

小王子

The Little Prince

——【法】圣埃克苏佩里 Saint Exupéry◎著

刘文钟◎译

柳鸣九◎导读

英美校园被推荐最广的文学经典

美国人为青少年专门编写

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出版人: 刘伟见

编辑统筹: 高立志

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Grown-ups never understand anything by themselves, and it is tiresome for children to be always and forever explaining things to them.

大人们从来不自己去弄明白任何一件事，总是要求小孩子一一向他们解释，实在很烦人啊！





Once when I was six years old I saw a magnificent picture in a book, called *True Stories from Nature*, about the primeval forest. It was a picture of a boa constrictor in the act of swallowing an animal. Here is a copy of the drawing.

In the book it said: “Boa constrictors swallow their prey whole, without chewing it. After that they are not able to move, and they sleep through the six months that they need for digestion.”



我六岁的那一年，曾经在了一本描述原始森林的图书《源于自然界真实的故事》之中，看到一幅令人大开眼界的图画，上面绘着一条大蟒蛇正吞食动物的画面。以下就是这一张图画。

书中这样写着：“大蟒蛇将捕获的猎物囫圇吞枣般咽下去，没有经过咀嚼。之后，它们就动弹不得，于是利用六个月的睡眠来消化这些食物。”

那时候我沉缅于丛林冒险的幻想当中，并用一支彩笔完成了我的第一幅画。以下就是我的第一件作品：

I pondered deeply then, over the adventures of the jungle. And after some work with a colored pencil I succeeded in making my first drawing. My Drawing Number One. It looked like this:

I showed my masterpiece to the grown-ups, and asked them whether the drawing frightened them.

But they answered:“Frighten? Why should any one be frightened by a hat?”

My drawing was not a picture of a hat. It was a picture of a boa constrictor digesting an elephant. But since the grown-ups were not able to understand it, I made another drawing: I drew the inside of the boa constrictor, so that the grown-ups could see it clearly. They always need to have things explained.



我把自己的作品拿给大人们欣赏，并问他们是否会被这幅画吓得心惊肉跳？

可是大人们却回答说：“心惊肉跳？我怎么会对一顶帽子感到害怕呢？”

然而，我画的不是一顶帽子，是一幅大象正在大蟒蛇肚子里消化的画。但是，大人们看不懂我的画，我只好重新画了另一幅画：我把大蟒蛇肚子里面清楚地描绘出来，如此一来，大人们就可以看懂了。他们



My Drawing Number Two looked like this:

The grown-ups response, this time, was to advise me to lay aside my drawings of boa constrictors, whether from the inside or the outside and devote myself instead to geography, history, arithmetic and grammar. That is why, at the age of six, I gave up what might have been a magnificent career as a painter. I had been disheartened by the failure of my Drawing Number One and my Drawing Number Two. Grown-ups never understand anything by themselves, and it is tiresome for children to be always and forever explaining things to them.

So then I chose another profession, and learned



总是要人解释才能了解。以下就是我的第二件作品：

这一次，大人们却劝我把大蟒蛇的画搁到一旁去，专心致志地学习地理、历史、算术和文法等学问。就这样我在六岁的时候，毅然放弃了梦寐以求的绘画生涯。第一件和第二件作品带给我的挫败感，一度使我非常沮丧。大人们从来不自己去弄明白任何一件事，总是要求小孩子——向他们解释，实在很烦人啊！

于是我选择了另一种职业，学习驾驶飞机。我几乎飞遍了世界各个角落，此时我才深深发觉地理对自

to pilot airplanes. I have flown a little over all parts of the world; and it is true that geography has been very useful to me. At a glance I can distinguish China from Arizona. If one gets lost in the night, such knowledge is valuable.

In the course of this life I have had a great many encounters with a great many people who have been concerned with matters of consequence. I have lived a great deal among grown-ups. I have seen them intimately, close at hand. And that hasn't much improved my opinion of them.

