

【 名著双语读物·中文导读+英文原版 】



The Common Reader (Second Series)

普通读者II ——三百年后的多恩

[英] 弗吉尼亚·伍尔芙 著
沙含玥 等 编译

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内 容 简 介

《普通读者 II》是英国著名作家弗吉尼亚·伍尔夫最重要的散文作品集之一。作者以普通读者的身份,对欧洲文艺复兴运动,特别是启蒙运动以来一些重要的作品进行了赏读与评论,其中还介绍了这些作品作者的生平及奇闻轶事,如多恩、丹尼尔·笛福、托马斯·哈代、乔治·吉辛、德·昆西和乔治·梅瑞狄斯等。该散文集在 20 世纪英国文学史上占有很重要的地位,并对英国文学产生了深远的影响。作品中充满智慧的文字、深邃的思想,赢得了全世界读者的共鸣。该书自出版以来,至今被译成世界上几十种语言。无论作为语言学习的课本,还是作为经典的文学读本,全文引进该书对当代中国的读者,特别是青少年将产生积极的影响。为了使读者能够了解英文故事概况,进而提高阅读速度和阅读水平,在每章的开始部分增加了中文导读。

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弗吉尼亚·伍尔芙（Virginia Woolf, 1882—1941），英国著名作家，意识流小说的代表人物之一，女权主义者，被誉为 20 世纪世界上最伟大的作家之一。

1882 年 1 月 25 日，伍尔芙出生在英国伦敦一个贵族家庭。父亲莱斯利·斯蒂芬爵士是著名的文学评论家、学者和传记家。伍尔芙从未上过学，没有接受过正规的学校教育，而是在父亲的指导下在家接受教育。她的父亲有大量的藏书，伍尔芙青少年时期是在和柏拉图、福克勒斯、普鲁塔克以及斯宾诺莎等古人神交，以经典世界名著为伴中度过的。父亲交往的多是当时英国文学界、学术界的名流，如小说家哈代、麦瑞迪斯、亨利、詹姆斯，美术史家与评论家鲁斯金等，他们经常是家里的常客。伍尔芙在这种浓郁的文学和艺术氛围中长大，加上父亲的精心培养及艺术熏陶，深刻地影响了她的精神世界，造就了她高雅的审美趣味，为她日后的创作打下了坚实的基础。

1905 年，伍尔芙为《泰晤士报文学增刊》撰稿，并开始职业写作生涯。1915 年，她的第一部小说《远航》出版，深受读者喜爱，并从此蜚声英文文坛。她一生共创作十余部长篇小说，大量的散文、游记、短篇小说等作品，但相比较而言，她的散文作品影响更大，她有“传统散文大师、新散文首创者”之称，并被誉为“英国散文大家中的最后一人”。伍尔芙被誉为 20 世纪现代主义文学潮流的先锋，不过她本人并不喜欢某些现代主义作者，如乔伊斯。她对英语语言革新良多，在小说中尝试意识流的写作方法，试图去描绘在人们心底的潜意识，英国著名作家爱德华·摩根·福斯特称她将英语“朝着光明的方向推进了一小步”。伍尔芙自幼精神比较脆弱，患有严重的抑郁症。进入 20 世纪 30 年代之后，病情日益恶化，但她



仍奋力写作，经常在一本书写完之前就开始酝酿新作，但每写成一部作品总是感到不满意，情绪时常处于困惑和消沉的状态。1941年3月28日，伍尔芙在病魔的折磨中投河自尽。

伍尔芙的小说、散文及随笔等在世界文坛影响巨大，她也是中国读者最喜爱的外国作家之一。基于这个原因，我们决定编译伍尔芙的系列作品，其中包括小说《达洛卫夫人》《狗狗的传记》《海浪》《魅力灯塔》，散文或随笔《普通读者 I》（《赞助人 与 番红花》）、《普通读者 II》（《三百年后的多恩》）《自己的一间屋子》《飞蛾之死》《三个旧金币》和《伦敦风景》，采用中文导读英文版的形式出版。在中文导读中，我们尽力使其贴近原作的精髓，也尽可能保留原作叙述主线。我们希望能够编出为当代中国读者所喜爱的经典读本。读者在阅读英文文本之前，可以先阅读中文导读内容，这样有助于了解故事背景，从而加快阅读速度。我们相信，该经典著作的引进对加强当代中国读者，特别是青少年读者的人文修养是非常有帮助的。

