弱地蜷缩在轮椅里——我所熟悉的父亲只剩下一个枯萎而苍白的残躯。我站在那儿,心痛而迷惑,他抬头看到了我。那一刻,我从他的眼中看到了意外而美好的东西,认识和爱。泪水,模糊了他的双眼,和我的双眼。

那天下午、被病痛折磨的父亲清醒了过来。有说有笑的,变成那个我熟悉的他。后来他累了,我们把他扶上床。次日,我曾来过的事他就不记得了。那一夜,父亲去世了。

每一个死亡都是通往创世纪神秘的一扇打开的门。门开了,但我们看到的却只有黑暗。在那个极为可怕的时刻,我们认识到宇宙是多么浩瀚,那是超越复杂的复杂,远非我们的认知所能比。然而,那就是对简单最真实的认识接受世界的无穷复杂,接受疑惑。

那样,特别是,我们就能去品味简单的事物,我们深爱的面庞,或许还有深含爱意的眼眸。

这是最简单的事情,但却有着无尽的意味。

The art of living simply

Richard W olkomir

We paddled down Maine's Saco River that September afternoon, five couples in canoes, basking in the summer's last golden sunlight. Grazing deer, fluttering their white tails, watched our flotilla pass. That evening we pitched tents, broiled steaks and sprawled around the campfire, staring sleepily at the stars. One man, strumming his guitar, sang an old Shaker song: "Tis the gift to be simple. Tis the girl to be free."

Our idyll ended, of course, and we drove back to the world of loan payments, jobs and clogged washing machines. "Tis the gift to be simple," I found myself humming at odd moments, "Tis the gift to be free." How I longed for that simplicity. But where could I find it?

"Our life is frittered away by detail. Simplify, simplify." That dictum of Henry David Thoreau's, echoing from the days of steamboats and ox—drawn plows, had long hunted me. Yet Thoreau himself was able to spend only two years in the cabin he built beside Walden Pond. And Henry—wifeless, childless and jobless—never had to tussle with such details as variable-rate mortgages.

My life attracted detail, as if my motto were: "Complicate, complicate." And I've found I'm not alone. But one day my thinking about simplicity turned upside down.

I was visiting a physicist in his office tower jutting from his Illinois farmlands. We looked through his window at the laboratory's miles—around particle accelerator, an immense circle in the prairie far below. "It's a kind of time machine," he said, explaining that the accelerator enables physicists to study conditions like those shortly after Creation's first moment. The universe was

simpler then, he noted, a mere dot comprising perhaps only one kind of force and one kind of panicle. Now it has many kinds of forces, scores of different particles, and contains everything from stars and galaxies to dandelions, elephants and the poems of Keats.

Complexity, I began to see from that tower, is part of God's plan.

Deep down, we sense that we speak, disparagingly, of a "simpleton". Nobody wants to be guilty of "simplistic" thinking.

But blinding ourselves to complexity can be dangerous. Once I bought a home. I liked its setting so much I unconsciously avoided probing into its possible defects. After it was mine, I found it needed insulation, roofing, a new heating system, new windows, a new septic system—everything. That old house became an albatross, costing far more than I could afford, the cost in stress was even higher, I had refused to look at the complexities.

Even ordinary finances are rarely simple—what does your insurance policy actually cover? Yet, economics are simplicity itself compared with moral questions.

One afternoon when I was ten, I found myself the leader of an after-school gaggle of boys. I had to divert them quickly, I knew, or my career as leader would be brief. And then I saw Joe.

Joe was an Eiffel Tower of a kid, an incipient giant. His family had emigrated from Europe, and he had a faint accent.

"Let's get him!" I said.

My little troop of Goths swarmed upon Joe. Somebody snatched his hat we played eatch with it. Joe ran home, and I took his hat as a trophy.

That night, our doorbell rang. Joe's father, a worded-looking farmer with a thick accent, asked for Joe' hat. I returned it sheepishly. "Please don't upset Joe," he said earnestly. He has asthma. When he has an attack, it is hard for him to get better."

I felt a lead softball in my chest. The next evening I walked to Joe's house. He was in the garden, tilling the soil, he watched me warily as I walked up. I asked if I could help. "Okay," he said. After that I went often to help him and we became best friends.

Perhaps, that is one reason we yearn for the simple life. In a way, we want to be children, to let someone clse carry the awkward backpack of responsibility.

We are like wheat, here on earth to ripen. We ripen intellectually by letting in as much of the universe's complexity as we can. Morally we ripen by making our choices. And we ripen spiritually by opening our eyes to Creation's endless detail.

One afternoon I picked up a fallen leaf from the sugar maple in our yard. Up close it was yellow, with splashes of red. At arm's length it was orange. Its color depended on how I looked at it.

