

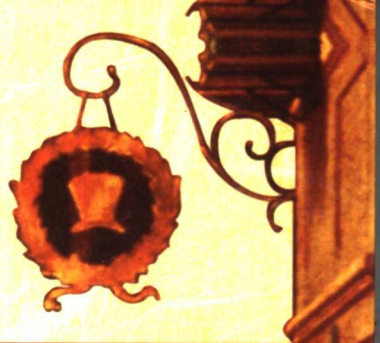
[美] 华盛顿·欧文 著

刘荣跃 译

The Sketch

Book

中英对照



见闻札记

美国文学之父的传世佳作

"I was always fond of visiting new scenes and observing strange characters and manners. Even when a mere child, I began my travels and made voyages of discovery into foreign parts, and followed the quest of the unknown, to the torment of my parents, and the rebuke of the good clergy. As I grew into boyhood, I extended the range of my observations. My holidays afterwards were spent in rambles about the surrounding country, I made myself familiar with all its places famous in history or fable. I knew every spot where a murder or robbery had been committed, or a ghost seen. I visited the principal cities, and acquired a general stock of knowledge, by noting their habits and customs, and conversing with their great and great men. I even journeyed one long summer's day to the summit of the most distant hill, from whence I stretched my eye over many a wide and fertile vale, and was astonished to find how vast a globe I inhabited."

○○○

我性好游历，喜观美景，爱赏奇风异俗，自幼年时，我便四处漫游，走过不少地方，深入故土的穷乡僻壤，作一番探索。为此，父母常感懊恼。及至童年，更常充作冒险骑士。每逢假日下午，我便畅游四郊。由此，历史上或传说中的著名地方，我于市廛间，便能任其游历。哪里发生过谋杀，我均能一语道破。我去邻近的村庄，观察其风俗习惯，与乡间之士和名流人物交谈，从而增加见闻。春一漫长夏月，我甚至远走它乡，爬上一座高山，极目远眺，观览广袤无垠的陌生土地，目睹其所居住的地域，广阔无边，我惊叹不已。

中国书籍出版社

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○○○作者简介○○○

华盛顿·欧文（1783—1859）是美国散文家和短篇小说家。他一生曾三度赴欧，在英、法、德、西等国度过了17年。这期间，他访问名胜古迹，了解风土人情，收集民间传说，积累了丰富的创作素材。从1819年起，他陆续发表了许多散文、随笔和故事。1820年汇集成《见闻札记》，在英国出版后引起轰动，流传甚广，使他成为第一个获得国际声誉的美国作家，被誉为“美国文学之父”。司各特和拜伦等人成为他的知交，萨克雷称其为“新世界文坛送往旧世界的第一位使节”。《见闻札记》被誉为美国富有想像力的第一部真正杰作。

— 目 录 —

THE WIFE	002
妻子	003
RIP VAN WINKLE	018
瑞普·凡·温克尔	019
RURAL LIFE IN ENGLAND	054
英国的乡村生活	055
THE BROKEN HEART	070
破碎的心	071
THE COUNTRY CHURCH	082
乡村教堂	083
THE WIDOW AND HER SON	094
寡妇和她的儿子	095
A SUNDAY IN LONDON	110
伦敦的礼拜天	111
RURAL FUNERALS	116
乡村葬礼	117

THE SPECTRE BRIDEGROOM	142
幽灵新郎	143
WESTMINSTER ABBEY	174
威斯敏斯特教堂	175
CHRISTMAS	198
圣诞节	199
LONDON ANTIQUES	210
伦敦古迹	211

The Sketch Book

THE WIFE

*The treasures of the deep are not so precious As are the
conceal'd comforts of a man Locked up in woman's love. I
scent the air Of blessings, when I come but near the house.
What a delicious breath marriage sends forth... The violet
bed's not sweeter.*

MIDDLETON.

