

中学生浅易英汉对照读物



Brainbox and Bull

智囊与公牛

外语教学与研究出版社

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雁 译注



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Brainbox and Bull

Abridged and edited by Lewis Jones

Collins: London and Glasgow

智能与公牛

ZHINANG YU GONGNIU

(简写本)

梁雁译注

外语教学与研究出版社出版

(北京外国语学院23号信箱)

外文印刷厂排版
印刷

新华书店北京发行所发行

全国各地新华书店经售

开本787×1092 1/32 3.5印张61千字

1983年12月第1版 1983年12月北京第一次印刷

印数1—31,000册

书号: 9215·206 定价: 0.41元

内 容 提 要

本书通过两个机智勇敢的少年的经历，揭露了西方石油公司为争夺石油而残酷斗争的事实。故事曲折惊险，引人入胜，文字浅易，适于中学生及初学英语者阅读。

书中主要人物表

Patrick ['pætrik] (帕特里克)——别名 **Brainbox** (智囊), 因机智而得名。

Ned [ned] (内德)——别名 **Bull** (公牛), 因力大而得名。

Dr West [west] (韦斯特博士)——帕特里克之父, **Celtic** (凯尔特) 石油公司的科学家。

Mr Tate [teit] (塔特)——内德之父。

Jones [dʒəʊns] (琼斯)——**Petco** (皮特科) 石油公司的头目, 他的特点是常伸手指头, 曾化名 **Henderson** (亨德森)。

Hunter ['hʌntə] (亨特)——别号 **Briefcase** (皮包), 因常带皮包而得名。

O'Grady [ou'greidi] (奥格拉迪)——别号 **Raincoat** (雨衣), 因常穿雨衣而得名。

Potter ['pɒtə] (波特)——凯尔特公司职员。

Malene ['mæln] (玛琳)——琼斯一伙, 曾化装为空中小姐。

Major Salim Hasan ['meɪdʒə 'sælɪm 'hæsən] (萨里姆·汉森少校)——琼斯一伙。

Ali kazoo ['æli 'kæzu:] (阿里·卡佐)——**Potter** (波特) 雇用的阿拉伯人。

The Celtic Sea lay below them like a blanket.

"Great!" said Patrick.

His eyes searched from behind grandmother-glasses,¹ as he looked down through the window of the helicopter. Among friends at school he was not Patrick West. He was Brainbox.

"Hey!" Ned, his neighbour, shouted above the helicopter noise. "There it is!"

The helicopter started to drop through the sky. The oil-rig Emerald Two rested on strong legs that stood on the sea floor.² A silver insect — a second helicopter — rose from the rig into the sky and away, towards the coast of Southern Ireland.

Emerald Two was the only oil-rig of Celtic Oil. And Patrick's father worked for Celtic Oil.

"What are they going to feed us?" Ned shouted. "I'm hungry!"

"You're always hungry!"

In front of the boys sat two workmen who were returning to the rig.³ In front of the workmen sat a man with no hair. He wore a raincoat. Beside him sat a man with a large briefcase. In front of the Raincoat Man and Briefcase Man sat the pilot.

The helicopter turned, dropped lower. Through his window Ned saw only sea and sky. Ned was over a hundred and eighty centimetres tall, growing, and already the school's best sportsman ever.⁴ His father was an Australian who worked in Dublin. In the classroom and on the football field he was not Ned Tate. He was Bull.

Patrick West's father was a scientist at Celtic Oil. Dr West studied the rocks (and hopefully the oil) that Celtic Oil discovered under the sea bed. He often made jet flights between Ireland and London and the Middle East.

The two boys planned to visit the oil-rig, then fly to the Middle East for a holiday with Dr West. It would be a free flight — the oil company would pay.

Patrick pointed down at an iron roof. "My Dad's probably in there," he shouted.

Oil. Dirty and smelly and black, and as valuable as gold. More valuable, because of its many uses. It powered planes and cars, brought heat and light, turned the wheels of the machine-age, made millionaires, and went into the making of paint and clothes and carpets and medicines. Men argued and fought for it, and sometimes died for it.

Celtic was the smallest of the companies that were searching for oil off the south of Ireland. But if Celtic found oil, it would be pulled into the world's power game. The rich Petco Oil company was again offering millions of pounds for Celtic's little piece of the sea, and again Celtic was saying no.

"There's a fire," shouted Patrick.