本书是名著双语读物·中文导读+英文原版系列丛书中的一种，编写本系列丛书的另一个主要目的就是为准备参加英语国家留学考试的学生提供学习素材。对于留学考试，无论是 SSAT、SAT 还是 TOEFL、GRE，要取得好的成绩，就必须了解西方的社会、历史、文化、生活等方面的背景知识，而阅读西方原版名著是了解这些知识最重要的手段之一。本套丛书可以使读者在欣赏世界原版名著的同时，了解西方的历史、文化、传统、价值观等，并提高英语阅读速度、阅读水平和写作能力，从而在 TOEFL、雅思、SSAT、SAT、GRE、GMAT 等考试中取得好的成绩，进而帮助读者成功申请到更好的国外学校。

本书中文导读内容由沙含玥编写。参加本书故事素材搜集整理及编译工作的还有纪飞、赵雪、刘乃亚、蔡红昌、王卉媛、陈起永、熊红华、熊建国、程来川、徐平国、龚桂平、付泽新、熊志勇、胡贝贝、李军、宋婷、张灵羚、张玉瑶、付建平、汪疆玮、乔暘等。限于我们的科学、人文素养和英语水平，书中难免会有不当之处，衷心希望读者朋友批评指正。



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伊丽莎白时代陌生的人

The Strange Elizabethans



尽管伊丽莎白时代^①的散文十分美妙和丰富，但却无法履行散文的职责，即无法让人简单地谈论日常事物。它们书写一些如生死、季节等壮丽的主题，当回归现实时就会显得笨拙而尴尬。那些文章不能有助于我们了解莎士比亚时期一个普通男人或女人的生活。

加布里埃尔·哈维^②也许能满足我们的要求。他用一些诸如记录琐事、保存书信、在书页空白处记录突发奇想的观点等方式，在某种程度上观察着现代人的心性。这些碎片让我们听到诗人们的漫谈，也会碰到伊丽莎白时代的卑微之人。

我们首先碰到的人是个挤奶姑娘，即加布里埃尔·哈维的妹妹梅西。1574年冬天，梅西被风吹掉帽子的美丽模样被萨利爵士看到，并疯狂爱上了她。梅西开始坚持立场，说自己只是个普通挤奶女工，而对方是一位高贵的绅士。最后她终于同意和爵士相见，但见面时爵士试图强暴她，幸好被邻居解救，梅西才跑掉了。后来，她哥哥加里布埃尔在骑马去剑桥的路上阴差阳错地收到爵士写给梅西的情书，他要求妹妹三思后行，也给爵士

① 伊丽莎白时代：英格兰女王、都铎王朝的最后一位君主伊丽莎白一世在位时期（1558年11月至1603年3月）。在她的统治期内，英格兰各方面趋向强盛，文学尤其是诗歌和话剧也进入了一个黄金时代。莎士比亚即生活在这一时期。

② 加布里埃尔·哈维（Gabriel Harvey）：1545—1630，文艺复兴时期欧洲文学批评家，一生主要写作有关于诗歌以及修辞学的著作，作品曾在欧洲风靡一时。

写了一封劝止的信。这段浪漫故事就这么结束了，它并不是什么不寻常的故事，但在伊丽莎白传统统治十分牢固的时候，梅西的书信仍能引起共鸣。这个挤奶姑娘在用一种自然和高贵的形式写作，不粗俗，也不狎昵。

加布里埃尔在剑桥大学十分努力地工作，但作用很小，同伴们都不太喜欢他，他甚至失去了学位。不过， he 可以和意气相投之人日复一日地讨论诗歌韵律，对英语文学的未来抱有期望，对诗歌有着无私的热忱。但我们不得不承认，他的作品啰嗦得无休无止，语句太过激动、冗长和陈腐，阅读它们超越了我们的底线。剑桥学者的身份也在他和家人之间筑起了一道鸿沟。他为自己感到骄傲，的确，他比其他人更能干、敏锐和博学，长得也很英俊，但他不自重，没有自控力，常常让自己在一些场合显得荒唐丢脸，因而开始走向下坡路。

