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THE 'CAINE' MUTINY

HERMAN WOUK

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外语教学与研究出版社

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HERMAN WOUK 原著
G. C. Thornley MA PhD 改写
刘伟平 金立群 注释

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The 'Caine' Mutiny

by

Herman Wouk

Simplified and abridged by

G.C. Thornley MA PhD



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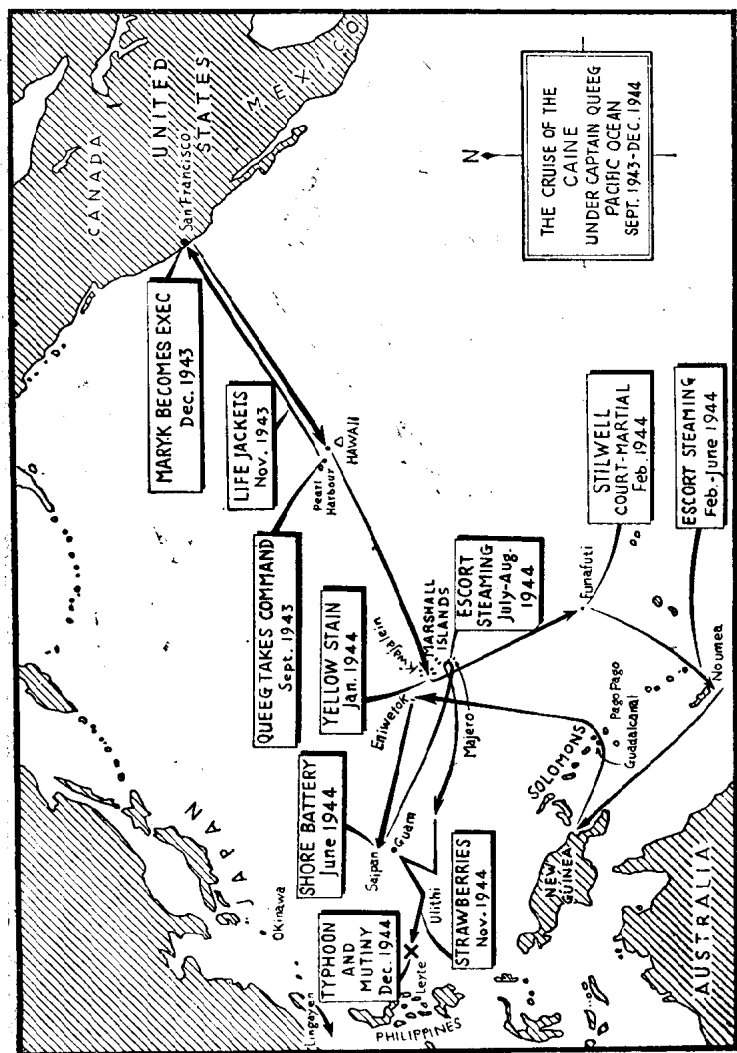
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内 容 提 要

《“该隐号”兵变记》是美国作家赫尔曼·沃克 (Herman Wouk, 1915—)一九五一年发表的一部虚构的小说,描写第二次世界大战期间美国对日作战时,在一艘美国兵舰上发生的事件。作品对人物的刻画很有特色,长期艰苦的海上生活对船上的官兵心理产生不同的影响。作者对他们充满了同情。书中穿插了主人公威利·基思的恋爱故事。情节曲折、生动紧张,富有吸引力。这部小说曾获得普利彻奖 (Pulitzer Prize),是五十年代的畅销书之一,也是赫尔曼·沃克的代表作。

这个简写本基本保持了原有的故事情节和语言风格,可以作为英语专业二、三年级学生或掌握了一定量的词汇和句型的其他英语学习者的阅读材料。



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Part 1

Willie Keith

Into the Navy

HE was of medium height and good-looking, with curly red hair and an innocent, gay face. He had left Princeton University¹ in 1941 with high marks in all subjects except the sciences. He had done well in literature, but even better in playing the piano and inventing little songs for parties.

