

# A CUP OF COMFORT FOR MOTHERS & DAUGHTERS 母女情深

主编 (美)科琳·塞尔



母女情深展示着人类神奇伟大的精神力量。  
Stories that celebrate a very special bond

【一杯安慰系列】

\*英汉对照\*

青岛出版社



A COB OF  
DOWNPORT  
FOR  
AND THERE'S  
CAUGHT THERE  
母女情誼

THE FISHING BOAT



一杯安慰系列

# 母女情深

A Cup of Comfort for Mothers & Daughters

主编 (美) 科琳·塞尔

译者 张莉



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## PREFACE

Colleen Sell

The Cup of Comfort anthology series was created at the dawn of the new millennium to provide a forum by which ordinary people could share true stories about the experiences and people that have inspired them. My hope was that these uplifting personal stories would create a bridge between people of different circumstances and cultures by reminding them of the universal truths that make us all human and that give us hope and happiness. It is certainly not a new concept.

Since human beings first acquired the ability to communicate, we have used stories to share humanity's most empowering truths and most powerful lessons. For hundreds of thousands of years, the uniquely human gift of story has guided and comforted us, connecting us to our inner spirits and to one another.

And now the stories in this book are reaching across continents and oceans to connect people in North America with people in China. The Cup of Comfort authors and I are humbled and honored by this privilege, and we sincerely hope that these stories bring you comfort and joy.



## 序 言

科琳·塞尔

《一杯安慰》系列丛书问世于新千年伊始。该丛书为人们提供了一个交流平台，普通人可以在这里讲述他们的真实故事，讲述感动过他们的经历和人。他们的个人经历，使人振奋，揭示了赋予我们人性、带给我们希望和快乐的普遍道理。我希望该故事丛书能为不同背景、不同文化的人们架起一座交流和沟通的桥梁。诚然，以书为桥不是一个新的概念。

自从人类获得交流沟通的能力以来，我们就用故事来传播最发人深省的人生道理，传授最重要的生活经验。千万年来，故事这一非同寻常的人类礼物指引着我们人生的道路，带给我们心灵的慰藉，让我们了解自己的内心世界，是连接我们和他人之间的纽带。

本书中的故事跨越了不同的大陆，漂洋过海，把北美和中国不同地域的人们连接在一起。我和《一杯安慰》的各位作者享此殊荣，不胜荣幸。我们衷心地希望书中故事给你们带去安慰和快乐。

徐莉娜 译



## 译者序

本以为普天下的母女情相去无几，译完本书才发觉，原来爱女之心与爱母之情也千差万别，尤其是本书所描述的纯美国式母女情与我们所熟悉的中国式母女情之间的对比则更显强烈。

传统上，中国的母女情从女儿一方讲，指的是她们的孝顺、服从、忍耐和守礼等，而从母亲方面讲，则可谓是一种彻底、完全乃至无私忘我的牺牲，这样的母爱包容一切、跨越时空、感人肺腑、震撼人心。一代又一代，我们的母亲、母亲的母亲都是这样过来的。

本书描写的那些美国母女们却大不一样。这些美国女儿也深爱着自己的母亲，但却不会对她们的母亲言听计从，也不可能忍受中国母亲们那种铺天盖地、无孔不入的母爱。相比之下，美国的母女们则显得更独立，也更注重自己的权利。《她留下了一团糟》中离家出走的女儿、《母亲的鸡蛋》中坚持考取驾照的老母亲、《我值几头骆驼》中结伴环游世界的母女、《心灵的选择》中始终摩擦不断的恩怨母女，无不如此。然而，无论母女间存有多少冲突、多大障碍，却动摇不了她们天然的深情，在经历了种种恩怨、相爱又相斗之后，其中一方才翻然悔悟，原来自己是那样执著地爱着自己的母亲，女儿对母亲的亲情也无法释怀和割舍。