哈维将自己的诗歌理论搞得太过狭窄，当他付诸实践时，仅能流出一些枯燥单薄、油腔滑调的诗句。还好哈维留下了一本札记，让我们看到了他的公众形象和私下形象，看到了一个在人群中遭受折磨的哈维和一个睿智地阅读和思考的哈维：一个是消极和愚蠢的，另一个则是积极和聪明的。他的生活充满了矛盾，但这两个哈维整体上实则是一个悲剧。哈维最后几年的生活极端贫困，满脑子想的都是权力和荣耀。但他真正热爱读书，活到了八十一二岁的高龄。

There are few greater delights than to go back three or four hundred years and become in fancy at least an Elizabethan. That such fancies are only fancies, that this “becoming an Elizabethan”, this reading sixteenth-century writing as currently and certainly as we read our own is an illusion, is no doubt true. Very likely the Elizabethans would find our pronunciation of their language unintelligible; our fancy picture of what it pleases us to call Elizabethan life would rouse their ribald merriment. Still, the instinct that drives us to them is so strong and the freshness and vigour that blow through their pages are so sweet that we willingly run the risk of being laughed at, of being ridiculous.

And if we ask why we go further astray in this particular region of English

literature than in any other, the answer is no doubt that Elizabethan prose, for all its beauty and bounty, was a very imperfect medium. It was almost incapable of fulfilling one of the offices of prose which is to make people talk, simply and naturally, about ordinary things. In an age of utilitarian prose like our own, we know exactly how people spend the hours between breakfast and bed, how they behave when they are neither one thing nor the other, neither angry nor loving, neither happy nor miserable. Poetry ignores these slighter shades; the social student can pick up hardly any facts about daily life from Shakespeare's plays; and if prose refuses to enlighten us, then one avenue of approach to the men and women of another age is blocked. Elizabethan prose, still scarcely separated off from the body of its poetry, could speak magnificently, of course, about the great themes — how life is short, and death certain; how spring is lovely, and winter horrid — perhaps, indeed, the lavish and towering periods that it raises above these simple platitudes are due to the fact that it has not cheapened itself upon trifles. But the price it pays for this soaring splendour is to be found in its awkwardness when it comes to earth — when Lady Sidney, for example, finding herself cold at nights, has to solicit the Lord Chamberlain for a better bedroom at Court. Then any housemaid of her own age could put her case more simply and with greater force. Thus, if we go to the Elizabethan prose-writers to solidify the splendid world of Elizabethan poetry as we should go now to our biographers, novelists, and journalists to solidify the world of Pope, of Tennyson, of Conrad, we are perpetually baffled and driven from our quest. What, we ask, was the life of an ordinary man or woman in the time of Shakespeare? Even the familiar letters of the time give us little help. Sir Henry Wotton is pompous and ornate and keeps us stiffly at arm's length. Their histories resound with drums and trumpets. Their broadsheets reverberate with meditations upon death and reflections upon the immortality of the soul. Our best chance of finding them off their guard and so becoming at ease with them is to seek one of those unambitious men who haunt the outskirts of famous gatherings, listening, observing, sometimes taking a note in a book. But they are difficult to find. Gabriel Harvey perhaps, the friend

of Spenser and of Sidney, might have fulfilled that function. Unfortunately the values of the time persuaded him that to write about rhetoric, to write about Thomas Smith, to write about Queen Elizabeth in Latin, was better worth doing than to record the table talk of Spenser and Sir Philip Sidney. But he possessed to some extent the modern instinct for preserving trifles, for keeping copies of letters, and for making notes of ideas that struck him in the margins of books. If we rummage among these fragments we shall, at any rate, leave the highroad and perhaps hear some roar of laughter from a tavern door, where poets are drinking; or meet humble people going about their milking and their love-making without a thought that this is the great Elizabethan age, or that Shakespeare is at this moment strolling down the Strand and might tell one, if one plucked him by the sleeve, to whom he wrote the sonnets, and what he meant by Hamlet.