He kissed his mother good-bye near the corner of Broadway² and 116th Street in New York City on a cold sunny morning in December 1942. She had driven her son³ to the Mishipmen School⁴ from their home in Manhasset⁵ in spite of Willie's protests. Willie had wanted to take the train, and did not like being led to the gates of the Navy by his mother. But Mrs. Keith had prevailed⁶ as usual: she was a large, wise, firm woman, as tall as her son.

He kissed her for a second time, hoping that no military men were observing the scene, and then walked down a few steps to the entrance of Furnald Hall. A grey fat Navy chief opened the door invitingly. Willis Seward Keith stepped through and passed into a new and exceedingly strange

world.

When Willie disappeared, Mrs. Keith remembered an important transaction⁷ that she had neglected. She ran to the entrance of Furnald Hall, but the chief stopped her.

'Sorry, madam. No admittance.'⁸

'But I must speak to my son. He just went in. He forgot something.'

"They're doing exercises in there, madam. There are men walking around with nothing on."⁹

Mrs. Keith was not used to being argued with.¹⁰ Her tone sharpened. 'Don't be stupid. There he is, just inside the door.' She could see her son plainly with several other young men around an officer who was talking to them. 'Willie! Willie!' she cried, but her son did not hear her call from the other world.

'Madam,' said the chief, not unkindly, 'he's in the Navy now.'

Mrs. Keith suddenly blushed. 'I'm sorry.'

'Okay, okay. You'll see him again soon — maybe Saturday.'

The mother opened her purse. 'You see, he forgot his money. He hasn't a cent. Would you be kind enough to give these to him?'

'Madam, he won't need money. He'll be getting his pay soon.'

'But suppose he wants some before that? Please take the money.'

The Chief accepted the bills. His eyebrows went up. 'Madam — this is a hundred dollars !' He stared at her.

'Well,' she said defiantly, 'it isn't every day he goes to fight a war.'

'I'll take care of it,¹¹ madam.'

'Thank you,' said Mrs. Keith, and then, vaguely, 'I'm sorry.'

'Okay.'

Meanwhile¹² Willie Keith advanced to war. He had escaped from the United States Army¹³ and was glad. He was inoculated against several tropical diseases,¹⁴ his clothes were carried off, and his lungs, heart, eyes, ears, all the apparatus he had been using since birth, were examined. Willie could see that one examiner looked very dissatisfied.

'Bend over and touch your toes.'

Willie tried, but years of over-eating barred the way.¹⁵ His fingers hung eight inches from his toes.

'*Without* bending the knees, please.'

Willie straightened, took a deep breath, and tried to become double. His back cracked. There were still four inches to go.

'You wait.' The examiner walked away and returned with a lieutenant¹⁶ with a black moustache. 'Look at that, sir.'

'That' was Willie.

'Can he touch ?'

'Hardly gets past his knees, sir. And he has a hollow back.'

'Curvature of the spine.'¹⁷ No doubt of it.'

'Well, do we reject him, sir?'

The doctor took Willie's wrist, and looked surprised.

'Good lord,¹⁸ boy — are you sick?'

Willie could feel his blood racing past the doctor's fingers. Its speed was increased by the inoculations, and especially by the possibility of his having to go into the army.

'No, just worried.'¹⁹

'I don't blame you. How did you get past the doctor at the receiving station?'

'Sir, I may be a bit fat, but I play tennis and climb mountains.'

'There are no mountains at sea,' said the examiner.

'Shut up, Warner,' said the doctor. 'Send him to Captain²⁰ Grimm for re-examination.'

'Aye aye,²¹ sir.'

The doctor left, and Willie and the examiner exchanged a look of hate. Then Willie moved away. The Navy dressed him in blue jumper²² and trousers, black shoes, black socks, and a sailor hat with a blue stripe. Then it filled his arms with books of all shapes, sizes and colours. He was given a pile of papers which brought his total heap level with his eyebrows.

