

网络侦探丛书

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海上断线的电话

迈克尔·科尔曼 著



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伊卡勒斯的复活

作者 迈克尔·科尔曼

注释 陈丽华

终审 张卫族

责任编辑 张勇

封面设计 安洪民

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编者的话

当今时代,什么技能最热门?关于这一问题,尽管仁智所见,人言言殊,但真正无可争议的答案只能是:英语和微机。

英语热由来已久,微机热正是方兴未艾。随着中国改革进一步深入、开放程度进一步提高,中国社会与国际社会在许多方面已经实现全面接轨。其中最令人眩目的当首推信息技术的发展。而信息技术中最令人瞠目的又非国际互联网络(Internet)莫属了。在这一点上,作为信息国际传播之载体的英语和作为国际互联网络之基石的微机两厢情愿地联姻结亲了。

历次西学东渐中,最近的信息科技的传布,其迅猛的来势可谓空前,而国人表现出的积极态度及国内各界达成的一致共识亦少有先例。原因只在于,现代社会是信息社会。正如托夫勒在《第三次浪潮》中说的,谁掌握了信息,谁就掌握了权力。因此,Internet当之无愧地成为通往21世纪的捷径。谁若抢先掌握了Internet,执信息技术之牛耳,谁就足以傲视侪朋,毫无疑问地成为新世纪的一代才俊。显然,一场空前的Internet热正在徐徐地拉开帷幕……

为了适应国内英语、微机和Internet三大热潮,我社慎重推出这一套Internet侦探丛书,以英汉对照和英文注释两种版本面市,以满足不同读者的需求。这

7.6.10.104

套丛书有如下三个主要特点：

首先，本书原为英文版，故其英语纯正地道。文中对话占去相当大的篇幅，内容虽三句话不离 Internet，但对日常生活中的各个方面也多有涉及，故而完全可以作为英语口语教材来学习。

其次：每篇故事虽系杜撰，但其中所有关于 Internet 的描述，毫无虚构成分，即非童话，也非科幻，乃是当今世界已然存在的科技实录。因此，对 Internet 之实际用途及其对人们生活的种种影响，读者尽可先睹为快。

第三，本套丛书熔英语知识、微机知识及 Internet 知识于八篇生动有趣的小故事中，每篇都围绕着与 Internet 密切相关的一件神秘案件展开，读来饶有趣味，寓教于乐，使人学不知疲。

本套丛书的主人公们虽只是些稚气未脱的孩子，但他们凭借 Internet 知识，接连破获了许多连大人都束手无策的大案要案。

我们由衷地感谢每位对本套丛书感兴趣的读者。希望读者诸君通过阅读本套丛书，能够对电脑科技的发展及信息技术的应用获取一个全新的认识，且能进一步发挥各自的想像力与创造力，作一位走在时代前面的现代人。

98 年 4 月

编者谨识

SYSTEM CRASH

Slowly the carriage^① began to climb.

With every metre, Tamsyn found herself gripping^② the rail in front of her more tightly.

On both sides, the ground below was receding.^③

Beneath the carriage floor a rhythmic^④ clunk-clunk^⑤ sounded as the metal-toothed track took them up towards the sky.

'Get ready,' whispered Rob.

Suddenly the air was filled with screams ... and everything went blank.

