

10元丛书

英文经典名著

苔丝

Thomas Hardy

Tess of the D'Urbervilles

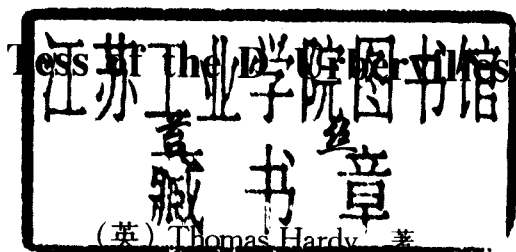
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丛书主编 范希春 马德高



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前 言

托马斯·哈迪(Thomas Hardy 1840. 6. 2—1928. 1. 11)是英国屈指可数的几位优秀小说家之一。1840年,哈迪出生于英国南部一个小建筑业主家庭,16岁那年辍学,进入建筑业当学徒,业余时间学习文学和神学。哈迪的初期创作以诗歌为主,后迫于生计而改写小说。1874年,婚后的哈迪,不再打理建筑业,而成为一位职业作家。1928年,68岁的哈迪辞别人世,被葬在英国著名的威斯敏斯特大教堂的诗人之角,作为英国国民精英中的精英,与前辈优秀的诗人作家长眠一处。

哈迪一生蹉跎,晚年得享大名,而且,随着时间的推移,哈迪的作品如陈年古酿,其日益久,其香愈远,越来越受到广泛的推崇,具有了世界性的意义。

《苔丝》(*Tess of the D'Urbervilles*)是哈迪最好的小说之一,它的副题是“一个纯洁的女人”(A pure woman),从中可以看出作者对本书主人公苔丝深挚的同情和对残酷现实的一种无奈——苔丝出生于一个多子女的贫困家庭,为了生计不得不到同一姓氏的贵族德伯家做佣工,不幸的是,毫无涉世经验的苔丝被德伯家的少爷,一位花花公子亚历克·德伯诱奸,并生下了一个私生子,苔丝旋即被赶出了这个贵族之家;带着耻辱的印记——那位私生子,苔丝开始了她苦难的单身母亲生涯——在家庭和社会的双重歧视中,在贫困和舆论的重压下,从事繁重的田间劳作。不久,孩子夭折,苔丝只身一人到一个牛奶场做工,在这儿,苔丝遇见了一位青年,他就是牧师的儿子安吉尔·克莱尔。生活,似乎对苔丝露出了它难得的一丝笑容。经过了一段时间的恋爱之后,安吉尔不顾家庭的反对和苔丝结婚。但是,新婚之夜,善良且毫无城府的苔丝向安吉尔坦白了自己过去的~~不幸经历~~。此刻,似乎连上帝也在惩罚这个说真话的年轻女子了——安吉尔接受不了这一无情的现实,痛心、失望、愤

闷中远走巴西。苔丝重新陷入了屈辱孤独之中。恶棍亚历克趁机重新霸占了苔丝。几年过去了,在痛苦中受尽煎熬的苔丝终于等来了自己的丈夫——安吉尔。贫病交加的安吉尔,怀着愧悔的心情从美洲回来寻找昔日的情人和妻子苔丝。但是,亚历克为了达到继续占有苔丝的卑劣目的,妄图阻挠苔丝回到丈夫的身边。于是,苔丝怀着半是绝望,半是希冀的心情杀死了这个毁了自己一生幸福的恶棍。苔丝与安吉尔在逃亡途中被捕,最后,苔丝被判绞刑。

女人为爱而生,也为爱而死,对于不幸的苔丝来说,最可怕的不是死,而是摆脱不掉现世的恶——恶棍亚历克的纠缠折磨和人世虚伪的舆论对她的羞辱,同时,她更恐惧的是失去自己的真爱——安吉尔。或许,死,对于苔丝来说是最好的归宿和解脱——