Whenever I met one of them who seemed to me at all clear-sighted, I tried the experiment of showing him my Drawing Number One, which I have always

已非常有帮助。我只要看一眼，就能很快认出中国或是亚历桑那州。倘若有人在夜间迷失了航向，此类知识更是弥足珍贵。

在我的生命当中，也曾经遇到不少实事求是的人。我在成人的世界里生活了很久，并用心去揣摩他们心底深处最私密的事，但是仍然未能改变我对他们的一些看法。

一旦我在他们之间寻到眼光独特的人，我便将自己的第一件作品拿出来试探他，如此作法，无非是想





kept. I would try to find out, so, if this was a person of true understanding. But, whoever it was, he or she, would always say:

“That is a hat.”

Then I would never talk to that person about boa constrictors, or primeval forests, or stars. I would bring myself down to his level. I would talk to him about bridge, and golf, and politics, and neckties. And the grown-ups would be greatly pleased to have met such a sensible man.

了解这个人是否具有真知灼见。可是，不管我遇到的是谁，男或女，他们的答案总是一致：

“那是一顶帽子。”

于是，我再也不愿跟这些人谈论大蟒蛇、原始森林甚至是星星之类的事了。我降低自己的标准，开始和他们闲聊桥牌、高尔夫球、政治以及领带的事。这些话题正中大人们的下怀，心喜遇见一个懂事、善解人意的人。

**So I lived my life alone, without anyone
that I could really talk to...**

长久以来，我一直都是孤零零的一个人，
始终没有一位能倾诉的知心朋友……





So I lived my life alone, without anyone that I could really talk to, until I had an accident with my plane in the Desert of Sahara, six years ago. Something was broken in my engine. And as I had with me neither a mechanic nor any passengers, I set myself to attempt the difficult repairs all alone. It was a question of life or death for me: I had scarcely enough drinking water to last a week.

The first night, then, I went to, sleep on the sand, a thousand miles from any human habitation. I was more isolated than a ship-wrecked sailor on a raft in the middle of the ocean. Thus you can imagine my amazement, at sunrise, when I was awakened by an odd little voice. It said:

长久以来，我一直都是孤零零的一个人，始终没有一位能倾诉的知心朋友，直到六年前，我驾飞机失事坠落在撒哈拉沙漠。由于飞机引擎发生故障，但当时我的身旁没有技师，也没有任何一位乘客，只能独自着手修复的工作。此刻对我而言，真是生死攸关之际；因为我几乎没有足够的水能够安然度过一个星期。

第一个晚上，我就在杳无人烟的沙漠睡了一宿，这种情境，甚至比发生海难时，水手乘坐救生艇，孤立无援在汪洋大海中漂荡还要凄楚。翌日清晨，令人无法想象，我被一阵奇特细小的声音惊醒。





“If you please — draw me a sheep!”

“What!”

“Draw me a sheep!”

I jumped to my feet, completely thunder-struck. I blinked my eyes hard. I looked carefully all around me. And I saw a most extraordinary small person, who stood there examining me with great seriousness. Here you may see the best portrait that, later, I was able to make of him. But my drawing is certainly very much less charming than its model.

That, however, is not my fault. The grown-ups discouraged me in my painter's career when I was six years old, and I never learned to draw anything, except boas from the outside and boas from the

“请你替我画一只绵羊，好吗？”

“什么？”

“画一只绵羊给我。”

我惊恐万分，猝然从沙地跳起来，眼睛使劲儿眨了几下，左顾右盼，环视周遭环境，看见一个奇怪且身材短小的人，伫立在那里，若有所思地注视着我。以下就是我为他画出的一张肖像，但他本人比画中人还要可爱多了。

可是，这事并不能完全怪我。在我六岁的时候，大人就规劝我放弃绘画生涯，所以除了那两张看不见和看得见大蟒蛇里面的画之外，我再也没有动手画过

inside.