Titles in the



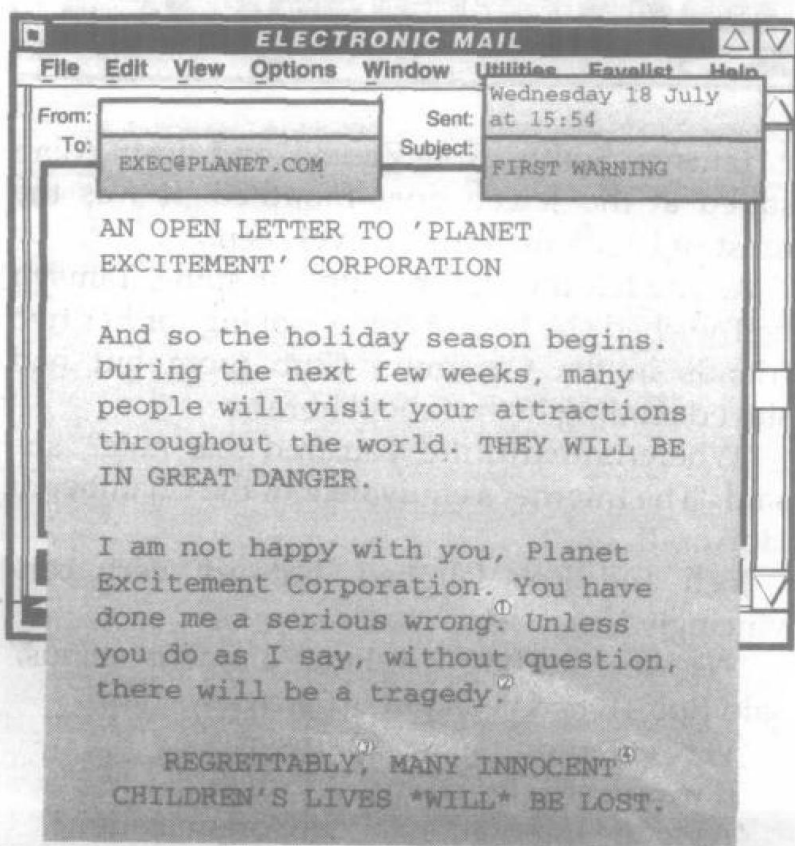
INTERNET DETECTIVES

series

- 1. NET BANDITS**
- 2. ESCAPE KEY**
- 3. SPEED SURF**
- 4. CYBER FEUD**
- 5. SYSTEM CRASH**
- 6. WEB TRAP**
- 7. VIRUS ATTACK**
- 8. ACCESS DENIED**

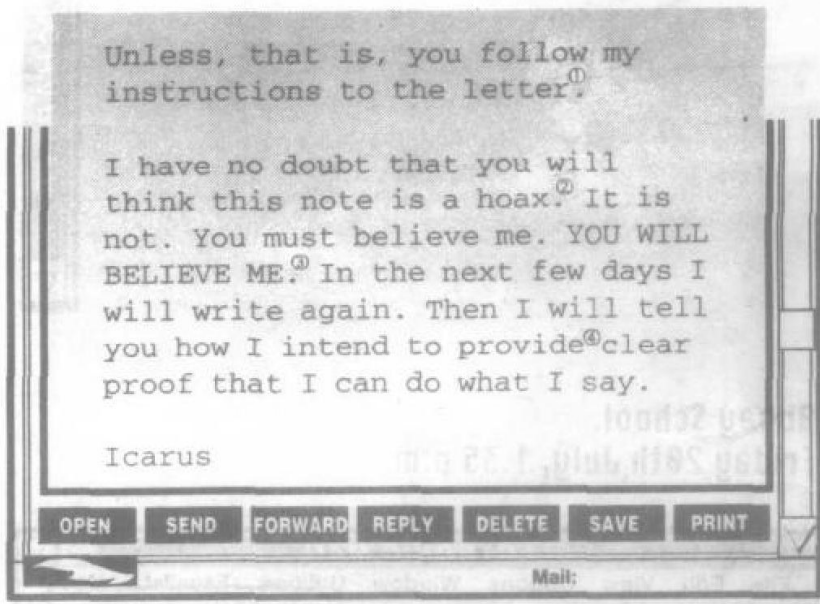


Abbey School.
Friday 20th July, 1.35 p.m.



system crash





Tamsyn Smith, Rob Zanelli and Josh Allan stared at the screen open-mouthed. It was the most sinister e-mail they'd ever seen.

As she felt the chill run up her spine, Tamsyn half-wished she hadn't come looking for her two friends in the Computer Club room but had stayed reading in the school library.

'Where on earth did you find that note?' she said. 'The Internet's equivalent of the Chamber of Horrors?'

Josh and Rob laughed, but not very convincingly.

