



(英汉对照)

ALL THAT IS BEAUTIFUL
A true instinct for the beautiful

最美丽的英文

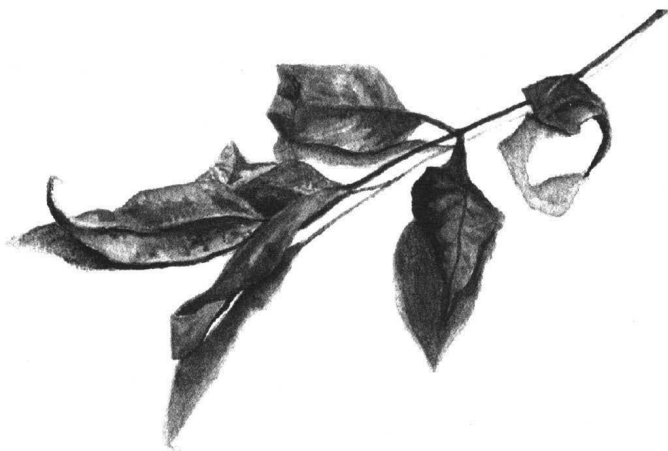
让爱美的天性常在



培根等 著 武晔岚 编 段鸿欣等 译



陕西师范大学出版社



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感 谢



许多美好的东西，都需要等待。

好文章妙手偶得，那些偶然也是有相当的过程。

《最美丽的英文》，由武晔岚编辑，那是四年前的冬天，所有的作者介绍及简析都由她来编写。在编辑整理中，有些译者未能联系上，敬请谅解。我们等待您的联系。

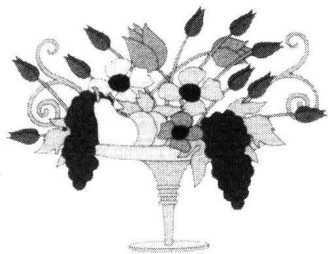
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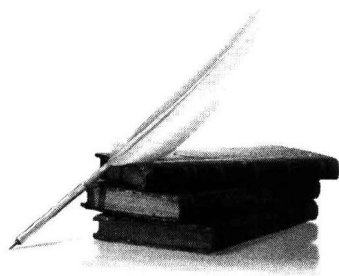
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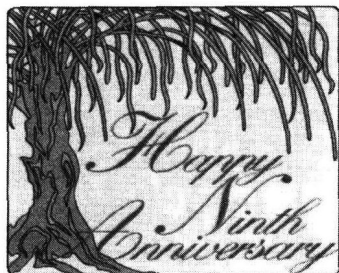
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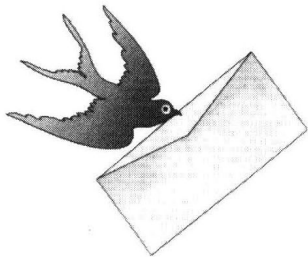
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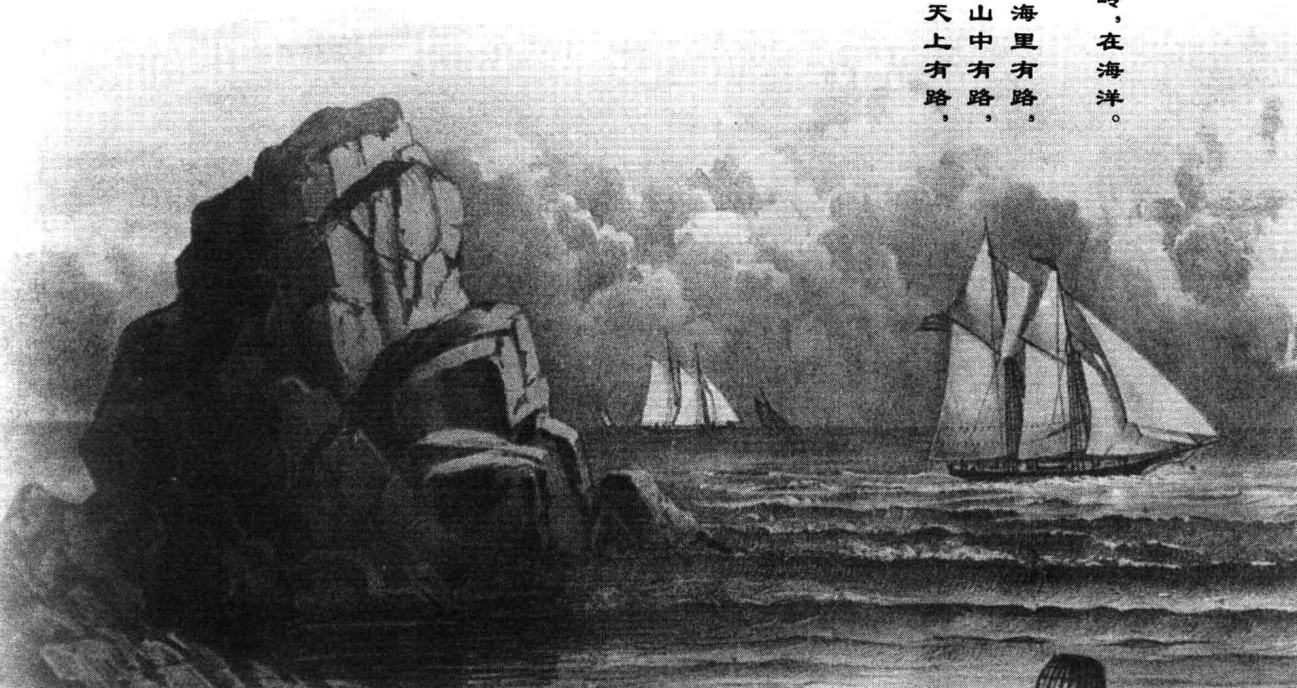
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第一篇