请让我安睡! 爱的美酒已使我的心灵沉醉。

请让我长眠! 我的灵魂已经尝够了岁月的辛酸。^①

这是侨居美国的阿拉伯诗人纪伯伦写下的诗句,恰好,纪伯伦生活的年代与哈迪大致相同。

范希春

2000年7月18日

于中国社会科学院研究生院

① 纪伯伦《泪与笑·死之美》,见《纪伯伦散文诗全集》,128页。浙江文艺出版社,1990年10月第1版。

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Phase I The Maiden

Chapter I

On an evening in the latter part of May a middle-aged man was walking homeward from Shaston to the village of Marlott, in the adjoining Vale of Blakemore or Blackmoor. The pair of legs that carried him were rickety, and there was a bias in his gait which inclined him somewhat to the left of a straight line. He occasionally gave a smart nod, as if in confirmation of some opinion, though he was not thinking of anything in particular. An empty egg-basket was slung upon his arm, the nap of his hat was ruffled, a patch being quite worn away at its brim where his thumb came in taking it off. Presently he was met by an elderly parson astride on a gray mare, who, as he rode, hummed a wandering tune.

"Good night t'ee," said the man with the basket.

"Good night, Sir John," said the parson.

The pedestrian, after another pace or two, halted, and turned round.

"Now, sir, begging your pardon; we met last market-day on this road about this time, and I said 'Good-night', and you made reply 'Good night, Sir John', as now."

"I did," said the parson.

"And once before that—near a month ago."

"I may have."

"Then what might your meaning be in calling me 'Sir John' these different times, when I be plain Jack Durbeyfield, the haggler?"

The parson rode a step or two nearer. "It was only my whim," he said; and, after a moment's hesitation: "It was on account of a discovery I made some little time ago, whilst I was hunting up pedigrees for the new county history. I am Parson Tringham, the antiquary, of Stagfoot Lane. Don't you really know, Durbeyfield, that you are the lineal representative of the ancient and knightly family of the d'Urbervilles, who derived their descent from Sir Pagan d'Urberville, that renowned knight who came from Normandy with William the Conqueror, as appears by Battle Abbey Roll?"

"Never heard it before, sir!"

"Well it's true. Throw up your chin a moment, so that I may catch the profile of your face better. Yes, that's the d' Urberville nose and chin—a little debased. Your ancestor was one of the twelve knights who assisted the Lord of Estrenavilla in Normandy in his conquest of Glamorganshire. Branches of your family held manors over all this part of England; their names appear in the Pipe Rolls in the time of King Stephen. In the reign of King John one of them was rich enough to give a manor to the Knights Hospitallers; and in Edward the Second's time your forefather Brian was summoned to Westminster to attend the great Council there. You declined a little in Oliver Cromwell's time, but to no serious extent, and in Charles the Second's reign you were made Knights of the Royal Oak for your loyalty. Aye, there have been generations of Sir Johns among you, and if knighthood were hereditary, like a baronetcy, as it practically was in old times, when men were knighted from father to son, you would be Sir, John now."

"Ye don't say so!"

"In short," concluded the parson, decisively smacking his leg with his switch, "there's hardly such another family in England."

"Daze my eyes, and isn't there?" said Durbeyfield. "And here have I been knocking about, year after year, from pillar to post, as if I was no more than the commonest feller in the parish... And how long hev this news about me been knowed, Pa'son Tringham?"

The clergyman explained that, as far as he was aware, it had quite died out of knowledge, and could hardly be said to be known at all. His own investigations had begun on a day in the preceding spring when, having been engaged in tracing the vicissitudes of the d' Urberville family, he had observed Durbeyfield's name on his waggon, and had thereupon been led to make inquiries about his father and grandfather till he had no doubt on the subject. "At first I resolved not to disturb you with such a useless piece of information," said he. "However, our impulses are too strong for our judgment sometimes. I thought you might perhaps know something of it all the while."

"Well, I have heard once or twice, 'tis true, that my family had seen better days afore they came to Blackmoor. But I took no notice o't, thinking it to mean that we had once kept two horses where we now keep only one. I've got a wold silver spoon, and a wold graven seal at home, too; but, Lord, what's a spoon and seal?... And to think that I and these noble d' Urbervilles were

one flesh all the time. 'Twas said that my gr' t-grandfer had secrets, and didn't care to talk of where he came from. . . And where do we raise our smoke, now, parson, if I may make so bold; I mean, where do we d' Urbervilles live?"

