

诗露·英汉对照读物



# Destined To Meet

# 前定姻缘

*Jessica Steele*



外语教学与研究出版社  
禾林® 图书有限公司

(京)新登字 155 号

图书在版编目(CIP)数据

前定姻缘/(英)司蒂儿(Steele, J.)著;胡德顺译.

—北京:外语教学与研究出版社,1997

ISBN 7-5600-1233-7 (诗露·英汉对照读物)

I. 前… II. ①司… ②胡…

III. 小说-加拿大-对照读物-英、汉 IV. H319.4: I

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(97)第 11173 号

诗露·英汉对照读物

## 前定姻缘

**Destined to Meet**

原著 Jessica Steele

译者 胡德顺(台湾)

---

出版发行 外语教学与研究出版社  
(北京西三环北路 19 号)

印刷 华利国际合营印刷有限公司

经销 新华书店总店北京发行所

开本 736×965 1/32 12.75 印张

版次 1997 年 6 月第 1 版 1997 年 6 月第 1 次印刷

印数 1-25000 册

---

书号 ISBN 7-5600-1233-7/H·690

定价 13.80 元

10012

京权图字：01-96-1535

Destined to Meet

Original: © 1993 Jessica Steele

Translation: © 1996 Harlequin Books S. A.

Foreign Language Teaching & Research Press

Cover Art: © 1996 Harlequin Enterprises Limited

All rights reserved including the right of  
reproduction in whole or in part in any form.

This edition is published by arrangement with Harlequin Books S. A.

All characters in this book are fictitious.

Any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead,  
is purely coincidental.

本书所有人物皆属虚构, 如有雷同, 纯属巧合。

**版权所有      翻版必究**

# 出版说明

加拿大禾林图书有限公司出版了一套“诗露”爱情小说系列,该系列中的每部小说都讲述了一个曲折的爱情故事,作者非常精心地在小说中安排和构造情节走向,设计情绪节奏和阅读兴奋点,牵引着读者能够以最快的读速在极短的时间里将一部小说读完,并随即翻开另一部。

“诗露”小说在西方极其畅销,这或许不只是说明了该类读物独具的市场生命力,是否还可以认为同样会是一个细致的出版者对当今读者的别样关切?

外语教学与研究出版社始终致力于我国外语的普及,孜孜以求掀起外语阅读的风气。外语学习也许不全是辛劳的苦事,不苦不累、轻轻松松、且又乐在其中的外语阅读已为越来越多的外语学习者所欢迎。因此,“edutainment”(寓教于乐)就成了外研社在图书出版中做出的一种新的尝试。这次外研社与禾林图书有限公司达成出版协议,以谨慎的态度推出这套系列小说的英汉版本(配设译文),此为原因之一。同时还应说明的是,选择了爱情小说作为这种读物的内容,其目的并不在于营造温馨浪漫,推销款款情语。因为,读者可能注意得到,言情类型小说的语言尽管大半缺乏风格,语言大半缺乏创造

性,但是它的通俗流畅和透明,倒是值得我们英语学习者品味品味的。爱情小说免不了涉及人类多种多样的情绪心理。某种意义上说,爱情小说是人类丰富情感的展示“橱窗”:相思之苦,别离之伤,误解之涩,相拥之喜,生死之痛,所有这一切情感的表达方式和词汇,都交汇在言情小说里,因此言情小说应该被我们视为一种语库,而为读者系统并具规模地提供这种语库,正是外研社出版“诗露”系列的第二个原因。

爱情小说尽管少了些凝重和深沉,但小说中叙述的男女两性的情感生活,也或多或少地传达出一些西方世界爱情与婚姻的文化。前些时候美国言情小说《廊桥遗梦》风靡中国,并引发了国人对婚外恋情的讨论。这一现象表明,即使是言情类型小说,也能够敏感地传达出一个时代里人们价值观念的细微变化。正是在这层意义上,禾林爱情系列小说在一定程度上便拥有了文化的内涵,读者可以从小说中触探到西方社会生活价值观念的迁变。是为原因之三。