《母爱的力量》所描述的母亲对不理解自己的女儿一直挂念着，不管女儿如何伤害自己，也不放弃对孩子的帮助。当女儿怀孕难产时，母亲终于等到了与女儿和解的机会。《妈妈总是知道》中的母亲对女儿的一举一动了如指掌，甚至对远在千里之外的女儿也有一种神奇的心理感应。《海绵浴》中的母亲怕宠坏了女儿，抑制着感情的流露，直到年老多病时，真实的情感才洪水般宣泄而出。看完此书谁都会禁不住感叹母爱的神奇和力量。母爱是人类情感世界中的一个奇迹、一种永恒的美。母爱这个世界永恒的主题在此书中也得到了很好的诠释。

翻译过程中，虽竭力而为，不妥之处恐难避免，恳请读者不吝赐教。另外，青岛大学的岳玉庆老师帮助笔者修改译稿，在此一并深表感谢！

张 莉



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## She Left a Mess Behind

I watch her back her new truck out of the driveway. The pickup<sup>①</sup> is too large, too expensive. She'd refused to consider a practical compact car that gets good gas mileage and is easy to park. It's because of me, I think. She bought it to spite me.

She'd dropped out of college, and I'd made her come home. All summer long she'd been an unstable cloud of gasoline fumes, looking for a match to set her off. We'd fought about her job, about leaving school, about her boyfriend and her future. She'd cried a lot and rebuffed all my attempts to comfort her.

"I'm twenty, almost," she'd told me so often that my teeth ached. "I am an adult!"

Each time I silently replied, No, you are not. You still watch cartoons, and expect me to do your laundry, and ask me to pick up toothpaste for you when I go to the grocery store.

Now she is gone, off to be an adult far away from me. I'm glad she's gone. She's impossible and cranky<sup>②</sup> and difficult to get along with. I am sick of fighting, tired of her tantrums<sup>③</sup>.

Her father is angry. He watches television and will not speak. He helped her with the down payment on the truck and got her a good deal. He slipped her cash before she left. I want to say, If only you hadn't helped her buy the truck, she would still be here. It's a lie.

"I am never coming back," she told me. "I'm a grown-up now. I want to live."



What had she been doing for twenty years? Existing in suspended animation<sup>④</sup>?

The cat is upset by the suitcases and boxes and unspoken recriminations<sup>⑤</sup>. She's hiding. For a moment I fear she's sneaked into the truck, gone off with my daughter on an adventure from which I am forbidden.

She left a mess. Her bathroom is an embarrassment of damp towels, out-of-date cosmetics, hair in the sink, and nearly empty shampoo bottles. Ha! Some grown-up! She can't even pick up after herself. I'll show her. She doesn't want to live with me, doesn't want to be my baby girl anymore, fine. I can be even stinkier<sup>⑥</sup> than she is.

I bring a box of big black garbage bags upstairs. Eye shadow, face cream, glitter nail polish<sup>⑦</sup>, and astringent — into the trash. I dump drawers and sweep shelves clear of gels, mousse, body wash, and perfume. I refuse to consider what might be useful, what can be saved. Everything goes. I scrub the tub and sink clean of her. When I am finished, it is as sterile and impersonal as a motel bathroom.

In her bedroom I find mismatched socks under her bed and frayed panties on the closet floor. Desk drawers are filled with school papers, filed by year and subject. I catch myself reading through poems and essays, admiring high scores on tests and reading her name, printed or typed neatly in the upper right-hand corner of each paper. I pack the desk contents into a box. Six months, I think. I will give her six months to collect her belongings, and then I will throw it all away. That is fair. Grown-ups pay for storage.

Her books stymie<sup>⑧</sup> me. Dr. Seuss, Sweet Valley High, R. L. Stine, Baby-sitters Club, Shakespeare, *The Odyssey* and *The Iliad*<sup>⑨</sup>, romance novels, historical novels, and textbooks. A lifetime of reading; each book beloved. I want to be heartless, to stuff them in paper sacks for the used bookstore. I love books as much as she does. I cram them onto a single bookshelf to deal with later.