"Where?"

Even as Ned spoke, the fire jumped across Emerald Two and doubled in size. Then doubled again. Like a match dropped into a lake of petrol.

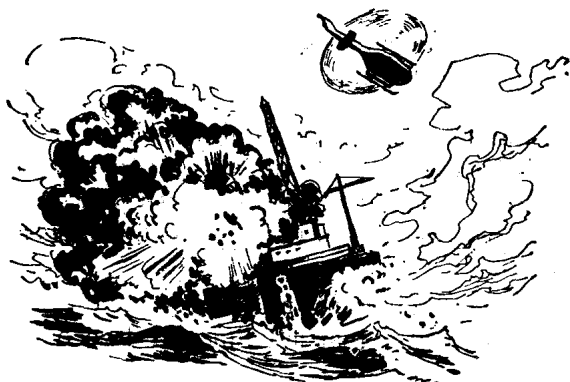
The helicopter was kicked by a great bang. Below, the oil-rig fell slowly over to the left. Brainbox's mouth fell wide open as his fingers ran wildly across the window.

A man fell off a high building, missed the edge of the rig, and disappeared into the sea. The engine-house moved gently off the rig, like a plate off a table. One of the legs of the rig disappeared under water. There was a second great bang, then a third.

"Emerald Two, do you read me?" the helicopter pilot repeated again and again into his radio telephone. "Hello, Emerald Two, are you reading me?"

On the water, iron roofs and bent wheels rose and fell. The floor of the rig — as big as a football field — was not on legs at all now. It went into the sea and came up, dropped under water and rose again.

Ned didn't know what to say to Patrick. He didn't even know if Dr West was a swimmer or not.



At last the pilot realised it was useless trying to speak to Emerald Two. "Hello Celtic. Hello Celtic. Emerald Two's

gone down. I'm over her now. There's nothing there. I've about thirty minutes of petrol."

The helicopter pushed upwards into the sky and its nose turned northwards for the Irish coast.

Patrick understood — helicopters usually got their petrol on the oil rig for the return journey. Without more petrol, they had just enough for the homeward journey. They could not try to save people from the sea. Still, ships and search aircraft would soon be on the way.

But there was something that Patrick did not know. No one could live for more than a few minutes in this cold Celtic Sea.

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The engine was beginning to fail: the petrol was almost finished. If the engine stopped, the helicopter would drop like a stone into the sea.

Less than four hundred metres away on the Irish coast were the Celtic office buildings.⁵ Another thousand metres along the coast stood the fat silver containers at Whitegate. They were waiting to take Celtic oil, if Celtic ever found oil.

Outside the Celtic office buildings the people stood with upturned faces. Some of them were Irish police, dressed in blue. Cars were driving fast towards the buildings and away from them.

A helicopter stood empty and forgotten⁶ on the landing-place — it was the one that left Emerald Two only minutes before the fire.

But below Brainbox and Bull's helicopter there was only the sea. The engine stopped and started again. There was little that the pilot could do. Behind him, his passengers

held on to their seats. The engine was suddenly silent, then came to life again.

At once the helicopter dropped, and Brainbox and Bull thought their heads might go through the roof.⁷ The pilot was using the last drop of power to drive the helicopter down. It was their only chance to land safely, and he knew it.

The boys and the other passengers lifted in their seats. Sky shot past the windows. Then the engine stopped for the last time. Almost at once there was a loud bang, and everyone shook in their seats. The helicopter was down on dry land.

People were running from the Celtic offices. The helicopter was resting on grass, in front of the landing-place. Only metres behind it there was sand and stones and the ~~rough~~ sea.

The pilot took off his radio headset and turned round. "Everyone OK?"⁸ he called out.

Among the people from the offices was a photographer with a camera, and a doctor.

"Look!" Ned said, and he pointed.

But Patrick was already looking. The Celtic Oil scientist was pushing through the crowd. He had red hair, and he was as thin as a kitchen brush. His suit was too large for him: a sudden wind might pick him up and carry him away.

"Patrick," he said.

Patrick could only say, "Hello, Dad." Then he looked back towards the sea and said, "I thought you were out there."

"I was. But I had a phone call. I had to get back. I still can't believe it. Are you both all right? Let's have a cup of tea!"

Dr West drank tea, and Brainbox and Bull had an orange drink. Brainbox ate a piece of meat and an apple. Bull ate an apple, two pieces of bread-and-butter with meat, some beef and vegetables, fish, a piece of Irish cheese, a second apple, and several chocolates.