"You don't live anywhere. You are extinct—as a county family."

"That's bad."

"Yes—what the mendacious family chronicles call extinct in the male line—that is, gone down—gone under."

"Then where do we lie?"

"At Kingsbere-sub-Greenhill; rows and rows of you in your vaults, with your effigies under Purbeck-marble canopies."

"And where be our family mansions and estates?"

"You haven't any."

"Oh? No lands neither?"

"None; though you once had 'em in abundance, as I said, for your family consisted of numerous branches. In this county there was a seat of yours at Kingsbere, and another at Sherton, and another at Milipond, and another at Lullstead, and another at Wellbridge."

"And shall we ever come into our own again?"

"Ah—that I can't tell!"

"And what had I better do about it, sir?" asked Durbeyfield, after a pause.

"Oh—nothing, nothing; except chasten yourself with the thought of 'how are the mighty fallen'. It is a fact of some interest to the local historian and genealogist, nothing more. There are several families among the cottagers of this county of almost equal lustre. Good night."

"But you'll turn back and have a quart of beer wi' me on the strength o't, Pa'son Tringham? There's a very pretty brew in tap at The Pure Drop—though, to be sure, not so good as at Rolliver's."

"No, thank you—not this evening, Durbeyfield. You've had enough already." Concluding thus the parson rode on his way, with doubts as to his discretion in retailing this curious bit of lore.

When he was gone Durbeyfield walked a few steps in a profound reverie, and then sat down upon the grassy bank by the roadside, depositing his basket before him. In a few minutes a youth appeared in the distance, walking in the same direction as that which had been pursued by Durbeyfield. The latter, on seeing him, held up his hand, and the lad quickened his pace and came

near.

"Boy, take up that basket! I want 'ee to go on an errand for me."

The lath-like stripling frowned. "Who be you, then, John Durbeyfield, to order me about and call me 'boy'? You know my name as well as I know yours!"

"Do you, do you? That's the secret—that's the secret! Now obey my orders, and take the message I'm going to charge 'ee wi'... Well, Fred, I don't mind telling you that the secret is that I'm one of a noble race—it has been just found out by me this present afternoon P. M." And as he made the announcement, Durbeyfield, declining from his sitting position, luxuriously stretched himself out upon the bank among the daisies.

The lad stood before Durbeyfield, and contemplated his length from crown to toe.

"Sir John d'Urberville—that's who I am," continued the prostrate man. "That is if knights were baronets—which they be. 'Tis recorded in history all about me. Dost know of such a place, lad, as Kingsbere-sub-Greenhill?"

"Ees. I've been there to Greenhill Fair."

"Well, under the church of that city there lie—"

"'Tisn't a city, the place I mean; leastwise 'twaddn' when I was there—'twas a little one-eyed, blinking sort o' place."

"Never you mind the place, boy, that's not the question before us. Under the church of that there parish lie my ancestors—hundreds of 'em—in coats of mail and Jewels, in gr't lead coffins weighing tons and tons. There's not a man in the county o' South-Wessex that's got grander and nobler skillentons in his family than I."

"Oh?"

"Now take up that basket, and goo on to Marlott, and when you've come to The Pure Drop Inn, tell 'em to send a horse and carriage to me immediately, to carry me hwoome. And in the bottom o' the carriage they be to put a noggin o' rum in a small bottle, and chalk it up to my account. And when you've done that goo on to my house with the basket, and tell my wife to put away that washing, because she needn't finish it, and wait till I come hwoome, as I've news to tell her."

As the lad stood in a dubious attitude, Durbeyfield put his hand in his pocket, and produced a shilling, one of the chronically few that he possessed. "Here's for your labour, lad."

This made a difference in the young man's estimate of the

position. "Yes, Sir John. Thank 'ee. Anything else I can do for 'ee, Sir John?"