'We were surfing the Entertainment menus,' said Rob. 'It had been put up as a news flash.'

'Very entertaining,' said Tamsyn. 'Not!'

'It was posted by Interpol,' Josh said.

'As in the International Police organization?'

Rob nodded. 'It's up in quite a few places, but they obviously thought putting it under Entertainment would be a good idea. It could be the best way of reaching the people who might be able to help them.'

Clicking^① on the vertical scroll bar,^② Josh moved back to the^③ previous page. The text that had accompanied the note flicked up^④ on the screen.

Interpol are taking the unusual step of circulating^⑤ this threatening message on the Internet and world-wide media because it was sent over the network to the^⑥ Planet Excitement Corporation's HQ^⑦ in Florida, USA. The sender used an 'anonymous^⑧ mail' facility to hide his or her identity^⑨.

'Anonymous mail?' said Tamsyn. 'What's that?'

'There's a way of turning off parts of the routing^⑩ information,' said Rob. 'The stuff you get at the front of e-mail messages ...'

'Like an unsigned letter. They've no idea who sent it,' chipped in^⑪ Josh.

'It may be a joke, of course,' said Rob. 'But the sender's no joker when it comes to^⑫ using the Net.'

'The police aren't treating it as a joke,' said Tamsyn, pointing at the screen.

Interpol take this threat very seriously. Any information that Net users can provide as to the possible identity of 'Icarus' will be treated in the strictest confidence^⑬. Reply by e-mail to...

The note ended with the e-mail address of the Interpol HQ in Paris.

Josh snorted. 'Well, they've got to say that, haven't they? Even if they do think it's down to some crackpot^① with a weird^② sense of humour^③.'

Tamsyn shivered again. 'Just so long as this Icarus is a crackpot. How's your Greek mythology, Josh?'

'My what?' said Josh.

'He probably thinks it's the name of a computer game,' Tamsyn said to Rob, shaking her head in mock^④ despair.^⑤

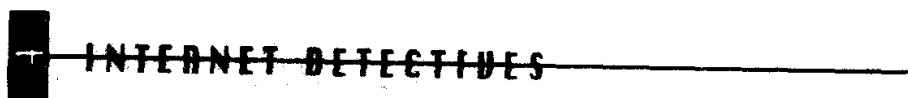
'Oh, yeah?' Josh clutched^⑥ the sides of his Abbey School sweatshirt as if he was a lawyer in court. 'Icarus. Ancient guy who wants to fly. Makes himself a pair of wings, and off he goes. Trouble is, he gets too near the sun and the wings melt. Pop! He falls to earth. End of Icarus.'

'End of discussion!' said Rob. 'It's a bit heavy for me.^⑦ This is all I need right now!'

Tamsyn looked at Rob, and remembered. 'Of course. You're going to Florida for your holiday, aren't you!'

'Next Tuesday. With a visit to the Planet Excitement theme park^⑧ high on the agenda^⑨ soon after,' said Rob.

Rob's parents, Paul and Theresa Zanelli, ran a successful computer software company called GAMEZONE. One or the other was regularly flying to America on business. This time they'd arranged to combine^⑩ a business trip to Florida



with a three-week holiday. Rob had talked about little else ever since he'd found out.

'That's why we were surfing^① the Entertainment menu,' said Josh. 'Rob was showing me the Planet Excitement web site when we spotted that news flash nearby. The official site didn't mention a thing, of course. Probably worried they'd scare off the punters^④.'

'We could check it out now,' said Rob, looking at his watch. 'We've got five minutes before afternoon registration^⑤.'

Tamsyn shook her head. 'No, it's OK,' she said. 'I'll wait for the holiday snaps^⑥.'

Josh nodded. 'Yeah, me too.'

Rob turned to face his two friends. 'One of you may not have to wait for the holiday snaps,' he said. 'One of you will be coming with me, I hope.'

Josh and Tamsyn exchanged glances. 'You what?' said Josh.

There was a pause. Rob seemed uncertain how to continue. 'I wanted to tell you both together,' he said finally. 'There's been a change of plan. Mum told me this morning.' Again, he paused.