"It's a bad business," Dr West said. "Dangerous."

"It wasn't an accident?" Patrick asked.

"Of course it wasn't an accident," his father said. "Oil-rigs don't catch fire. They don't just fall into the sea. They're strong enough for almost anything. But not if somebody wants to destroy them." 9

"But who?" Patrick asked.

Dr West looked unhappily into the air. "Ah," he said. "Who?"

"Mr Jones?" asked an Irish voice. "Our fine finger-pulling friend Mr Jones? We've always thought he might be trouble, haven't we? Now we know."

The voice was Raincoat Man's. His head shone like an egg. He sat down with his tea on the empty chair beside Dr West.

"The police say they'll catch him. I say they never will. He'll be halfway to Timbuctoo by now."

"You know Patrick, don't you?" Dr West said. "And Ned?"

"Fine boys. You were great in the helicopter, boys. No trouble at all. Brave boys."

Patrick shook hands with him, then Ned. Ned put another chocolate into his mouth.

"Celtic is finished, that's what I think. Sell our piece of

the sea to Petco — that's the best thing we can do." Raincoat Man took another mouthful of tea. "And we're finished if we sell. What's the use of money for a new rig? We have nowhere else to put it."

"Jones did his work well," agreed Dr West. "If it was Jones."

"Whose fingers does he pull?" Ned asked.

"You're brainless," Patrick said. "He pulls his own fingers. Like this." Patrick pulled each of his fingers, and they gave out sounds like little gunshots.

Then he looked down at the table. No Middle East holiday now.¹⁰ Still, he was alive, his Dad was alive. He was lucky, really.

"Would you boys go off and telephone home? Patrick, tell your mother you're all right. You too, Ned. The phone's through that door." Dr West looked up at the clock. "We're away to Dublin in ten minutes."

"You're coming too, Dad?"

"Your Mum and me will say goodbye to you at the airport. John Potter will meet you in Bahrain."

Patrick could not hide his sudden happiness. "We're still going — tomorrow? Me and Bull?"

"Your seats are booked, and your hotel. In two or three days I'll be with you." Dr West looked towards the clock again. "Quick, or the newspapermen will be here."

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A newspaper photographer stepped in front of Brainbox and Bull, and asked for a big smile.

"Che-e-e-ese," Bull said.

"Always thinking about food,"¹¹ Brainbox said.

Fifteen minutes later, they were racing northwards

towards Dublin in Dr West's car. Patrick sat in the front passenger seat, and Ned in the back.

Dr West drove his Jaguar very fast, through a countryside that was all greens and yellows. Cows stood in the endless green fields. To the east, a line of purple hills joined land and sky. Dr West just missed a cow on the road, and the boys were thrown sideways.

"Dad, who's Jones?"

"He's the top man in Petco. He visited Emerald Two today with some of his men. He still wants to buy Celtic's piece of the sea. Soon after he left it, the rig caught fire and went down."

"Do you think he did it?"

"I don't know."

"Why should anyone want to destroy Emerald Two?"

"They might think we were close to oil, and we refused to sell. They might try to force us to sell."

Dr West shot past a sports car that was doing 110 kilometres an hour. The boys were thrown to one side again.

"O'Grady says we can't go on without a rig."

"Is O'Grady the man with no hair? The one with the raincoat?"

"That lorry's trying to race us," Ned said.

Patrick turned his head. Through the back window, he saw a big lorry passing the sports car. Now the Jaguar went even faster. The lorry became smaller, and then disappeared far behind.

Patrick said, "The top man of Petco wouldn't destroy an oil-rig."

"He could give the OK. There were three of his men with him. They could fix things when Jones gave a sign."

"I can't believe any of it," Patrick said.

"Why not? There are men who kill. Women too.¹² Everywhere, killing."

"He's back," Ned said. "He's catching us."

Patrick turned in his seat. The lorry banged along at full speed. Dr West took his hand out of his hair, and put it on the wheel. He pushed his right foot hard down.

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"Is it Mr Jones?" Ned called out.

"Of course it's not!" Dr West shouted.

Finger-pulling Mr Jones of Petco didn't drive lorries. He did no dirty work of any kind — not with his own hands. He might pay others to do it. But that was different.

Dr West kept his foot hard on the floor. Ned had to hold on to the back seat.