I knew a little about how this leaf had spent its life, transforming sunlight and carbon dioxide into nutrients, and I knew that we animals breathe that oxygen that such plants emit, while they thrive upon the carbon dioxide we exhale. And I knew that each cell of the leaf has a nucleus containing a chemical——DNA——upon which is inscribed all the instructions for making and operating a sugar maple. Scientists know far more about this than I. But even their knowledge extends only a short way into the sea of complexity that is a sugar maple.

I'm beginning to understand. I think, what simplicity means. It does not mean blinding ourselves to the world's stunning complexity or avoiding the choices that ripen us. By "simplify, simplify," Thoreau meant simplifying ourselves.

To accomplish this, we can:

Focus on deeper things. The simple life is not necessarily living in a cabin, cultivating beans. It is refusing to let our lives be "frittered away by detail". A professor taught me a secret for focusing: Turn off the TV and read great books. They open doors in your brain.

Undertake life's journey one step at a time. I once met a young couple both blind since birth. They had a three-year-old daughter and an infant, both fully sighted. For those parents, everything was complex: bathing the baby, monitoring their daughter, mowing the lawn. Yet, they were full of smiles and laughter. I asked the mother how she kept track of their lively daughter. "I tie little bells on her shoes," she said with a laugh.

"What will you do when the infant walks too?" I asked.

She smiled, "Everything is so complicated that I'don't try to solve a

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"What will you do when the infant walks too?" I asked.

She smiled. "Everything is so complicated that I don't try to solve a problem until I have to. I take one thing at a time!"

Pare down your desires. English novelist and playwright Jerome Klapka Jerome caught the spirit of that enterprise when he wrote, "Let your boat of life be light, packed only with what you need——a homely home and simple pleasures, one or two friends, worth the name, someone to love and someone to love you, a cat, a dog and a pipe too, enough to eat and enough to wear and a little more than enough to drink, for thirst is a dangerous thing."

Not long ago I flew home to see my father in the hospital. He has a disease that nibbles away the mind. I was a snarl of worries. Treatments? Nursing homes? Finances?

He was crouched in a wheelchair, a shriveled, whitened remnant of the father I had known. As I stood there, hurt and confused, he looked up and saw me. And then I saw something unexpected and wonderful in his eyes: recognition and love. It welled up and filled his eyes with tears. And mine.

That afternoon, my father came back from wherever his illness had taken him. He joked and laughed, once again the man I had known. And then he tired, and we put him to bed. The next day, he did not remember I had come. And the next night he died.

Every death is a door opening on Creation's mystery. The door opens, but

we see only darkness. In that awful moment, we realize how vast the universe is, complexity upon complexity, beyond us. But that is the true gift of simplicity: to accept the world's infinite complication, to accept bewilderment.

And then, especially, we can savor simple things. A face we love, perhaps, eyes brimming with love.

It is the simplest of things. But it is more than enough.



人生中最美好的时光

乔· 肯哲

那是 6 月 15 日,还有两天我就 30 岁了。即将迈入我生命中的又一个崭新的上年,我感到有些不安,害怕最美好的时光会离我远去。

我每天都去体育馆锻炼。而且每天早上都会遇见我的朋友尼古拉斯。

他已经 79 岁了、身材惊人得棒。

在这个特别的日子,我向尼古拉斯打招呼,他注意到我完全没有平时的 激情,于是问我怎么了。

我告诉他,自己快到 30 岁了,很紧张。我想知道当我到了尼古拉斯这个年龄,该怎样回首自己的人生,所以我问他:"您人生中最美好的时光是什么时候?"

尼古拉斯毫不犹豫地回答:"好的,乔,对你这个哲学的问题,我就给你哲学的回答:

"孩提时,我住在奥地利,深受所有人的爱护,接受着父母的言传身教,那是我人生中最美好的时光。

"上学时,我学到了许多知识,至今仍然有用,那是我人生中最美好的时光。

"第一次找到工作时,我有了责任,通过努力得到了报酬,那是我人生中最美好的时光。

"第一次见到我的妻子,就爱上了她,那是我人生中最美好的时光。

"第二次世界大战爆发了,我和妻子为了保护自己,逃离了奥地利。当我们一起安全地在一艘去往北美的船上时,那是我人生中最美好的时光。

"我们到达加拿大、开始了新的家庭、那是我人生中最美好的时光。

"我成为了一位年轻的父亲,看着自己的孩子慢慢长大,那是我人生中最美好的时光。

"此刻、乔、我已经 79 岁了、我拥有健康、感觉舒适、我爱我的妻子就像我们第一次见面时一样。这就是我人生中最美好的时光。"