'Come on, man,^⑦ spit it out!' yelled Josh.

Rob took a deep breath. 'OK, it's like this. It seems the plan was to have my cousin Chris come along on the holiday as well. To help me, y'know?'

As he patted the sides of his wheelchair, Josh and Tamsyn both nodded. Rob had been unable

to walk since he was involved in a car accident^① at the age of eight^②.

'Mum and Dad didn't mention that bit. You can guess why.'

Tamsyn laughed. Rob didn't need to say. He was fiercely^③ determined to be treated normally, and always got a bit annoyed^④ if he thought his parents were being over-cautious^⑤ about him.

'Anyway,' he continued, 'yesterday evening they get a phone call. From my aunt Brenda. Chris had been playing in a six-a-side football^⑥ tournament^⑦ and gone in for a crunching^⑧ tackle.^⑨ Result, one broken leg – and no holiday.'

He looked from Josh to Tamsyn and back to Josh again. 'And that's where you two come in.^⑩ Mum and Dad have agreed that one of you can come with me instead. Assuming^⑪ you're allowed.'

Josh's mouth fell open for the second time that morning. 'On holiday?'

Tamsyn's mouth followed suit.^⑫ 'To Florida?'

Rob nodded, but didn't smile. 'But only *one* of you. Pain^⑬, huh?'

'Which one of us?' said Josh anxiously.

'To take the place of the football-playing Chris?' said Tamsyn with a laugh and a shrug.^⑭ 'Who else? Have a nice time, Josh.'

Josh gulped. 'Me? Me? Is it me?'

'Sorry, Josh,' said Rob. 'It isn't.' Rob looked at Tamsyn. 'Chris is short for Christine. She's been playing football for a girls' team since she was



ten. Mum thinks a girl would be company^f for her as well. So, can you come, d'you reckon?²

'I ...' stammered³ Tamsyn. 'I don't know ... I'll have to ask ... I'll ... To Florida?'

Josh tapped her on the head. 'Hello? Are you receiving him? Yes, to Florida. That's what he said.'

Tamsyn's eyes lit up as the news started to sink in.⁴ 'Yes!' she screeched.⁵ 'Yes, yes, yes! If I have to tie my dad up and torture⁶ him into saying yes, the answer's yes!!!'

As she leapt from her chair and began to bounce⁷ around the room, Josh turned to Rob. 'Well, she seems quite pleased about it, I'd say.'

Rob looked slightly embarrassed.⁸ 'I only wish you could come as well, Josh.'

Josh shook his head, hiding his disappointment. 'No problem. Florida in August? A bit hot for me.⁹ Give me a nice cool computer room and a spot of Net-surfing ...'

His face broke into a wide smile. 'Say, that's a point.¹⁰ With you two out of the way, there'll be no competition¹¹ for air-time. I can surf all day!'

'Josh ... haven't you forgotten something?' said Tamsyn as she stopped leaping about the room and settled down on a chair.

'What?'

'This is the last day of term. The school will be shut for six weeks.'

Josh groaned.¹² 'No school – no computers. No computers – no Net. Oh, great!'



Josh's house.

Saturday 21st July, 12.25 p.m.

Josh heard the phone ring a couple of times, then stop as his mum picked it up.

He sat up on his bed, ready to dash^① downstairs if the call was for him. When no shout came from the hallway, he went back to studying the latest issue^② of a Net magazine.

If I can't get on the Net for the three weeks Rob's away, then at least I can read about it! he thought.

He was well into an article on smileys^③ when Mrs Allan popped^④ her head round the door fifteen minutes later.

'Are you getting up at all today?' she asked.

Josh gave the impression it was a tricky question. 'Er ... I suppose so.'

'And are you going to see Rob?'

'After lunch,' said Josh. 'Why?'

'I just wondered,' said his mum, closing the door.

It was more than Josh could put up with.^⑤ Heaving^⑥ himself out of bed, he threw on some clothes on and scurried^⑦ downstairs.