"Tell 'em at hwoome that I should like for supper,—well, lamb's fry if they can get it; and if they can't, black-pot; and if they can't get that, well, chitterlings will do."

"Yes, Sir John."

The boy took up the basket, and as he set out the notes of a brass band were heard from the direction of the village. "What's that?" said Durbeyfield. "Not on account o' I?"

"'Tis the women's club-walking, Sir John. Why, your dater is one o' the members."

"To be sure—I'd quite forgot it in my thoughts of greater things! Well, vamp on to Marlott, will ye, and order that carriage, and maybe I'll drive round and inspect the club."

The lad departed, and Durbeyfield lay waiting on the grass and daisies in the evening sun. Not a soul passed that way for a long while, and the faint notes of the band were the only human sounds audible within the rim of blue hills.

Chapter 2

The village of Marlott lay amid the north-eastern undulations of the beautiful Vale of Blakemore or Blackmoor aforesaid, an engirdled and secluded region, for the most part untrodden as yet by tourist or landscape-painter, though within a four hours' journey from London.

It is a vale whose acquaintance is best made by viewing it from the summits of the hills that surround it—except perhaps during the droughts of summer. An unguided ramble into its recesses in bad weather is apt to engender dissatisfaction with its narrow, tortuous, and miry ways.

This fertile and sheltered tract of country, in which the fields are never brown and the springs never dry, is bounded on the south by the bold chalk ridge that embraces the prominences of Hambledon Hill, Bulbarrow, Nettlecombe-Tout, Dogbury, High Stoy, and Bubb Down. The traveller from the coast, who, after plodding northward for a score of miles over calcareous downs and corn-lands, suddenly reaches the verge of one of these escarpments, is surprised and delighted to behold, extended like a map beneath him, a country differing absolutely from that which he has passed through. Behind him the hills are open, the sun blazes down upon fields so large as to give an unenclosed character

to the landscape, the lanes are white, the hedges low and plashed, the atmosphere colourless. Here, in the valley, the world seems to be constructed upon a smaller and more delicate scale; the fields are mere paddocks, so reduced that from this height their hedgerows appear a network of dark green threads overspreading the paler green of the grass. The atmosphere beneath is languorous, and is so tinged with azure that what artists call the middle distance partakes also of that hue, while the horizon beyond is of the deepest ultramarine. Arable lands are few and limited; with but slight exceptions the prospect is a broad rich mass of grass and trees, mantling minor hills and dales within the major. Such is the Vale of Blackmoor.

The district is of historic, no less than of topographical interest. The Vale was known in former times as the Forest of White Hart, from a curious legend of King Henry III's reign, in which the killing by a certain Thomas de la Lynd of a beautiful white hart which the king had run down and spared, was made the occasion of a heavy fine. In those days, and till comparatively recent times, the country was densely wooded. Even now, traces of its earlier condition are to be found in the old oak copses and irregular belts of timber that yet survive upon its slopes, and the hollow-trunked trees that shade so many of its pastures.

The forests have departed, but some old customs of their shades remain. Many, however, linger only in a metamorphosed or disguised form. The May-Day dance, for instance, was to be discerned on the afternoon under notice, in the guise of the club revel, or "club-walking", as it was there called.

It was an interesting event to the younger inhabitants of Marlott, though its real interest was not observed by the participants in the ceremony. Its singularity lay less in the retention of a custom of walking in procession and dancing on each anniversary than in the members being solely women. In men's clubs such celebrations were, though expiring, less uncommon; but either the natural shyness of the softer sex, or a sarcastic attitude on the part of male relatives, had denuded such women's clubs as remained (if any other did) of this their glory and consummation. The club of Marlott alone lived to uphold the local Cerealia. It had walked for hundreds of years, if not as benefit-club, as votive sisterhood of some sort; and it walked still.