"We're losing him — he can't keep up!" Ned cried out.

When the lorry was out of sight again, Dr West turned the wheel fast, and sent the car into a side-turning. They came to a place where plants hid the car when it stopped. The car waited in a sea of tall grass. No one spoke.

By now, the lorry must be past them. Dr West backed the car on to the Dublin road again.

"We've lost him," Ned said.

Dr West drove quickly towards Dublin, but he watched for the lorry in front. The sun was getting lower, and the light was going.¹³ In a village Dr West stopped the car, and the boys bought chocolate and some fruit drinks. They drove on, and Bull and Brainbox sang songs. A light rain started to fall.

The lorry shot past from behind with a violent banging. The noise was not because of its age, because it was as new as the Jaguar. The banging came from the metal it was carrying — pieces of steel, ten metres long. Brainbox got a quick look at the driver and the man beside him.

"Get out of the way!" Dr West shouted angrily. He drove the car left and right, but the lorry stayed in the middle of the road.

The back of the lorry fell open, and the ten metre steel pieces fell out and shot towards the car. Patrick covered his face with his arms. In the back Ned was thrown to the floor. Dr West was shouting, but his voice was lost in the crash of steel against steel.

The car jumped and shook when the metal hit it. The glass in front of Dr West went white.¹⁴ Ned saw a long piece of steel come through the roof and enter the back seat, a few centimetres from his eyes.

Car crashes must be like this, Ned thought. A quick death on the motorway. Turning over and over. No chance to escape, to do anything.¹⁵ He wondered how many seconds more he had to live.

The Jaguar shot across the road and over the green edge. It rose and fell like a ship. Then all was silence. The car was at rest. Peace. A sound of breathing. A bird somewhere, singing.

"Patrick?" a voice said.

"Yes."

"Ned?"

"Yes. All right — I think." He couldn't find an arm. Then he discovered it behind his back. He unbent it — it seemed to be OK.

Dr West said, "Quick. Everyone out."

Wrecked cars could catch fire. A drop of blood ran slowly below Patrick's right eye. And a mark on Dr West's face would soon be purple.

Patrick opened his door and saw that the road was empty — except for long pieces of steel, and a new Jaguar that was now useless. Dr West climbed out of the wreck.

"Get away from it," he said. The rain was grey, cold.

"Patrick, let me see that eye. Ned, stand there and stop the first car that comes."



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"Those boys are not staying here, I'll tell you that," Dr West said. "Two lucky escapes. First the oil-rig, now the lorry." He was angry.

Patrick stopped outside the living-room door and listened.

"You should go yourself," said a voice. "We must get the thing to Potter as soon as possible."

"I still think O'Grady should take it," said another voice.

"No. O'Grady's a Celtic man," Dr West said. "They'll be watching him."

Patrick went quickly back to his bedroom. Ned stood in the middle of the floor, with clothes and books and sports things all around him. Outside in the dark the rain was still

falling. Ned was looking at his games things — he was taking things for tennis and cricket.

“One, two, fasten my shoe!” Brainbox called, and threw a swimsuit across the room at Bull. Bull caught it without any trouble.

“One, two, fasten my shoe!” he cried, and threw his wooden cricket bat towards Brainbox.

Brainbox fell on the bed and laughed. They always called out these same words before they threw something. It was an old school joke.

At the bottom of his suitcase Patrick put some books — *Huckleberry Finn*, the complete plays of William Shakespeare, a book about the Middle East, one about wild flowers, and another about secret languages. Dr West came in.

“Who’s John Potter, Dad? You said he would meet us.”

“He looks after our Celtic office out there. You’ll like him.”

“Why’s Mr O’Grady going?”

“We were going together.”

“Does he play tennis?” Bull said.

“He might give you a game.” Dr West picked up a box of Bull’s tennis balls, looked at them, and put them down again. “You boys ought to be in bed. Up at six tomorrow.”

Patrick realized how tired he was. It was the end of a long day.

“Goodnight, Dad.”

Patrick and Ned fell into their beds, and almost at once (it seemed) there was a banging at the door.

“Six o’clock. Up.”

Rain still fell, all the way to the airport in the taxi. Air tickets and passports.¹⁶ Patrick’s old blue suitcase was heavy with books. Ned’s things were in a grey case. Patrick’s Irish passport was green. Ned’s Australian passport was blue.