笑看风云

在长空，在峻岭，在海洋。
你的路——
勇于远航的人海里有路，
敢于攀登的人山中有路，
善于奋飞的人天上有路，



A Meditation Upon A Broomstick

*According to the Style and Manner of the Hon. Robert Boyle's
Meditations*

This single stick, which you now behold ingloriously lying in that neglected corner, I once knew in a flourishing state in a forest. It was full of sap, full of leaves, and full of boughs; but now in vain does the busy art of man pretend to vie with nature, by tying that withered bundle of twigs to its sapless trunk; it is now at best but the reverse of what it was, a tree turned upside-down, the branches on the earth, and the root in the air; it is now handled by every dirty wench, condemned to do her drudgery, and, by a capricious kind of fate, destined to make other things clean, and be nasty itself; at length, worn to the stumps in the service of the maids, it is either thrown out of doors or condemned to the last use—of kindling a fire. When I beheld this I sighed, and said within myself, “Surely mortal man is a broomstick!” Nature sent him into the world strong and lusty, in a thriving condition, wearing his own hair on his head, the proper branches of this reasoning vegetable, till the axe of intemperance has lopped off his green boughs, and left him a withered trunk; he then flies to art, and puts on a periwig, valuing himself upon an unnatural bundle of hairs, all covered with powder, that never grew on his head; but now should this our broomstick pretend to enter the scene, proud of those birchen spoils it never bore, and all covered with dust, through the sweepings of the finest lady’s chamber, we should be apt to ridicule and despise its vanity. Partial judges that we are of our own excellencies, and other men’s defaults!





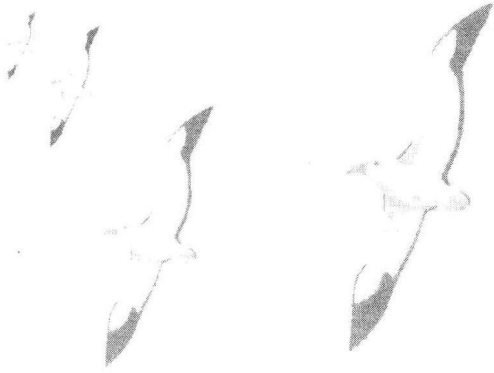
作者：乔纳森·斯威夫特

简析：斯威夫特的文章，除了那种与生俱来的强大的讽刺力量，还有的就是他的幽默风趣。本文来自于一个有趣的故事；斯威夫特三十二岁时受聘于一位伯爵作他家的牧师，每天须给伯爵夫人念其深爱的枯燥无聊的宗教伦理著作，使他厌烦透顶。某天他模拟一位神学家的口吻写了这篇文章并夹于书页之间，以平日之严肃面孔朗读给伯爵夫人听，使其吃惊不小，但又感莫测高深，听罢还赞不绝口。不久之后那位伯爵夫人重新翻看这本书时，才明白只不过是斯威夫特开的一个玩笑。