I HAVE often had occasion to remark the fortitude with which women sustain the most overwhelming reverses of fortune. Those disasters which break down the spirit of a man, and prostrate him in the dust^①, seem to call forth all the energies of the softer sex, and give such intrepidity and elevation to their character, that at times it approaches to sublimity. Nothing can be more touching than to behold a soft and tender female, who had been all weakness and dependence, and alive to^② every trivial roughness, while treading the prosperous paths of life, suddenly rising in mental force to be the comforter and support of her husband under misfortune, and abiding, with unshrinking firmness, the bitterest blasts of adversity.

As the vine, which has long twined its graceful foliage about the oak, and been lifted by it into sunshine, will, when the hardy plant is rifted by the thunderbolt, cling round it with its caressing tendrils, and bind up its shattered boughs; so is it beautifully ordered by Providence, that woman, who is the mere dependent and ornament of man in his happier hours,

① in the dust: 死; 屈辱。

② alive to: 注意到; 意识到; 感觉到。

— 妻 子 —

一个被女人深爱的男人心中珍藏无限慰藉，大海的宝藏亦无法与之相比。我走近家门感到神祝福的气息。婚姻散发的芬芳实在美妙无比，盛开的紫罗兰亦不比她馥郁！

——米德尔顿^①

我常注意到，妇女们深受挫折时显示出坚韧不拔的意志。有些灾难，会使男人精神崩溃，陷入绝境，却似乎能唤起温柔女性的全部活力，使其现出无畏高尚的品格，有时竟超凡出众。在一帆风顺的人生之途，她一直那么孱弱，事事依赖，任何一点烦扰均令她不安；但每当遇到丈夫遭受不幸，她却会突然精神昂扬，给他以安慰和支持，使他毫无畏惧、坚定不移地去承受巨大的天灾人祸。见到如此温存而娇柔女性，最令人感动。

蔓藤优美的叶子一直将橡树缠绕，并被树身高高举向阳光；当雷电劈开强壮的树干，它仍会用其爱抚的卷须，紧紧将橡树环抱，同时紧贴碎裂的树枝。同样，上帝绝妙的安排是，在丈夫幸福时刻，女人仅为依

^① 米德尔顿（1570-1627），英国剧作家，著有《一局棋》、《妇女相互提防》等。

should be his stay^① and solace when smitten with sudden calamity;winding herself into the rugged recesses of his nature, tenderly supporting the drooping head, and binding up the broken heart.

I was once congratulating a friend, who had around him a blooming family, knit together in the strongest affection. "I can wish you no better lot,"said he, with enthusiasm,"than to have a wife and children. If you are prosperous, there they are to share your prosperity;if otherwise, there they are to comfort you."And, indeed, I have observed that a married man falling into misfortune is more apt to retrieve his situation in the world than a single one;partly because he is more stimulated to exertion by the necessities of the helpless and beloved beings who depend upon him for subsistence; but chiefly because his spirits are soothed and relieved by domestic endearments, and his self-respect kept alive by finding, that though all abroad is darkness and humiliation, yet there is still a little world of love at home, of which he is the monarch. Whereas a single man is apt to run to waste and self-neglect;to fancy himself lonely and abandoned, and his heart to fall to ruin like some deserted mansion, for want of an inhabitant.

These observations call to mind a little domestic story, of which I was once a witness. My intimate friend, Leslie, had married a beautiful and accomplished girl, who had been brought up in the midst of fashionable life. She had, it is true, no fortune, but that of my friend was ample;and he delighted in the anticipation of indulging her in every elegant pursuit, and administering to those delicate tastes and fancies that spread a kind of witchery about the sex.—"Her life,"said he,"shall be like a fairy tale."