He took the elevator²³ to the top floor, walked down the passage, and found a door marked:

Room 1013: Keefer

Keith

Keggs

He went in and dropped the books on the bare springs of a bed.

'My name's Keggs,' said a face behind him.

Willie shook the hand stretched out.

'I'm Keith.'

'Well,' said Keggs sadly, 'looks like we're room-mates. I hope Keefer doesn't turn out to be too bad.'²⁴ He picked up a book and opened it with an unhappy sigh.

'How do you know what to study?' Willie was surprised at such eagerness.

'Brother, it makes no difference. It's all going to be too much for me. Might as well start anywhere.'

A heap of books entered the door, walking on strong legs. 'Make way,²⁵ gentlemen. Here Ah²⁶ come,' said a voice. The books fell, and the others saw a tall, fat sailor with a cheerful red face. 'Ah'm Keefer,' he said in a high, musical Southern tone.

'I'm Keith.'

'Keggs.'

The fat Southerner said, 'Ah had my farewell party last night. Excuse me.' He lay down and turned his face to the wall.

'You're not going to *sleep*!' Keggs said. 'Suppose they catch you?'

'My boy, Ah am an old military man. Don' worry about ol' Keefer.' Within a minute he was asleep.

'He'll get bilged,'²⁷ sure,' said Keggs, turning the pages.

'What do you mean, "bilged" ?'

'We get three weeks as apprentice seamen. Then the top two thirds of the class become midshipmen.'²⁸ The rest get bilged: straight to the Army.'

Willie's hand felt his back, to see how hollow it really was. He tried to touch his toes and at last did so. When he stood up, the room was spinning and he had to seize the desk to keep from falling over.

Mattresses, blankets, pillows and sheets shot through the open door, and the three men made their beds. The rest of the day went by in assemblies, marches, and lectures. A fair-haired, tall, baby-faced ensign²⁹ named Acres shouted instructions fiercely, and Willie was half dead with fatigue when at last they were marched off to dinner.

Back in their room, the three exchanged news. The gloomy Edwin Keggs was a high school³⁰ teacher from Akron, Ohio.³¹ Roland Keefer was the son of a West Virginian³² politician. Willie's announcement that he was a night-club pianist and a graduate of Princeton University brought a cold silence to the room.

When Willie climbed into bed that night, he experienced a curiously mixed feeling of adventure and sharp regret for lost freedom.

May Wynn

Willie had passed the first war year peacefully without running to the Navy to escape from the Army. There had been some talk of his returning to Princeton to take a master's degree³³ in literature, but he had found a job in a small New York hotel, playing the piano and singing his original songs.³⁴ He was paid little, but he did not care as long as fifty-dollar bills flowed from his mother.

Two months later the owner of a night-club on Fifty-Second Street, the Club Tahiti, saw his act and bought him away from the hotel with an extra ten dollars a week. The business was arranged one afternoon at the club. The date was December 7 th, 1941.

Willie walked proudly out into the street and stopped at a news stand,³⁵ his eye attracted by unusually big black headlines: JAPS BOMB PEARL HARBOUR.³⁶ He did not know where Pearl Harbour was. He realized that this meant the United States would enter the war, but this seemed in no way equal in importance to his new job at the Club Tahiti. He was still too young to join the forces.

The new rise in the entertainment world, announced to his family that evening, destroyed Mrs. Keith's hopes for his return to literature.³⁷ There was, of course, talk of Willie's enlisting.³⁸ 'What I really ought to do,' he said, 'is for-

get the piano and literature, and join the Navy.'

Mrs. Keith glanced at her husband, but the mild little doctor remained silent.

'Don't be absurd, Willie,' she said. 'I've been wrong about you. If you can play the piano so well, you ought to use your abilities.'

'Somebody's got to fight the war, Mom.'

'Don't try to be wiser than the Army, my boy. When they need you, they'll call you.'

Willie said, "What do you think, Dad?"

'Well, Willie, I think your mother would be very sorry to see you go.'