The banded ones were all dressed in white gowns—a gay survival from Old Style days, when cheerfulness and May-time were synonyms—days before the habit of taking long views had

reduced emotions to a monotonous average. Their first exhibition of themselves was in a processional march of two and two round the parish. Ideal and real clashed slightly as the sun lit up their figures against the green hedges and creeper-laced house-fronts; for, though the whole troop wore white garments, no two whites were among them. Some approached pure blanching; some were all had a bluish pallor; some worn by the older characters (which had possibly lain by folded for many a year) inclined to a cadaverous tint, and to a Georgian style.

In addition to the distinction of a white frock, every woman and girl carried in her right hand a peeled willow wand, and in her left a bunch of white flowers. The peeling of the former, and the selection of the latter, had been an operation of personal care.

There were a few middle-aged and even elderly women in the train, their silver-wiry hair and wrinkled faces, scourged by time and trouble, having almost a grotesque, certainly a pathetic, appearance in such a jaunty situation. In a true view, perhaps, there was more to be gathered and told of each anxious and experienced one, to whom the years were drawing nigh when she should say, "I have no pleasure in them", than of her juvenile comrades. But let the elder be passed over here for those under whose bodices the life throbbed quick and warm.

The young girls formed, indeed, the majority of the band, and their heads of luxuriant hair reflected in the sunshine every tone of gold, and black, and brown. Some had beautiful eyes, others a beautiful nose, others a beautiful mouth and figure; few, if any, had all. A difficulty of arranging their lips in this crude exposure to public scrutiny, an inability to balance their heads, and to dissociate self-consciousness from their features, was apparent in them, and showed that they were genuine country girls, un-accustomed to many eyes.

And as each and all of them were warmed without by the sun, so each had a private little sun for her soul to bask in; some dream, some affection, some hobby, at least some remote and distant hope which, though perhaps starving to nothing, still lived on, as hopes will. Thus they were all cheerful, and many of them merry.

They came round by The Pure Drop Inn, and were turning out of the high road to pass through a wicket-gate into the meadows, when one of the women said—

"The Lord-a-Lord! Why, Tess Durbeyfield, if there isn't thy father riding hwwome in a carriage!"

A young member of the band turned her head at the exclamation. She was a fine and handsome girl—not handsomer than some others, possibly—but her mobile peony mouth and large innocent eyes added eloquence to colour and shape. She wore a red ribbon in her hair, and was the only one of the white company who could boast of such a pronounced adornment. As she looked round Durbeyfield was seen moving along the road in a chaise belonging to The Pure Drop, driven by a frizzle-headed brawny damsel with her gown-sleeves rolled above her elbows. This was the cheerful servant of that establishment, who, in her part of factotum, turned groom and ostler at times. Durbeyfield, leaning back, and with his eyes closed luxuriously, was waving his hand above his head, and singing in a slow recitative—"I've-got-a-gr't-family-vault-at-Kingsbere—and knighted-forefathers-in-lead-coffins-there!"

The clubbists tittered, except the girl called Tess—in whom a slow heat seemed to rise at the sense that her father was making himself foolish in their eyes. "He's tired, that's all," she said hastily, "and he has got a lift home, because our own horse has to rest today."

"Bless thy simplicity, Tess," said her companions. "He's got his market-nitch. Haw-haw!"

"Look here; I won't walk another inch with you, if you say any jokes about him!" Tess cried, and the colour upon her cheeks spread over her face and neck. In a moment her eyes grew moist, and her glance drooped to the ground. Perceiving that they had really pained her they said no more, and order again prevailed. Tess's pride would not allow her to turn her head again, to learn what her father's meaning was, if he had any; and thus she moved on with the whole body to the enclosure where there was to be dancing on the green. By the time the spot was reached she had recovered her equanimity, and tapped her neighbour with her wand and talked as usual.

Tess Durbeyfield at this time of her life was a mere vessel of emotion untinged by experience. The dialect was on her tongue to some extent, despite the village school; the characteristic intonation of that dialect for this district being the voicing approximately rendered by the syllable UR, probably as rich an utterance as any to be found in human speech. The pouted-up deep red mouth to which this syllable was native had hardly as yet settled into its definite shape, and her lower lip had a way of thrusting the middle of her top one upward, when they closed

together after a word.