'Why did you ask if I was going to see Rob?' he asked. A sudden thought struck^⑧ him. 'Was that Rob on the phone? What did he want? Did he say anything about taking me to Florida?'

Mrs Allan shook her head and laughed. 'No, nothing and no. It was a call for me.'

Josh sighed. It was going to be a dull old summer.



But then, he hadn't noticed the twinkle in his mum's eye.

Manor House. 3.30 p.m.

Josh pedalled¹ up the smooth tarmac² driveway of Rob's house. Leaning his bike against the garage door, he pressed³ the security intercom⁴ at the side of the front door.

Almost at once, Rob's voice crackled⁵ out of the speaker. 'That you, Josh?'

'No, it's a seven-headed alien⁶ from the planet Alpha Centauri.⁷

Rob laughed. 'Ah, much better looking than Josh, then! Come in!'

The door clicked open with a buzz and Josh pushed through it into the wide hallway. Mrs Zanelli came out of the lounge⁸ to meet him. 'Hello, Josh! Come to do some surfing?'

Josh nodded. 'Definitely, Mrs Zanelli. There won't be many more chances for a while.'

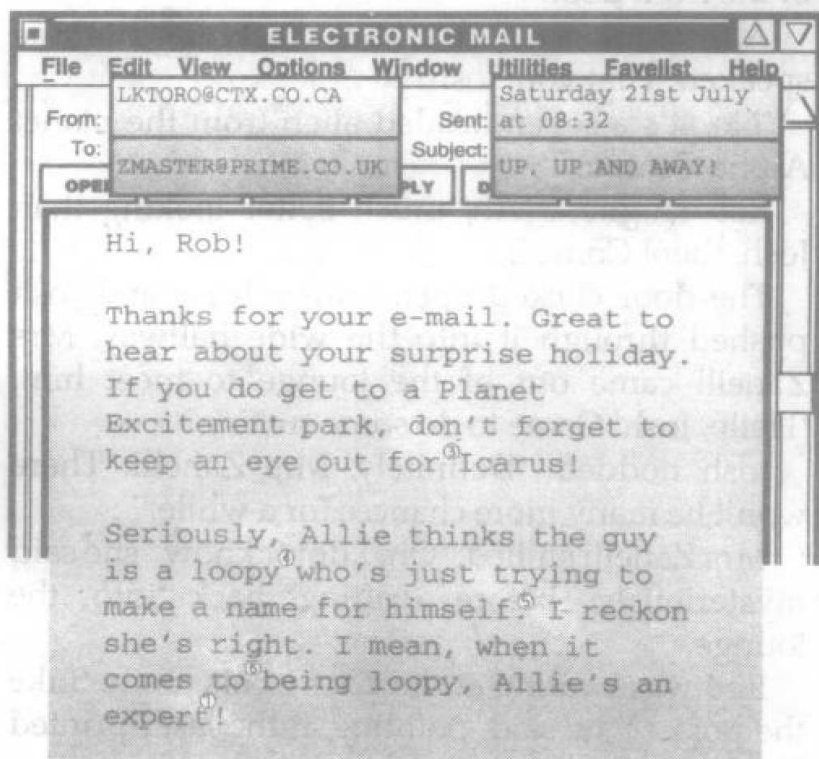
Mrs Zanelli smiled. 'Oh, I don't know,' she said mysteriously, before drifting⁹ back into the lounge.

Rob was waiting at the door of his room. 'Like the poster?¹⁰' he said, pointing at the laser-printed sheet taped to the door.

HOME OF ZMASTER

ZMASTER was Rob's User ID on the Net. He'd been surfing longer than any of them, and had

his own computer set-up. His parents had bought it for him in the days when he wasn't allowed to go to a normal school and was taught at home. It was through using this equipment^① that he'd first contacted^② Josh and Tamsyn at Abbey School, and the other friends they e-mailed over the Net. A note from one of them was already on Rob's screen.



'Allie would probably say the same about Lauren!' laughed Josh as he read the note over Rob's shoulder.

Allie was Lauren's grandmother, Alice. They'd lived in Toronto^③ ever since Lauren's parents