值得一提的是,这套系列英语读物的译文别具一格,它并非与原文字字对应。译者都是台湾译坛上的妙手,他们采取的是一种宽松的意译方法,行文通俗流畅。译者们如此处理,只希望不致引起读者的误解,同时我们也希望读者在禾林提供的爱情故事中品尝悲喜苦乐,在明快畅晓的小说叙述语言的环绕中坐看云起云消……

一九九二年销售两亿本平均每秒卖出六本  
禾林爱情小说以二十六种文字风行一百多个国家地区

*"Isn't there any woman  
you like enough to marry?"*

Jarvis looked astounded by Bevin's question. "Like enough to give up my freedom?" he asked, the idea clearly not filling him with enthusiasm. "I should have to like someone particularly well before—" He stopped dead. Then, to her utter astonishment, he stated offhandedly, "I could marry you, I suppose."

Bevin managed to cope with her shock, but not with the anger that followed it. "Don't do me any favors!"

Jarvis appeared incredulous at her reply. "You mean—you're actually turning down my proposal?" he asked disbelievingly.

"Got it in one!" she snapped.

For long moments, Jarvis just stood and surveyed her. Then a glint came into his eyes, and she had the peculiar feeling that, by turning him down, she'd just become a challenge to him.

一九九二年销售两亿本平均每秒卖出六本  
禾林爱情小说以二十六种文字风行一百多个国家地区

## Chapter One

‘**W**atch your step! This is *my* house, remember!’

How could she ever forget! There had been the usual unpleasantness in her stepmother’s tones, nor was the threat behind her words lost on Bevin, but for once she took little heed. She was feeling frozen, ached in every limb, and, although she was prepared to admit to having a heavy cold, she had a dreadful feeling that she was about to be visited with a giant-sized helping of flu.

‘I’m going to bed,’ she announced, and was on her way to rustle up a hot water bottle when the phone rang.

As she had taken to doing since she had moved in two weeks ago, her stepmother answered the phone. ‘Who wants her?’ Bevin heard her booming voice demand of the caller.

Bevin smothered a sigh and, while objecting strongly to Irene Pemberton’s attitude, she went over to take the phone from her. ‘Hello,’ she said into the receiver, feeling much too weary to object to the

fact that Irene was standing there ready to take in every word she said.

‘Hello, Bevin, it’s me — Oliver.’ She went to reply but, before she could answer him, a bout of coughing took her. ‘You’ve got a cold!’ he exclaimed.

‘A bit of one,’ she underestimated when she had some breath back.

‘I’ll bring you something for it,’ Oliver Taylor, the local pharmacist, immediately volunteered.

‘Oh, there’s no need,’ she assured him quickly, ‘I’m going to have an early night. I’ll be better by morning.’

‘If you’re sure,’ he replied, sounding concerned, and only when Bevin had convinced him that her cold was a mere trifle did he get round to the purpose of his call. ‘Actually, you know I was thinking of having a week off — well, I’ve managed to get a locum in starting Saturday and — well, I wondered if you’d like to come away with me.’

‘Oh, I don’t think...’

‘It’ll be all above board,’ he cut in hurriedly. ‘My mother’s been saying it’s about time I paid her a visit, and I know she’d be delighted to meet you.’

Oh, heavens, Bevin thought unhappily. ‘I’m



sorry, Oliver, I just don't feel I want to go away right now,' she told him, caught her stepmother's sour-faced look and tuned 'back in to Oliver. 'Besides, I've started w...'

'I understand, of course I understand.' He was, as ever, quickly sympathetic. 'It was just that I thought, what with you losing your father so recently — not to mention all your other problems — that a change of scene might do you good.'

'That was very thoughtful of you,' she found the energy to respond, as a splitting headache joined her other symptoms.

'You're sure you wouldn't like to ...?' Oliver pressed.

'Thank you just the same,' she replied.

'I'll ring you when I get back, then?'