Now I stared at this sudden apparition with my eyes fairly starting out of my head in astonishment. Remember, I had crashed in the desert a thousand miles from any inhabited region. And yet my little man seemed neither to be straying uncertainly among the sands, nor to be fainting from fatigue or hunger or thirst or fear. Nothing about him gave any suggestion of a child lost in the middle of the desert, a thousand miles from any human habitation. When at last I was able to speak, I said to him:

“But — what are you doing here?”

And in answer he repeated, very slowly, as if he

任何一张完整的画了。

此刻，我惊愕地张大眼睛紧盯着这个突然出现的精灵。别忘了，我当时正处于人迹罕至的沙漠之中，而这个小人，看起来不像是在沙漠中走丢了，也不像是因疲惫、饥渴及害怕而将昏厥的神情。在他的身上找不到一丝一毫是在沙漠中迷路的模样。等我心情恢复平静，便开口问他：

“你在这里做什么呢？”

他仍只是重述刚才说过的话，而且是郑重其事地





were speaking of a matter of great consequence:

“If you please — draw me a sheep...”

When a mystery is too overpowering, one dare not disobey. Absurd as it might seem to me, a thousand miles from any human habitation and in danger of death, I took out of my pocket a sheet of paper and my fountain-pen. But then I remembered how my studies had been concentrated on geography, history, arithmetic and grammar, and I told the little chap (a little crossly, too) that I did not know how to draw. He answered me:

“That doesn’t matter. Draw me a sheep...”

But I had never drawn a sheep. So I drew for him one of the two pictures I had drawn so often. It was

说：

“请你替我画一只绵羊……”

由于事出突然，且神奇得让人无从思索，故只有唯诺应允了。这事对我来说，可真是荒谬。置身千里之内无人烟的荒漠，又饱受死亡的威胁，我还能从容不迫自口袋里拿出一张纸和一支钢笔。当时，我才想起自己曾在地理、历史、算术及文法上投入相当大的心血，于是我就告诉这个小家伙，我不会画画。他却回答我说：

“没关系，只要替我画一只绵羊……”

我从来没有画过绵羊。不过，我还是画了自己从

that of the boa constrictor from the outside. And I was astounded to hear the little fellow greet it with.

“No, no, no! I do not want an elephant inside a boa constrictor. A boa constrictor is a very dangerous creature, and an elephant is very cumbersome. Where I live, everything is very small. What I need is a sheep. Draw me a sheep.”

So then I made a drawing.

He looked at it carefully, then he said:

“No. This sheep is already very sickly. Make me another.”



前两张画中的其中一幅给他，这一幅画就是看不见大蟒蛇肚子里面的那张画。小孩看了这画，却做出如此的反应：

“不要！不要！不要！我不要肚子里装着大象的蟒蛇。蟒蛇是一种很危险的动物，而大象大且笨重。我住的地方，所有的东西都是小小的。我只要一只绵羊，请替我画一只绵羊吧！”

于是，我只好画一张绵羊给他。

小孩仔细瞧了这张画，又说：

“不，这一只绵羊已经病得奄奄一息。再画另外一只给我。”





So I made another drawing.

My friend smiled gently and indulgently.

“You see yourself,” he said, “that this is not a sheep. This is a ram. It has horns.”



So then I did my drawing over once more.

But it was rejected too, just like the others.

“This one is too old. I want a sheep that will live a long time.”

By this time my patience was exhausted, because I was in a hurry to start taking my engine apart. So I

我又重新画了另一张。

这一回，我这位小朋友，展开温煦、宽容的笑容对我说：

“你自己瞧一瞧，这只不是绵羊，而是山羊。它还长着角呢？”

于是，我又得再画第三张。

但是，仍然像先前的两张一样不合格。



“这一只羊太老了。我要一只长命百岁的羊。”

此时，我实在厌烦不已。因为我急于想开始拆卸