The very difference in their characters produced an harmonious combination: he was of a romantic and somewhat serious cast;she was all life and gladness. I have often noticed the mute rapture with which he would gaze upon her in company, of which her sprightly powers made her the delight; and how, in the midst of applause, her eye would still turn to him, as if

① 支撑；支持；支柱。

附于他的装饰；但在丈夫突然灾难临头时，则成为他的支柱，给他慰藉，巧妙分担他内心深处的痛苦，轻轻扶起他低垂的头，抱紧其破碎的心。

我曾为一友人祝贺，他有一个相当和睦美好的家庭，夫妻恩爱挚深。“拥有妻室儿女，”他热切地说，“这是我对你的最好祝愿。假如你成功，他们会分享你的成功；假如你失败，他们会给你安慰。”我确已注意到，遭致不幸的已婚男人，比单身男人更易在世上重新找到生活的位置。部分原因，是所爱的无助的家人，须靠他获取生活之必需，否则难以生存，他因此备受激励，重整旗鼓。但主要原因，是家人之爱使其痛苦缓解，心境宁然——因他发现尽管处处是黑暗与羞辱，但家里仍有一片充满爱心的小天地，而他是这天地中的君主。单身男子则易自暴自弃，不求进取，自觉孤独无援，内心成一废墟，宛如无人居住而冷清荒凉的房子。

上述所见，使我想起一个家庭小故事，我曾亲眼目睹。我有一密友叫莱斯利，他娶了一位于上流社会长大的美丽多才的女子。不错，她本身几无财产，但友人却颇富裕。他满怀期望，乐于让她尽情享受高雅生活，获得种种雅趣，实现美好幻想——女性因此更具魅力。“她的生活，”他说，“要像童话一般。”

他们性格各异，也正因如此，其结合才颇为和谐。他富于浪漫，凡事有些认真，而她生气勃勃，乐观开朗。我常发现他们于亲朋好友中，他心怀无言的狂喜凝视着她，而她之令人快乐，正在于富有生机，充满朝气。我亦发现，当人们为她热烈鼓掌时，她怎样将视线转向他，仿佛

there alone she sought favor and acceptance. When leaning on his arm, her slender form contrasted finely with his tall manly person. The fond confiding air with which she looked up to him seemed to call forth a flush of triumphant pride and cherishing tenderness, as if he doted on his lovely burden for its very helplessness. Never did a couple set forward on the flowery path of early and well-suited marriage with a fairer prospect of felicity.

It was the misfortune of my friend, however, to have embarked his property in large speculations; and he had not been married many months, when, by a succession of sudden disasters, it was swept from him, and he found himself reduced almost to penury. For a time he kept his situation to himself, and went about with a haggard countenance, and a breaking heart. His life was but a protracted agony; and what rendered it more insupportable was the necessity of keeping up a smile in the presence of his wife; for he could not bring himself to overwhelm her with the news. She saw, however, with the quick eyes of affection, that all was not well with him. She marked his altered looks and stifled sighs, and was not to be deceived by his sickly and vapid attempts at cheerfulness. She tasked all her sprightly powers and tender blandishments to win him back to happiness; but she only drove the arrow deeper into his soul. The more he saw cause to love her, the more torturing was the thought that he was soon to make her wretched. A little while, thought he, and the smile will vanish from that cheek—the song will die away from those lips—the lustre of those eyes will be quenched with sorrow; and the happy heart, which now beats lightly in that bosom, will be weighed down like mine, by the cares and miseries of the world.

At length he came to me one day, and related his whole situation in a tone of the deepest despair. When I heard him through I inquired, “Does your wife know all this?” At the question he burst into an agony of tears. “For God’s sake!” cried he, “if you have any pity on me, don’t mention my wife; it is the thought of her that drives me almost to madness!”