'Have a nice time,' she bade him, and put down the phone to go in search of some aspirins.

'Frightened I might change the locks on the doors if you go away?' Irene followed her to taunt, clearly having realised that Oliver Taylor must have been asking her twenty-two-year-old stepdaughter to go away somewhere with him.

'You've had ample time to do that while I was out today,' Bevin answered, and, hating the

atmosphere in her home that had been there ever since her stepmother had moved back in, she downed a couple of aspirin, filled a hot water bottle, and went up the stairs to her room.

Having thought she felt exhausted enough to sleep the clock round, however, Bevin discovered that her worries were such as to make sleep impossible. She thought of her father, but when weak tears started to well up she determinedly set her mind to think of happier times.

Though when was the last time she'd been truly happy? she wondered.

She'd been happy when her mother had been alive, she recalled. Her 'little miracle', her mother used to call her. Her father had married late in life, and her mother had been thirty-nine herself when she had married Edmond Pemberton and come to live in the sizeable village of Abbot's Cheney in Oxfordshire. A year later Bevin had been born, and her mother had been overjoyed. For a few moments Bevin basked in a happy memory of her mother, beautiful and with the same reddish-blond hair she had passed down to her, a wide, loving smile on her lips, as she met her from school. Then Bevin was shaken by another bout of coughing, and the picture of her laughing-eyed

mother abruptly vanished. Her next memory was of her father telling her that her mother, who had been at pains to teach her road safety, had been involved in a traffic accident herself — and killed.

Life had never been the same for Bevin after that. She had been eleven then, and had witnessed how her father, a man never very free with his smiles, had seemed not to have a smile for anyone over the next three years.

She had thought, though, that things were about to improve when, in her fourteenth year, her father had met and quickly married Irene Smith — but they had all been doomed to disappointment.

Irene, who had been married before, was pushing fifty and, it turned out, clearly knew what she wanted. Edmond Pemberton, retired accountant with more than adequate income from some sound investments, had thought Irene had wanted him — they had both very soon discovered a miscalculation. He, that Irene had more interest in getting her hands on his money than interest in him; she, that other than for general housekeeping expenses he had no intention of parting with any of his carefully built up nest-egg.

The rows about money were legion. Bevin was

seized by another paroxysm of coughing, and struggled into a sitting position. Then, exhausted, her temperature soaring, she pushed the hot water bottle out of the bed and lay down again.

She closed her eyes, but, as her thoughts lingered on that last row between her father and Irene, sleep just wouldn't come. 'You're nothing but a penny-pinching old miser!' Irene's none-too-dulcet tones had floated upstairs to where Bevin, in her bedroom, was doing her homework. Bevin had ceased working on hearing her father's raised voice, but couldn't help hearing Irene's screeched, 'I'll get you! If it's the last thing I do, I'll get you!'

'Do your worst!' Edmond Pemberton had shouted back. And Irene had.

The very next day she had left the home which only a year previously she had moved into, to the neighbouring town of Dereham. The next Edmond Pemberton had heard was a letter from her lawyers in which she sought a substantial monthly allowance.

Her father had engaged solicitors of his own, but when their first account arrived, he had very soon come to the conclusion that he was being ripped off on all sides. Which was why he decided to do his own negotiating and, though it grieved him to part with

the money, he had finally agreed a figure which he declared might be worth paying to keep the dreadful woman out of his home. And, since never again was he going to be so demented as to try marriage for a third time, he had no intention of paying lawyers' fees in filing for a divorce when, who knew, some judge with some half-baked ideas on the frailty of women might decide he could afford to pay the dreadful woman more than he was paying now.

Shortly after that, Edmond's health started to fail, and although Irene negotiated an increase in her allowance from time to time there was never any suggestion that she would come back to nurse him.

There had been some talk, when Bevin had shown a natural aptitude for figures, of her training to be an accountant too. But when her father's health started to go from bad to worse, there was no question but that she should stay home and look after him. So she'd left school, and devoted herself to taking care of him.