So it was that Willie Keith played at the Club Tahiti from December 1941 to April 1942, while the Japanese conquered the Philippines, and the *Prince of Wales* and the *Repulse* sank, and Singapore fell. But in the spring he fell in love, and he received a notice from the Army.

He had already been in love; but the explosion into his life of May Wynn was a wholly different matter. She arrived at the club one afternoon to show how she sang, and placed some music in front of Willie. It was no less than a love song from *The Marriage of Figaro*,³⁹ with words in Italian.

He began to play. The music of Mozart⁴⁰ was one of the few things in the world that affected him deeply. She sang as a bright girl would sing who had a love of music and a pleasant voice. She sang the Italian words correctly and

apparently knew what they meant.

The proprietor⁴¹ of the club listened and said, 'Fine. Just wait, will you? Willie, come inside a minute.'

In the office he said, 'What do you think?'

'Well, I like Mozart,' Willie said doubtfully.

'Maybe that Mozart thing would be a delightful novelty⁴² — good class, charm.'

They went back. 'Who's your agent, dear?' said the proprietor.

'Marty Rubin,' said May Wynn, a little breathlessly.

'Can you start Monday?'

'Can I?' gasped the girl.

'Okay. Show her round, Princeton.' The proprietor disappeared into his office. Willie Keith and May Wynn were alone.

'Where would you like to eat?' Willie asked.

'Eat! I'm going home for dinner, thank you. Aren't you going to show me round?'

'There's nothing to show. That's your dressing-room: it has no washbasin, no window. We do shows at ten, twelve and two. You're supposed to⁴³ come at eight-thirty. That's all.' He took her firmly by the elbow. 'Let's go.'

Luigi's was a bright, small restaurant full of little tables in rows of little rooms. When she took off her coat, he was astonished at her beautiful figure.⁴⁴

'May Wynn,' he said thoughtfully. 'I like the name.'

'It took me a long time to think of it. My real name's

Marie Minotti.'

Willie's feelings when he discovered that she had an Italian name were complicated. Now he knew why she liked opera and understood Italian words. She was a mere night-club singer, if⁴⁵ a very pretty one. He knew perfectly well that he would never marry her.

'What are you thinking?' she asked.

'The nicest possible things about you.'

'Your name, no doubt, is really Willis Seward Keith?'

'Oh, yes.'

'And you come from a fine old family?'

'Yes. Will you marry me?'

'No, your mother wouldn't like it.'

'Good,' said Willie. 'We understand each other.

Allow me to tell you, then, that I'm falling in love with you.'

'How old are you?' May said.

'Twenty-two. Why?'

'You seem a lot younger.'

'Are you engaged,⁴⁶ May, or do you have a sweetheart?'

May coughed. 'Let's talk about books,' she said.

'You're a Princeton man.'

They talked about books until he took her to the subway.⁴⁷

'Thank you for the dinner,' she said. 'See you Monday.'

She was swallowed up in the crowd, and Willie walked away with an absurd feeling of being newborn. He decided

that New York was beautiful and mysterious, like Baghdad.⁴⁸

May Wynn's job at the Club Tahiti lasted for three weeks. Her Mozart novelty was well received. Her agent, Marty Rubin, came several times each week to watch her, and after her performance he would spend an hour or more talking to her. He was a short man, perhaps thirty-five, with pale hair and very thick eyeglasses.⁴⁹ The rest of May's time between shows was taken by Willie. He spoke as the educated authority⁵⁰ and May listened half-respectfully and half-mockingly. During the daytime he took her to museums, where he was a good guide.

'Do you really learn all that stuff in four years at college?' she asked in admiration.

'Not quite. Mother's been taking me to museums since I was six.'

'Oh.' The girl was a little disappointed.

Willie obtained the telephone number of the Bronx store near her home, as she had no telephone. They continued seeing each other after her work at the club was finished. It was April. Their relationship advanced to include long walks in the new-green park, and dinners at expensive restaurants, and kisses in taxis. Willie wrote some bad poetry too, and May took it home, read it again and again, and shed warm tears over it. Nobody had ever written poetry to her before.