“And why not?” said I. “She must know it sooner or later: you cannot keep it long from her, and the intelligence may break upon her in a more

只在那里寻求欢心和认可。她依偎在他怀中，苗条的身躯与他魁梧雄壮的体魄形成鲜明对比。她仰望着他，满怀深情与信任，仿佛内心激动不已，充满胜利的自豪和甜美的爱意。他对自己这份责任似乎喜爱有加，就因为自己必不可少。——就初期婚姻而言，他俩的婚姻堪称完美之至，一开始就踏上铺满鲜花的道路，并可望生活蒸蒸日上。

但友人不幸的是，将财产拿去大做投机生意，结婚没几月灾难忽然接踵而至，将其钱财几乎一扫而光。一段时间他将此困境埋于心中，整日憔悴，沮丧不堪。生活只是在拖延着痛苦；更有甚者，他必须在妻子前强装笑容，实在无法把坏消息对她启齿，让其蒙受沉重打击。然而，她充满柔情蜜意的眼睛却表机敏无比，看出他遇到麻烦。她发觉他表情异样，将叹息克制；他极力露出高兴的样子，却显得阴郁沉闷，这些她均看在眼里。她尽量显得富有生气，对他温存，讨他欢心，欲使其再度快活起来，但此举仅把剑更深地插进他心灵——他愈知自己何以爱她深切，愈想到不久会让她难过而备受折磨。他想，她的笑容很快会消失，嘴上不再有歌声，炯炯目光将忧伤黯然；此刻欢快的心，将如他的心一般，被压上世间沉重的忧虑与苦难。

终于有一天他来找我，将心事尽皆吐露，语气不无绝望。听他说完我问：“你妻子都知道吗？”他顿时万分沮丧，泪流满面。“看在上帝分上！”他哭道。“假若你对我还有点同情，就别提我妻子了——正是想到她我才快要发疯！”

“为什么不呢？”我说。“她迟早会知道的，你不可能长期隐瞒，而

startling manner, than if imparted by yourself; for the accents of those we love soften the harshest tidings. Besides, you are depriving yourself of the comforts of her sympathy; and not merely that, but also endangering the only bond that can keep hearts together—an unreserved community of thought and feeling. She will soon perceive that something is secretly preying upon^① your mind; and true love will not brook reserve; it feels undervalued and outraged, when even the sorrows of those it loves are concealed from it.”

“Oh, but, my friend! to think what a blow I am to give to all her future prospects—how I am to strike her very soul to the earth, by telling her that her husband is a beggar! that she is to forego all the elegancies of life—all the pleasures of society—to shrink with me into indigence and obscurity! To tell her that I have dragged her down from the sphere in which she might have continued to move in constant brightness—the light of every eye—the admiration of every heart! How can she bear poverty? she has been brought up in all the refinements of opulence. How can she bear neglect? She has been the idol of society. Oh! it will break her heart—it will break her heart! ”

I saw his grief was eloquent, and I let it have its flow; for sorrow relieves itself by words. When his paroxysm^② had subsided, and he had relapsed into moody silence, I resumed the subject gently, and urged him to break his situation at once to his wife. He shook his head mournfully, but positively.

“But how are you to keep it from her? It is necessary she should know it, that you may take the steps proper to the alteration of your circumstances. You must change your style of living—nay,” observing a pang to pass across his countenance, “don’t let that afflict you. I am sure you have never placed your happiness in outward show—you have yet friends, warm friends, who will not think the worse of you for being less splendidly

① 折磨；使苦恼；损害。

② （感情、疾病）突然发作，阵发。

如果她从别处听到这消息，就比你亲自告诉她更震惊；因为即便最冷酷的消息，由所爱的人说出也会变得温和。此外，你在拒绝她为你分担痛苦，给你安慰，也拒绝危及着联结你们的心的一根纽带——即无可保留的共同思想和感情。她不久会觉察到什么事在暗暗折磨你，而真正的爱情是不容任何隐瞒的：当连所爱的人都要将其伤心事隐瞒时，你会觉得自己受到轻视和伤害。”

“唉，可是朋友啊！如果我告诉她，她的丈夫已成乞丐，想想看将给她多大打击，给她心灵怎样致命的创伤！她将摒弃生活中一切高雅与舒适享乐，同我一起陷入贫困境地，湮没无闻！——如果告诉她我已把她从原来的生活圈拉走，而她本应在那里一直过得欢快舒心，引人注目，令人羡慕！她怎样受得了贫穷！她完全在富贵优雅的生活中长大，怎能受得了被人遗弃的处境！她已在社会上受人崇拜！唉，那会让她心碎的！那会让她心碎的！”