'I'll make it up to you,' he told her one day when he was in one of his more mellow moods. 'This house, and all my investments — all I own — will be yours one day. I've seen to it.'

'Don't! Please don't talk like that,' Bevin had

begged him, unable to bear the thought of him dying, of him one day no longer being there.

'Don't upset yourself, girl. It's got to be talked about,' he had replied.

'Yes, but — not today,' she'd pleaded, and he had dropped the subject and, as if aware how much it had upset her, or perhaps, on thinking about it, considered that he had said all that had needed to be said, had never referred to the matter again.

Some days were good, some were quite painful. Edmond Pemberton had a good doctor who called regularly and who prescribed specialised drugs which Bevin obtained from the chemist's shop in Abbot's Cheney.

Which was how she came to meet Oliver Taylor. He was tall, thin and thirty, and was in fact the new and sole owner of the village chemist's. He was very willing and helpful too when, gazing down at the clear-complexioned, wide-brown-eyed twenty-year-old with long strawberry blonde hair who was waiting for him to go and make up the prescription, he questioned, 'This is for an Edmond Pemberton?'

'My father,' she explained, and had been going on to state that it was impossible for her father to come for the dangerous drugs himself, when she

realised that the pharmacist seemed to know that.

‘I’m afraid I haven’t got all you need here, but I’m expecting a delivery in about an hour.’ And, as if comprehending that she didn’t like to leave her father too frequently, ‘I’ll drop the remaining items in, if you like.’

‘It’s not out of your way?’ she queried gratefully.

‘Of course not,’ he smiled — and so Bevin made the acquaintance of Oliver Taylor.

He became a good friend over the next two years and would often pop in for an hour or so at the end of his day. Apart from the doctor and the district nurse, they had few other visitors, though, so her father in particular welcomed Oliver’s visits as a break from routine.

Oliver had been there almost immediately when her father had died three weeks ago, and Bevin had been glad to have a friend she could turn to. He was there at her father’s funeral too, and, with so few people there, she was again glad to see him.

An announcement of Edmond Pemberton’s death had been printed in the *Dereham Chronicle*. But of Irene — an avid reader of that paper, so she must have known of her husband’s passing — there was no

sign at his funeral.

Bevin experienced another bout of coughing, but her thoughts went on to how, at the time, she had formed the view that, although Irene had been conspicuous by her absence, perhaps she was just being honest. Neither she nor the man she married could stand the sight of each other, so perhaps it would have been hypocritical for her to have attended his funeral.

Less than twenty-four hours later, however, Bevin was shaken into having second thoughts about her stepmother's honesty. Shaken to indeed wonder if Irene Pemberton knew the meaning of the word honesty.

Painfully Bevin recalled how she had been upstairs in her father's room forcing herself to do some essential folding up of his clothes, when there was a ring at the doorbell.

She went down the stairs to answer it, but soon realised how out of place was the small surge of relief she felt to be released from her parcelling-up duty. For that relief was short-lived when she saw that her thin-lipped stepmother stood on the other side of the door.

'You're not any fatter, I see!' Irene began



loudly as she glanced hostilely at Bevin's slender form. Then, just as though she still lived there, and with not a word of condolence, she brushed past Bevin into the hall.

Wordlessly, and since she didn't rate very highly her chances of being able to bundle the plump woman out again, Bevin followed and opened the door to the sitting-room. At the same time, money having been the last thing on her mind, she suddenly realised why Irene, with her track record, must have called.

'You know of course that the bank have frozen your father's account?' her stepmother charged before Bevin could decide whether she should invite the woman to take a seat.

'That's quite normal, I believe,' Bevin answered, in truth having no idea whether it was or it wasn't, but as her thoughts went no she quickly realised that if her father's account was frozen, then so too would be the standing monthly payment out of her father's bank account and into Irene's.

'Normal or not, I want my allowance!' Irene demanded. But while Bevin was unable to see any other reason why the woman should call in person, and was trying to decide if she was meant to write out a cheque for her on the spot pending her father's