I will turn her room into a crafts room. Or create the fancy guest room I've always



wanted. But not for her benefit. When grown-up life proves too hard and she comes crawling back, she can stay in the basement or sleep on the couch.

My ruthlessness returns with a vengeance. Dresses, sweaters, leggings, and shoes she hasn't worn since seventh grade are crammed into garbage bags.

Her thoughtlessness appalls me. Did I raise her to be like this? To treat what she owns — what I paid for — as so much trash? No, she left this mess to thumb her nose<sup>⑩</sup> at me, as payback for treating her like the child she is.

“Fa la la, Mom, I am off to conquer the world, off to bigger and better things. Do be a dear and take care of this piffle<sup>⑪</sup>. ”

I am a plague of locusts emptying the closet. Two piles grow to clumsy heights: one for Goodwill, the other trash.

There are more shoes, stuffed animals large and small, knickknacks, felt pennants, posters, hair bands, and pink foam rollers. The job grows larger the longer I am at it. How can one girl collect so much in only twenty years?

It's obvious she doesn't care about me, her father, our home, or anything we've provided. We are the flotsam and jetsam<sup>⑫</sup>, the detritus<sup>⑬</sup> of childhood.

I stuff garbage bags until the plastic strains. I haul them down the stairs two bags at a time. Donations to Goodwill go into the trunk of my car; trash goes to the curb. Sweat and sore shoulders fuel my irritation. My husband has left the house, perhaps to avoid the same fight I wish to avoid.

She left the bed rumpled, the comforter on the floor, the sheets in a tangle. I strip off the comforter, blanket, sheets, mattress pad, and pillows. Once she starts feeding quarters into Laundromat machines, she'll appreciate the years of clean clothes I've provided for free.

I turn the mattress. A large manila envelope is marked “DO NOT THROW AWAY.” I open it. More papers. I dump the contents onto the floor. There are old photographs,



letters, greeting cards, and notes filled with sappy sentiments, bad puns, and silly nicknames. There are comics clipped from newspapers and book reviews. Every single item had passed from my hand to hers.

“DO NOT THROW AWAY.”

Darned kid knows me too well.

I read over a lifetime of inside jokes and shared sentiments. Maybe the pickup wasn't such a bad idea, after all. Maybe it helps her to feel less small in a big world. Maybe, too, the awful summer wasn't for my benefit, but for hers. It's easier to leave when she's convinced she is too angry to stay.

I retrieve garbage bags from the car and the curb. Clothes and shoes go back into the closet. I remake the bed and pile it with stuffed animals. The cat slinks into the room and looks around with suspicious eyes. Finally she makes a place for herself between a Christmas bear and an Easter bunny.

My husband comes home and calls up the stairs.

“Just straightening up,” I tell him. “Can you find some boxes for her stuff?”

He brings up cartons from the basement. “She left a mess,” he says.

“I don't mind,” I reply.

“She's not coming back,” he says. His anger is gone, and now he's sad.

My little baby, my dependent child, isn't coming back. Someday my daughter, the woman, will return for a visit. Mementos of childhood will await her. So will I.

—Jaye W. Manus

**Notes:**

① pickup: 小卡车, 轻型货车

② cranky: 暴躁的, 脾气坏的





- ③ tantrum: 发脾气,勃然大怒
- ④ suspended animation: (因窒息造成的)生命暂停,假死
- ⑤ recrimination: 反斥,斥责
- ⑥ stinky: 发恶臭的; stinkier 为比较级。
- ⑦ nail polish: 指甲油;趾甲油
- ⑧ stymie: 阻拦,阻碍

⑨ *The Odyssey and The Iliad*:《奥德赛》与《伊利亚特》。《奥德赛》为古希腊史诗,荷马史诗中记述了奥德修斯在特洛伊失败后的漂泊生活;《伊利亚特》为古希腊描写特洛伊战争的英雄史诗,相传为荷马所作。

- ⑩ ... thumb her nose at me: ……对我嗤之以鼻,蔑视我
- ⑪ piffle: 无聊话;愚蠢行事
- ⑫ flotsam and jetsam: 无价值(无用)的东西
- ⑬ detritus: 碎石;屑粒