见他如此意味深长述说自己的悲哀，我不予插话，因痛苦经过倾诉能自行缓解。他激动一阵后渐渐平息，忧郁不语。此时我温和地重提前言，催促他立即把困境告诉妻子。他仍忧伤但断然地摇头。

“可你如何能隐瞒过她呢？她必然会知道的，所以你要采取适当措施，改变生活环境。你必须改变生活方式，而且，”我见他脸上掠过极度悲哀，“别让痛苦困扰你。我肯定你从没将幸福建立于浮华的外表。你还有朋友，热情的朋友，他们并不因你的住房不如过去堂皇就小看你。

lodged: and surely it does not require a palace to be happy with Mary—”

“I could be happy with her,”cried he, convulsively, “in a hovel! —I could go down with her into poverty and the dust! —I could—I could— God bless her! —God bless her!”cried he, bursting into a transport^① of grief and tenderness.

“And believe me, my friend,”said I, stepping up, and grasping him warmly by the hand, “believe me she can be the same with you. Ay, more: it will be a source of pride and triumph to her—it will call forth all the latent energies and fervent sympathies of her nature; for she will rejoice to prove that she loves you for yourself. There is in every true woman’s heart a spark of heavenly fire, which lies dormant in the broad daylight of prosperity; but which kindles up, and beams and blazes in the dark hour of adversity. No man knows what the wife of his bosom is—no man knows what a ministering angel she is—until he has gone with her through the fiery trials of this world.”

There was something in the earnestness of my manner, and the figurative style of my language, that caught the excited imagination of Leslie. I knew the auditor I had to deal with; and following up the impression I had made, I finished by persuading him to go home and unburden his sad heart to his wife.

I must confess, notwithstanding all I had said, I felt some little solicitude for the result. Who can calculate on the fortitude of one whose life has been a round of pleasures? Her gay spirits might revolt at the dark downward path of low humility suddenly pointed out before her, and might cling to the sunny regions in which they had hitherto revelled. Besides, ruin in fashionable life is accompanied by so many galling mortifications, to which in other ranks it is a stranger.—In short, I could not meet Leslie the next morning without trepidation. He had made the disclosure.

“And how did she bear it?”

① 指一种十分激动的心情，而非“运输”。

和玛丽过幸福生活，不一定非要宫殿啊！”

“即使住一间茅屋，”他颤抖地哭着说，“我和她也会幸福的！——我能和她一起过贫穷生活，甚至去死！——我能——我能——上帝保佑她吧！——上帝保佑她吧！”他哭道，突然又激动起来，满怀伤心和温柔。

“相信我吧，朋友。”我说，走上前去热情地握住他的手。“相信我，她不会变心的。当然，不仅如此——她会因此自豪，充满喜悦，一切潜在的活力与炽热的同情会由此产生，因为她会很高兴证明，她所爱的是你本人而非别的。每个真诚的女人心里，都有一星神圣的火花，在兴旺的白昼休眠着，而于灾难的黑夜燃起，发出强烈光彩。只有与妻子共同经受了世间烈火般的考验，男人才会真正了解她，知道她是一位多么能助人的天使。”

我态度诚恳，语言生动，使莱斯利兴奋起来，产生想象。我了解所面对的听者；紧接对他已发生的影响，最后我仍劝他回去向妻子一吐苦衷。

我得承认，尽管说了这一切，对结果如何我仍有点担忧。一个生活充满享乐的人，谁知有多么坚韧？她性情欢快，也许会对突然出现的黑暗卑微的道路厌恶，而紧紧依附于一直迷恋的阳光明媚之地。此外，过惯时髦生活后又倾家荡产，同时会受到许多令人烦恼的耻辱，而其他阶层的人对此并不了解。总之，次日早上我见到莱斯利不免恐慌。他把情况告诉了我。

“她怎么样？”