扫 帚 说

——戏仿尊敬的罗伯特·波以耳《默想录》之笔调而作

这只孤零零的扫帚，你别瞧它现在很不光彩地被搁置在个偏僻角落，我敢说它过去在树林中也曾一度好运昌隆，汁液饱满，叶茂枝繁；但现在整束干枝既被捆在一根枯木之上，便穷极机巧也势难妄与自然争衡；目前的情形至多也仅是它过去的一个翻转，一株本末倒置，枝条朝地，根部朝天的树木；一把在每个罚做苦役的邋遢女人的手下听使唤的东西；而且仿佛命运有意捉弄，专门清理污秽，但自身却难免肮脏；临了在女佣人的手下磨个光秃，不是扔出门外了事，便是最后再行利用一下，点火时候，充把干柴。看到这事，我不能不有所慨然，因自忖道：夫人固亦犹此扫帚也！试想当初大自然将人度入这个世界之时，原也是何等强健活泼，欣欣可爱，泼发覆额，有如草木之茂密纷披，但是曾几何时，而色斧欲斤早已将其绿叶青枝斩伐殆尽，徒剩此枯干一具；于是遂不得不急靠装扮度日，凭假发掩盖，并因自己一头遍敷香粉但非天然长出的人工头发而自鸣得意；但是设若此时我们这柄扫帚竟突然出现在我们面前，并以它身上并不佩带的桦叶战利品相夸耀，而且还尘垢满面，尽管是出自美人的香闺绣阁，我们必将对其虚荣大加讪笑。真的，我们对自身的优点与他人的缺点判断起来竟往往是如此失当！



But a broomstick, perhaps you will say, is an emblem of a tree standing on its head; and pray what is a man but a topsyturvy creature, his animal faculties perpetually mounted on his rational, his head where his heels should be, grovelling on the earth? And yet, with all his faults, he sets up to be a universal reformer and corrector of abuses, a remover of grievances, rakes into every slut's corner of nature, bringing hidden corruptions to the light and raises a mighty dust where there was none before, sharing deeply all the while in the very same pollutions he pretends to sweep away. His last days are spent in slavery to women, and generally the least deserving; till, worn to the stumps, like his brother besom, he is either kicked out of doors, or made use of to kindle flames for others to warm themselves by.



也许你会要说，扫帚乃是树木出了毛病，出了颠倒情形的象征；于是请问，人不也是个颠之倒之的动物吗，其兽性官能总是高踞于其理想官能之上，其头颅与脚踵往往形同易位，徒自卑屈苟活于天地之间！然而尽管一身是病，却偏好以匡弊正俗者自居，以平冤矫枉者自居，其扒罗之广，甚至连娟妇之隐私也不放过；摘奸发微，张之于世，身所过处，平地生波；且惯于其所正谓消除之污秽中，自身沾染更重，陷溺更深；他的晚年则甘充奴仆于妇人，而妇人也多属无聊者。及至后来，童山濯濯，必与其扫帚兄沦为同一命运，不是被人踢出室外，便是充作点火干柴，以供他人用暖。

(高健 译)

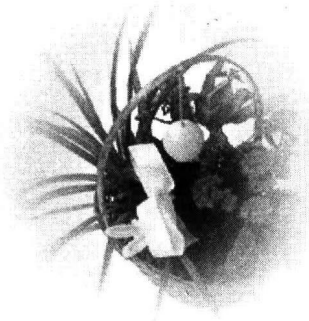
蜉 蝣

——人生的一个象征



作者：本杰明·富兰克林（Benjamin Franklin, 1706—1790），美国政治家和科学家，曾参与起草美国《独立宣言》；最广为人知的作品是《自传》。

简析：在庄子的《逍遥游》里有这样的一句：朝菌不知晦朔，蟪蛄不知春秋。从富兰克林的这篇文章我们可以体会到这种“相映成趣”：蜉蝣是一种在一天之内就可以有好几代虫生生死死的小昆虫，那么在我们看来平淡无奇的一天，对于蜉蝣来说可是几代“人”的悲欢离合。作者就用一种可爱轻松又认真的文笔，“记录”了几只蜉蝣间关于哲学和思辩的对话。