## 她留下了一团糟

我看着她把那辆新买的卡车倒出了车道。皮卡太大,又太贵。但她就是拒绝考虑买一辆实用的小型汽车,尽管那种车既省油,又方便停泊。我想,这都是因为我。她买那辆车就是为了故意气我。

她从大学退学以后,我让她回了家。一整个夏天,她都像一团不稳定的汽油雾,只等着有根火柴可以让她爆炸。我们为很多事情争吵过,她的工作,她的辍学,她的男朋友,还有她的将来。她痛哭过很多次,我试着安慰她,但无一例外都遭到了回绝。

“我已经 20 了,快了,”她总是这样告诉我,我听得牙都痛了。“我是个大人了!”

每一次,我都在心里默默地说,不,你还不是。你还在看卡通片,你还在指望我为你洗衣



服,要是我去杂货店的话,你还会要我帮你买牙膏。

现在,她走掉了,远远地离开我,去当她的大人了。我很高兴她走了。她不可理喻,脾气暴躁,简直无法相处。我已经吵够了,也受够了她的坏脾气。

她父亲也很生气。他一言不发,闷着头看电视。不过,他帮她垫上了买卡车的首付,还帮她谈了个好价钱。女儿离家之前,他还悄悄地给她塞了点钱。我想说的是,要是你当初没有帮她买下卡车,那么她还会在这儿。这是谎话。

“我再也不回来了,”她对我说,“我现在是个成人了。我想要活着。”

过去20年里,她都做了些什么?以假死的状态存在吗?

行李箱、纸盒箱,还有相互间没有明言的指责,这些都让家里的猫觉得不对劲儿。它躲了起来。有一会儿,我担心它会溜上卡车,跟着女儿一起出发,踏上我无法同行的冒险旅途。

她留下了一团糟。她的浴室令人不忍卒睹,里面堆满了潮湿的浴巾、过时的化妆品、几乎全空的洗发水瓶子,水池里还留有头发。哈!好个成年人!她甚至都无法把自己的事情收拾好。我要让她好好瞧瞧。她不想跟我住在一起,不想再当我的宝贝女儿,好。我可以做得比她还绝。

我拿着一整盒大号的黑色垃圾袋上了楼。眼影、面霜、闪亮的指甲油,还有涩剂——全都扔进垃圾袋。我把抽屉倒空,又把架子上的啫喱、摩丝、沐浴液、香水等等一扫而空。我根本不去考虑,哪些东西可能有用,哪些东西可以留下来。每件都扔。我把浴缸和面池擦洗干净,清除掉她留下的一切痕迹。我把这一切做完以后,她的浴室看起来就像是一家汽车旅馆的浴室,既没有生气,也毫无人情味可言。

我在她卧室的床底下还发现了不成双的袜子,衣橱底部的隔板上则扔着磨破了边的短裤。书桌的抽屉里塞满了学校发下的卷子,全都按照年份和科目编档。我不禁捧起那一篇篇的诗歌和论文读了起来,一边看着她清清爽爽打印在每份卷子右上角的名字,一边在心里为她在测试中得到的高分赞叹不已。然后,我把书桌里的东西都装进一只盒子。6个月,我心想。我会给她6个月的时间回来取走她的东西,否则的话,到时候我就把它们全都扔了。这很公平。成年人应该为他们的东西支付储存费。



然而,她的书却使我感到左右为难。苏斯博士,《甜蜜高谷》,R·L·史坦恩,《俏奶妈俱乐部》,莎士比亚,《奥德赛》,《伊里亚特》,浪漫小说,历史小说,还有课本。这些书简直够读一辈子了;每一本都令人爱不释手。我想干脆狠狠心,把它们都装进纸袋卖给二手书店。但我爱书的程度跟女儿不相上下,于是我又将这些书统统塞到一个单独的书架上,想留到以后再说。