The first person whom we meet is indeed a milkmaid — Gabriel Harvey's sister Mercy. In the winter of 1574 she was milking in the fields near Saffron Walden accompanied by an old woman, when a man approached her and offered her cakes and malmsey wine. When they had eaten and drunk in a wood and the old woman had wandered off to pick up sticks, the man proceeded to explain his business. He came from Lord Surrey, a youth of about Mercy's own age — seventeen or eighteen that is — and a married man. He had been bowling one day and had seen the milkmaid; her hat had blown off and "she had somewhat changed her colour". In short, Lord Surrey had fallen passionately in love with her; and sent her by the same man gloves, a silk girdle, and an enamel posy ring which he had torn from his own hat though his Aunt, Lady W——, had given it him for a very different purpose. Mercy at first stood her ground. She was a poor milkmaid, and he was a noble gentleman. But at last she agreed to meet him at her house in the village. Thus, one very misty, foggy night just before Christmas, Lord Surrey and his servant came to Saffron Walden. They peered in at the malthouse, but saw only her mother and sisters; they peeped in at the parlour, but only her brothers were there. Mercy herself was not to be seen; and "well mired and wearied for their labour", there was

nothing for it but to ride back home again. Finally, after further parleys, Mercy agreed to meet Lord Surrey in a neighbour's house alone at midnight. She found him in the little parlour "in his doublet and hose, his points untrust, and his shirt lying round about him". He tried to force her on to the bed; but she cried out, and the good wife, as had been agreed between them, rapped on the door and said she was sent for. Thwarted, enraged, Lord Surrey cursed and swore, "God confound me, God confound me", and by way of lure emptied his pockets of all the money in them — thirteen shillings in shillings and testers it came to — and made her finger it. Still, however, Mercy made off, untouched, on condition that she would come again on Christmas eve. But when Christmas eve dawned she was up betimes and had put seven miles between her and Saffron Walden by six in the morning, though it snowed and rained so that the floods were out, and P., the servant, coming later to the place of assignation, had to pick his way through the water in pattens. So Christmas passed. And a week later, in the very nick of time to save her honour, the whole story very strangely was discovered and brought to an end. On New Year's Eve her brother Gabriel, the young fellow of Pembroke Hall, was riding back to Cambridge when he came up with a simple countryman whom he had met at his father's house. They rode on together, and after some country gossip, the man said that he had a letter for Gabriel in his pocket. Indeed, it was addressed "To my loving brother Mr. G. H.", but when Gabriel opened it there on the road, he found that the address was a lie. It was not from his sister Mercy, but to his sister Mercy. "Mine Own Sweet Mercy", it began; and it was signed "Thine more than ever his own Phil". Gabriel could hardly control himself — "could scarcely dissemble my sudden fancies and comprimitt my inward passions" — as he read. For it was not merely a love-letter; it was more; it talked about possessing Mercy according to promise. There was also a fair English noble wrapped up in the paper. So Gabriel, doing his best to control himself before the countryman, gave him back the letter and the coin and told him to deliver them both to his sister at Saffron Walden with this message: "To look ere she leap. She may pick out the English of it herself." He rode on to Cambridge; he

wrote a long letter to the young lord, informing him with ambiguous courtesy that the game was up. The sister of Gabriel Harvey was not to be the mistress of a married nobleman. Rather she was to be a maid, “diligent, and trusty and tractable”, in the house of Lady Smith at Audley End. Thus Mercy’s romance breaks off; the clouds descend again; and we no longer see the milkmaid, the old woman, the treacherous serving man who came with malmsey and cakes and rings and ribbons to tempt a poor girl’s honour while she milked her cows.

This is probably no uncommon story; there must have been many milkmaids whose hats blew off as they milked their cows, and many lords whose hearts leapt at the sight so that they plucked the jewels from their hats and sent their servants to make treaty for them. But it is rare for the girl’s own letters to be preserved or to read her own account of the story as she was made to deliver it at her brother’s inquisition. Yet when we try to use her words to light up the Elizabethan field, the Elizabethan house and living-room, we are met by the usual perplexities. It is easy enough, in spite of the rain and the fog and the floods, to make a fancy piece out of the milkmaid and the meadows and the old woman wandering off to pick up sticks. Elizabethan songwriters have taught us too well the habit of that particular trick. But if we resist the impulse to make museum pieces out of our reading, Mercy herself gives us little help. She was a milkmaid, scribbling love-letters by the light of a farthing dip in an attic. Nevertheless, the sway of the Elizabethan convention was so strong, the accent of their speech was so masterful, that she bears herself with a grace and expresses herself with a resonance that would have done credit to a woman of birth and literary training. When Lord Surrey pressed her to yield she replied:

The thing you wot of, Milord, were a great trespass towards God, a great offence to the world, a great grief to my friends, a great shame to myself, and, as I think, a great dishonour to your lordship. I have heard my father say, Virginity is ye fairest flower in a maid’s garden, and chastity ye richest dowry a poor wench can have. . . . Chastity, they say, is like unto time, which, being once lost, can no more be recovered.

Words chime and ring in her ears, as if she positively enjoyed the act of

writing. When she wishes him to know that she is only a poor country girl and no fine lady like his wife, she exclaims, “Good Lord, that you should seek after so bare and country stuff abroad, that have so costly and courtly wares at home!” She even breaks into a jog-trot of jingling rhyme, far less sonorous than her prose, but proof that to write was an art, not merely a means of conveying facts. And if she wants to be direct and forcible, the proverbs she has heard in her father’s house come to her pen, the biblical imagery runs in her ears: “And then were I, poor wench, cast up for hawk’s meat, to mine utter undoing, and my friends’ exceeding grief”. In short, Mercy the milkmaid writes a natural and noble style, which is incapable of vulgarity, and equally incapable of intimacy. Nothing, one feels, would have been easier for Mercy than to read her lover a fine discourse upon the vanity of grandeur, the loveliness of chastity, the vicissitudes of fortune. But of emotion as between one particular Mercy and one particular Philip, there is no trace. And when it comes to dealing exactly in a few words with some mean object — when, for example, the wife of Sir Henry Sidney, the daughter of the Duke of Northumberland, has to state her claim to a better room to sleep in, she writes for all the world like an illiterate servant girl who can neither form her letters nor spell her words nor make one sentence follow smoothly after another. She haggles, she niggles, she wears our patience down with her repetitions and her prolixities. Hence it comes about that we know very little about Mercy Harvey, the milkmaid, who wrote so well, or Mary Sidney, daughter to the Duke of Northumberland, who wrote so badly. The background of Elizabethan life eludes us.

But let us follow Gabriel Harvey to Cambridge, in case we can there pick up something humble and colloquial that will make these strange Elizabethans more familiar to us. Gabriel, having discharged his duty as a brother, seems to have given himself up to the life of an intellectual young man with his way to make in the world. He worked so hard and he played so little that he made himself unpopular with his fellows. For it was obviously difficult to combine an intense interest in the future of English poetry and the capacity of the English language with card-playing, bear-baiting, and such diversions. Nor

could he apparently accept everything that Aristotle said as gospel truth. But with congenial spirits he argued, it is clear, hour by hour, night after night, about poetry, and metre, and the raising of the despised English speech and the meagre English literature to a station among the great tongues and literatures of the world. We are sometimes made to think, as we listen, of such arguments as might now be going forward in the new Universities of America. The young English poets speak with a bold yet uneasy arrogance —“England, since it was England, never bred more honourable minds, more adventurous hearts, more valorous hands, or more excellent wits, than of late”. Yet, to be English is accounted a kind of crime —“nothing is reputed so contemptible and so basely and vilely accounted of as whatsoever is taken for English”. And if, in their hopes for the future and their sensitiveness to the opinion of older civilisations, the Elizabethans show much the same susceptibility that sometimes puzzle us among the younger countries today, the sense that broods over them of what is about to happen, of an undiscovered land on which they are about to set foot, is much like the excitement that science stirs in the minds of imaginative English writers of our own time. Yet however stimulating it is to think that we hear the stir and strife of tongues in Cambridge rooms about the year 1570, it has to be admitted that to read Harvey’s pages methodically is almost beyond the limits of human patience. The words seem to run red-hot, molten, hither and thither, until we cry out in anguish for the boon of some meaning to set its stamp on them. He takes the same idea and repeats it over and over again:

In the sovereign workmanship of Nature herself, what garden of flowers without weeds? what orchard of trees without worms? what field of corn without cockle? what pond of fishes without frogs? what sky of light without darkness? what mirror of knowledge without ignorance? what man of earth without frailty? what commodity of the world without discommodity?