The Ephemera

—An Emblem of Human Life

You may remember, my dear friend^①, that when we lately spent that happy day in the delightful garden and sweet society of the Moulin Joly^②, I stoppecl a little in one of our walks, and stayed some time behind the company. We had been shown numberless skeletons of a kind of little fly, called an ephemera, whose successive generations, we were told, were bred and expired within the day. I happened to see a living company of them on a leaf, who appeared to be engaged in conversation. You know I understand all the inferior animal tongues. My too great application to the study of them is the best excuse I can give for the little progress I have made in your charming language^③. I listened through curiosity to the discourse of these little creatures; but as they, in their national vivacity, spoke three or four together, I could make but little of their conversation. I found, however, by some broken expressions that I heard now and then, they were disputing warmly on the merit of two foreign musicians, one a *cousin*, the other a *moscheto*; in which dispute they spent their time, seemingly as regardless of the shortness of life as if they had been sure of living a month. Happy people! thought I; you are certainly under a wise, just, and mild government, since you have no public grievances to complain of, nor any subject of contention but the perfections and imperfections of foreign music. I turned my head from them to an old gray-headed one, who was single on another leaf, and talking to himself. Being amused with his soliloquy, I put it down in writing, in hopes it will likewise amuse her to whom I am so much indebted for the most pleasing of all amusements, her delicious company and heavenly harmony.

“It was,” said he, “the opinion of learned philosophers of our race, who lived and flourished long before my time, that this vast world, the Moulin Joly, could not itself subsist more than eighteen hours; and I think there was some foundation for that opinion, since, by the apparent motion of the great luminary that gives life to all na-

蜉 蝣

——人生的一个象征

我亲爱的朋友，上次在芍丽磨坊举行园游会的那天，我们玩得很痛快。那天良辰美景，到会者个个是风雅仕女，可是也许还记得，我们在散步的时候，我曾经在路上停留了一会，落在大家后面。原因是园里有很多蜉蝣的残尸——所谓蜉蝣，是苍蝇一类的小昆虫——有人指给我们看了；而且据说它们的寿命很短，一天之内，生生死死好几代就过去了。我听讲之后，信步走去，在一片树叶上面，发现了这种小虫有一群之多，它们似乎在讨论什么东西——你知道我是善知虫语的。我和你往来这么久，可是你们贵国美妙的语言我学来学去始终进步很小。我如何能替自己解嘲呢？只好说我研究虫语用心过度了。现在这批小虫在进行辩论，我好奇心切，不免凑上前去偷听一番；可是虫虽小，它们的心却大，开起口来，都是三四个一起来的，因此听来很不清楚。偶尔断断续续也可听清一两句，原来它们正在热烈讨论两位外国音乐家的优劣——那两位，一位是蚋先生，一位是蚊先生；讨论得非常之热烈，它们似乎忘记了“虫生”的短促，好像很有把握可以活满一个月似的。你们多快乐呀，我这么想，你们的政府一定是贤明公正，宽仁待民的，你们没有牢骚可发，你们也用不着闹党派斗争，你们竟有闲情逸致在这里讨论外国音乐的优劣。我转过头来，看见另一片树叶上有一个白发老蜉蝣，独个儿正在自言自语。我听得很有趣，因此把它笔录下来。我的好朋友的深情厚意，我已领受很多，她的清风明月的风度，她的妙音雅奏，一向使我倾倒不已，我这一段笔记，无非博她一粲，聊作报答而已。