Phases of her childhood lurked in her aspect still. As she walked along today, for all her bouncing handsome womanliness, you could sometimes see her twelfth year in her cheeks, or her ninth sparkling from her eyes; and even her fifth would flit over the curves of her mouth now and then.

Yet few knew, and still fewer considered this. A small minority, mainly strangers, would look long at her in casually passing by, and grow momentarily fascinated by her freshness, and wonder if they would ever see her again; but to almost everybody she was a fine and picturesque country girl, and no more.

Nothing was seen or heard further of Durbeyfield in his triumphal chariot under the conduct of the ostleress, and the club having entered the allotted space, dancing began. As there were no men in the company the girls danced at first with each other, but when the hour for the close of labour drew on, the masculine inhabitants of the village, together with other idlers and pedestrians, gathered round the spot, and appeared inclined to negotiate for a partner.

Among these on-lookers were three Young men of a superior class, carrying small knapsacks strapped to their shoulders, and stout sticks in their hands. Their general likeness to each other, and their consecutive ages, would almost have suggested that they might be, what in fact they were, brothers. The eldest wore the white tie, high waistcoat, and thin-brimmed hat of the regulation curate; the second was the normal undergraduate; the appearance of the third and youngest would hardly have been sufficient to characterize him; there was an uncribbed, uncabined aspect in his eyes and attire, implying that he had hardly as yet found the entrance to his professional groove. That he was a desultory tentative student of something and everything might only have been predicted of him.

These three brethren told casual acquaintance that they were spending their Whitsun holidays in a walking tour through the Vale of Blackmoor, their course being south-westerly from the town of Shaston on the north-east.

They leant over the gate by the highway, and inquired as to the meaning of the dance and the white-frocked maids. The two elder of the brothers were plainly not intending to linger more than a moment, but the spectacle of a bevy of girls dancing without male partners seemed to amuse the third, and make him in no

hurry to move on. He unstrapped his knapsack, put it, with his stick, on the hedge-bank, and opened the gate.

"What are you going to do, Angel?" asked the eldest.

"I am inclined to go and have a fling with them. Why not all of us—just for a minute or two—it will not detain us long?"

"No—no; nonsense!" said the first. "Dancing in public with a troop of country hoydens—suppose we should be seen! Come along, or it will be dark before we get to Stourcastle, and there's no place we can sleep at nearer than that; besides, we must get through another chapter of *A Counterblast to Agnosticism* before we turn in, now I have taken the trouble to bring the book."

"All right—I'll overtake you and Cuthbert in five minutes; don't stop; I give my word that I will, Felix."

The two elder reluctantly left him and walked on taking their brother's knapsack to relieve him in following, and the youngest entered the field.

"This is a thousand pities," he said gallantly, to two or three of the girls nearest him, as soon as there was a pause in the dance.

"Where are your partners, my dears?"

"They've not left off work yet," answered one of the boldest. "They'll be here by and by. Till then, will you be one, sir?"

"Certainly. But what's one among so many!"

"Better than none. 'Tis melancholy work facing and footing it to one of your own sort, and no clissing and colling at all. Now, pick and choose."

"Ssh—don't be so for'ard!" said a shyer girl.

The young man, thus invited, glanced them over, and attempted some discrimination; but, as the group were all so new to him, he could not very well exercise it. He took almost the first that came to hand, which was not the speaker, as she had expected; nor did it happen to be Tess Durbeyfield. Pedigree, ancestral skeletons, monumental record, the d'Urberville lineaments, did not help Tess in her life's battle as yet, even to the extent of attracting to her a dancing-partner over the heads of the commonest peasantry. So much for Norman blood unaided by Victorian lucre.

The name of the eclipsing girl, whatever it was, has not been handed down; but she was envied by all as the first who enjoyed the luxury of a masculine partner that evening. Yet such was the force of example that the village young men, who had not hastened to enter the gate while no intruder was in the way, now dropped