我要把她的房间改装成一间工艺品室,或者弄成一间我一直想要的漂亮客房。不过,再也没她的份儿了。要是哪一天成人的生活太过艰难,她只好爬着回来的话,那么她就只能住在地下室里,要不就睡在沙发上。

报复心理使我又变得无情起来。她七年级以后就再没穿过的衣裙、羊毛衫、绑腿、鞋子等等全都被我塞进了垃圾袋。

她的粗心和草率让我吃惊不小。是我把她带成这样的吗?她就这样对待属于自己的东西——当然都是我买的——就像对待一堆垃圾一样?不,她留下了这一团糟,还对我嗤之以鼻。我把她当宝贝一样养大,她就这样回报我。

“法啦啦,妈,我出发去征服整个世界啦,去见识更大、更好的东西啦。请你乖一点,把我留下的烂摊子照料好。”

我开始清空衣橱,手到之处就如同蝗灾掠过。衣物渐渐摞成了高高的两大堆:一堆是要捐给慈善机构的,还有一堆是垃圾。

还有更多的鞋子、大大小小的填充动物玩具、各种小摆设、毡制的锦旗、海报、发带,甚至还有一双粉色的泡沫滑轮溜冰鞋。我收拾的时间越长,这个活儿就变得越繁重。一个女孩怎么可能在短短的20年里收集这么多的东西?

事情明摆着,她根本就不在乎我,也不在乎她的父亲、我们这个家,或者我们为她提供的任何东西。我们只不过是她童年时代的瓦砾碎石,毫无价值。

我不停地往垃圾袋里塞东西,一直到塑料袋都快撑破了。我每次拖两个这样的垃圾袋下楼。捐给慈善机构的袋子都放进我那辆汽车的车厢里;垃圾都扔到路边的道牙上。汗水和酸痛的双臂让我感觉更加火上浇油。丈夫早就出了家门,也许就是为了避开那场我也想躲开的争吵。



她走了，就这么留下一张凌乱的床，盖被扔到了地板上，床单纠结成一团。我抽掉盖被、毛毯、床单、床垫，还有枕头。等到她需要自己往自助洗衣机里投一枚枚二毛五的硬币时，她就会感激我这么多年来一直免费提供的洗衣服务。

我把床垫翻了个个儿。一只写着“别扔掉”的大号马尼拉信封赫然出现在眼前。我打开了它，里面全是纸。我把里面的东西都倒在地板上。里面有一些老照片、信件、贺卡、故作伤感的笔记、拙劣的双关语，还有愚蠢的绰号。此外，还有从报纸和书评上剪下来的连环漫画。每一样东西都是我亲手交给她的。

“别扔掉。”

这个该死的鬼丫头，她太了解我了。

我读了一辈子关于内心情感的笑话，而且自己也深有感触。也许买下那辆皮卡毕竟也算不上什么坏事。也许它能让她在这个庞大的世界上感觉不那么渺小。又或者，这个难熬的夏天对我没什么帮助，但却能令她受益匪浅。如果她认为自己气坏了，再也呆不下去了，那么这个时候离开倒是容易些。

我把放在车里和路边的垃圾袋拿了回来。衣服和鞋子又回到了衣橱。我重新铺好床，还在上面堆放了填充动物玩具。那只猫悄无声息地溜进了房间，用狐疑的目光四处张望着。最后，它为自己在一只圣诞小熊和复活节兔子中间找了个位置，卧了下来。

这时，丈夫回了家，他冲着楼上叫了我一声。

“刚刚直起腰，”我对他说，“你能找些盒子来装她的东西吗？”

他从地下室里拿上来一些纸箱。“她可真是留下了一团糟。”他对我说。

“我不介意。”我回答说。

“她不会回来了。”他又说。他的怒气已经消失，现在他很伤心。

我的宝贝，那个曾经那么依赖我的孩子，不会回来了。将来有一天，我的女儿会变成一位妇人，那时她会回来看望我们。她童年时代的纪念物会在这里守候着她。我也一样。

——杰儿·W·马努斯