老蜉蝣说道：“我们的哲人学者，在很久很久以前，以为我们这个世界（即所谓芍丽磨坊），其寿命不会超过十八小时的。我想这话不无道理，因为自然界芸芸众生，无不依赖太阳为生，而太阳正在自东往西的移动，就在我的这一生，太阳显然已经落得很低，快要沉到我们的地球尽头的海洋里去了。太阳行将结束它的行程，为我们周围的海

ture, and which in my time has evidently declined considerably towards the ocean at the end of our earth, it must then finish its course, be extinguished in the waters that surround us, and leave the world in cold and darkness, necessarily producing universal death and destruction. I have lived seven of those hours, a great age, being no less than four hundred and twenty minutes of time. How very few of us continue so long! I have seen generations born, flourish, and expire. My present friends are the children and grandchildren of the friends of my youth, who are now, alas, no more! And I must soon follow them; for, by the course of nature, though still in health, I cannot expect to live above seven or eight minutes longer. What now avails all my toil and labor in amassing honeydew on this leaf, which I cannot live to enjoy! What political struggles I have been engaged in for the good of my compatriot inhabitants of this bush of my philosophical studies for the benefit of our race in general! For in politics what can laws do without morals? Our present race of ephemera will in a course of minutes become corrupt, like those of other and older bushes, and consequently as wretched. And in philosophy how small our progress! Alas! art is long, and life is short! My friends would comfort me with the idea of a name they say I shall leave behind me; and they tell me I have lived long enough to nature and to glory. But what will fame be to an ephemera who no longer exists? And what will become of all history in the eighteenth hour, when the world itself, even the whole Moulin Joly, shall come to an end, and be buried in universal ruin?"

To me, after all my eager pursuits, no solid pleasures now remain, but the reflection of a long life spent in meaning well, the sensible conversation of a few good lady ephemeræ, and now and then a kind smile and a tune from the ever amiable Brillante.

注释:

- ①my dear friend: “朋友”指本文最后一段提到的白夫人 (Madame Brillon de Jouy)。
白夫人年轻貌美, 富兰克林驻法期间, 与白夫人过往甚密。
- ②Moulin Joly: 芍丽磨坊为一英国式花园, 位于塞纳河的一个小岛上。
- ③charming language: 白夫人是法国人。富兰克林的法语, 语法准确, 而韵味不够, 白夫人时时替他修正。



洋吞没，世界变成一片寒冷黑暗，一切生命无疑都将灭亡，地球归于毁灭。世界的寿命一共十八小时，而我已经活了其中的七个小时，说起来时间也真不少，足足有四百二十分钟！我们里面有几个能得享如此高寿？我见过好几代蜉蝣出生、长大，最后又死去。我现在的朋友都是我青年时代的朋友的子孙，可是他们本身，咳，现在是都已不在‘虫世’了。我追随他们于地下的时候也不远，因为现在我虽然仍旧步履轻捷，但天下无不死之虫，我顶多也只能再活七八分钟而已。我现在还是辛辛苦苦地在这片树叶上搜集蜜露，可是这有什么用呢？我所收藏的，我自己是吃不到的了。回忆我这一生，为了我们这灌木丛里同胞的福利，我参加过多少次政治斗争；可是有法律而无道德配合，政治仍旧不能清明，因此为了增进全体蜉蝣类的智慧，我又研究过多少哲学问题！‘道心惟微，虫心惟危’，我们现在这一族蜉蝣必须随时戒慎警惕，否则一不小心，在几分钟之内，就可以变得像别的、历史较为悠久的灌木丛里的蜉蝣一样，道德沦丧，万劫不复！我们在哲学方面的成就又是多么渺小！呜呼，生也有涯，知也无涯。我的朋友常常都来安慰我，说我年高德劭，为蜉蝣中之大老，身后之名，必可流传千古。可是蜉蝣已死，还要身后名何用？何况到了第十八小时的时候，整个苟且磨坊都将毁灭，世界末日已临，还谈得上什么历史吗？”

我劳碌一生，别无乐趣，惟有想起世间众生，无分人虫，如能长寿而为公众谋利者，这是可以引为自慰的；再则听听蜉蝣小姐蜉蝣太太们的高谈阔论，或者偶然从那可爱的白夫人那里，得到巧笑一顾，或者是清歌一曲，我的暮年也得到慰藉了。