It is interminable. As we go round and round like a horse in a mill, we perceive that we are thus clogged with sound because we are reading what we should be hearing. The amplifications and the repetitions, the emphasis like that of a fist pounding the edge of a pulpit, are for the benefit of the slow and

sensual ear which loves to dally over sense and luxuriate in sound — the ear which brings in, along with the spoken word, the look of the speaker and his gestures, which gives a dramatic value to what he says and adds to the crest of an extravagance some modulation which makes the word wing its way to the precise spot aimed at in the hearer's heart. Hence, when we lay Harvey's diatribes against Nash or his letters to Spenser upon poetry under the light of the eye alone, we can hardly make headway and lose our sense of any definite direction. We grasp any simple fact that floats to the surface as a drowning man grasps a plank — that the carrier was called Mrs. Kerke, that Perne kept a cub for his pleasure in his rooms at Peterhouse; that "Your last letter . . . was delivered me at mine hostesses by the fireside, being fast hedged in round about on every side with a company of honest, good fellows, and at that time reasonable, honest quaffers"; that Greene died begging Mistress Isam "for a penny pot of Malmsey", had borrowed her husband's shirt when his own was awashing, and was buried yesterday in the new churchyard near Bedlam at a cost of six shillings and fourpence. Light seems to dawn upon the darkness. But no; just as we think to lay hands on Shakespeare's coat-tails, to hear the very words rapped out as Spenser spoke them, up rise the fumes of Harvey's eloquence and we are floated off again into disputation and eloquence, windy, wordy, voluminous, and obsolete. How, we ask, as we slither over the pages, can we ever hope to come to grips with these Elizabethans? And then, turning, skipping and glancing, something fitfully and doubtfully emerges from the violent pages, the voluminous arguments — the figure of a man, the outlines of a face, somebody who is not "an Elizabethan" but an interesting, complex, and individual human being.

We know him, to begin with, from his dealings with his sister. We see him riding to Cambridge, a fellow of his college, when she was milking with poor old women in the fields. We observe with amusement his sense of the conduct that befits the sister of Gabriel Harvey, the Cambridge scholar. Education had put a great gulf between him and his family. He rode to Cambridge from a house in a village street where his father made ropes and his mother worked in

the malthouse. Yet though his lowly birth and the consciousness that he had his way to make in the world made him severe with his sister, fawning to the great, uneasy and self-centred and ostentatious, it never made him ashamed of his family. The father who could send three sons to Cambridge and was so little ashamed of his craft that he had himself carved making ropes at his work and the carving let in above his fireplace, was no ordinary man. The brothers who followed Gabriel to Cambridge and were his best allies there, were brothers to be proud of. He could be proud of Mercy even, whose beauty could make a great nobleman pluck the jewel from his hat. He was undoubtedly proud of himself. It was the pride of a self-made man who must read when other people are playing cards, who owns no undue allegiance to authority and will contradict Aristotle himself, that made him unpopular at Cambridge and almost cost him his degree. But it was an unfortunate chance that led him thus early in life to defend his rights and insist upon his merits. Moreover, since it was true — since he was abler, quicker, and more learned than other people, handsome in person too, as even his enemies could not deny (“a smudge piece of a handsome fellow it hath been in his days” Nash admitted) he had reason to think that he deserved success and was denied it only by the jealousies and conspiracies of his colleagues. For a time, by dint of much caballing and much dwelling upon his own deserts, he triumphed over his enemies in the matter of the degree. He delivered lectures. He was asked to dispute before the court when Queen Elizabeth came to Audley End. He even drew her favourable attention. “He look ut something like an Italian”, she said when he was brought to her notice. But the seeds of his downfall were visible even in his moment of triumph. He had no self-respect, no self-control. He made himself ridiculous and his friends uneasy. When we read how he dressed himself up and “came ruffling it out huffty tuffty in his suit of velvet” how uneasy he was, at one moment cringing, at another “making no bones to take the wall of Sir Phillip Sidney”, now flirting with the ladies, now “putting bawdy riddles to them”, how when the Queen praised him he was beside himself with joy and talked the English of Saffron Walden with an Italian accent, we can imagine how his