

廉耻



问题

A MATTER OF HONOR



英汉对照读物



英 汉 对 照 读 物



廉 耻 问 题

马克·吐温等 著

招子明 周以能等 译

周 国 珍 校

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前 言

这本英汉对照读物，可以称为“英美幽默讽刺短篇小说选”，因为其中的作者有英国作家，也有美国作家；作品发表的时间虽然先后不一，但均属于现代作品；就内容而论，有的可说是幽默故事，有的则属于讽刺小说。但是这两者有时很难截然划分。幽默往往寓意于讽刺；讽刺常常借助于幽默。所不同者，有的寓意较深，意在发人深思而后使人悟出某种社会现象的真谛。收在这个集子里的美国著名作家马克·吐温的《廉耻问题》就是这样的。作者在这里无情地讽刺了资本主义社会中为数颇多的一种讹诈者，他们往往道貌岸然地对自己的卑劣行径加以荒唐的辩解，然后也就“问心无愧”而且“心安理得”了。但是故事本身极其简单，作者只把一件小事的经过和当事人“我”的想法展示在读者面前，仿佛是要让读者自己去作结论。英国著名作家萨基的一篇《托伯莫里》也是如此。作者对于资本主义社会的有闲阶级的讽刺是辛辣的；但是乍看起来，他讲的故事似乎有点“荒唐”，特别是一只猫竟然学会说话的事情。然而重要的是，那只猫学会说话之后，老爷太太们为什么立刻惊恐万状，把它视为洪水猛兽，置之死地而后快？粗略地说，可以这样理解：猫儿一旦会说话，口没遮拦，把它知道得最详细的老爷太太们的底细统统说出去，他们就没脸见人了。

这里收集的另一些作品的主题思想就比较显而易见了。例如《生活水平》中的那两个女主人公，不正是脱离实际，

一味追求奢华的物质生活而到头来自讨苦吃的典型么？《大学时代》中对于不合理的教育制度和课程设置的讽刺，也是一望而知的。

这本对照读物的英语原文属于中等的难易程度。译文力求扣紧原文，以期有助于读者对原文的理解。

周 国 珍

一九八三年四月十六日

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THE STANDARD OF LIVING

BY DOROTHY PARKER

Annabel and Midge came out of the tea room with the arrogant slow gait of the leisured, for their Saturday afternoon stretched ahead of them. They had lunched, as was their wont, on sugar, starches, oils and butter-fats. Usually they ate sandwiches of spongy new white bread greased with butter and mayonnaise; they ate thick wedges of cake lying wet beneath ice cream and whipped cream and melted chocolate gritty with nuts. As alternates, they ate patties sweating beads of inferior oil, containing bits of bland meat bogged in pale, stiffening sauce; they ate pastries limber under rigid icing, filled with an indeterminate yellow sweet stuff, not still solid, not yet liquid, like salve that has been left in the sun. They chose no other sort of food, nor did they consider it. And their skin was like the petals of wood anemones, and their bellies were as flat and their flanks as lean as those of young Indian braves.

Annabel and Midge had been best friends almost from the day that Midge had found a job as stenog-

生 活 水 平

[美] 多萝西·派克

安娜博尔和米吉从小餐馆里走出来，迈着高傲和缓慢的步子，象个闲人，悠然自得，因为展现在她们面前的是个星期六的下午。她俩刚刚用完午餐，吃的是平日常吃的糖类、淀粉类、油类的食品和乳脂，通常是松软新鲜的三明治，上面涂点黄油和蛋黄酱；或是楔形的蛋糕，上面浇有冰淇淋、拌奶油和带有小粒果仁的巧克力汁。要是换换口味，她们就吃些朝外渗出一滴滴劣质油的小面饼，馅儿是用无色的稠佐料汁拌过的清淡的肉粒；或吃些表层是硬糖衣的松饼，里面包着说不上来的黄色甜食，已经不是固体，也不算液体，就象放在阳光下晒化了的药膏。别的东西她们都不吃，也不去想它。她们的皮肤象白头翁的花瓣，她们的肚子扁平不凸，腰肢纤细，就象年轻的印第安人勇士的身材。

米吉也是在雇用安娜博尔的那个公司里找到了一份速记工作，几乎就是从那一天起，这两个姑娘

rapher with the firm that employed Annabel. By now, Annabel, two years longer in the stenographic department, had worked up to the wages of eighteen dollars and fifty cents a week. Midge was still at sixteen dollars. Each girl lived at home with her family and paid half her salary to its support.

The girls sat side by side at their desks, they lunched together every noon, together they set out for home at the end of the day's work. Many of their evenings and most of their Sundays were passed in each other's company. Often they were joined by two young men, but there was no steadiness to any such quartet, the two young men would give place unlamented, to two other young men, and lament would have been inappropriate really, since the newcomers were scarcely distinguishable from their predecessors. Invariably the girls spent the idle hours of their hot-weather Saturday afternoons together. Constant use had not worn ragged the fabric of their friendship.

They looked alike, though the resemblance did not lie in their features. It was in the shape of their bodies, their movements, their style, and their adornments. Annabel and Midge did, and completely, all that young office workers are besought not to do. They painted their lips and their nails, they darkened their lashes and lightened their hair, and scent seemed to shimmer from them. They wore thin, bright dresses, tight over

就成了最亲密的朋友。安娜博尔现在拿的已经是十八元五角的周薪了，因为她进速记科工作比米吉早两年，而米吉还是拿十六元的工资。两个姑娘都和自己一家共同生活，拿出自己的一半工资贴补家里的开销。

这两个姑娘坐在并排的两张办公桌旁工作，每天中午一起吃饭，晚上下班时一道回家。她们有许多个晚上和大多数的星期日都是一起度过的。也常有两个小伙子来和她们一起玩，不过这样的四人结伙并不固定；上次来的两个小伙子，下次便会毫不伤心地让位给另外两个青年人，要伤心可也实在犯不着，因为无论新人或旧友，几乎全被一视同仁。碰到热天的星期六下午，这两个姑娘更是必然要在一起消磨大好的空闲时光。朝夕相处并没有损伤两人之间的友谊。

两人看来很相象，但这相象之处不在于外貌。这种相象在于她们的体形，动作，风度和打扮。人家恳求年轻职员们不要做的事情，安娜博尔和米吉偏要做，而且做得很彻底。比如，她们搽口红，涂指甲油，画眉毛，把头发染成淡黄色，而且身上的香气简直象要闪出光来。她们爱穿鲜艳的薄料衣服，紧得绷在胸脯上，短得盖不住大腿，穿了高跟拖鞋还不算，再别出心裁地绑上鞋带。她们那副样

their breasts and high on their legs, and tilted slippers, fancifully strapped. They looked conspicuous and cheap and charming.

Now, as they walked across to Fifth Avenue with their skirts swirled by the hot wind, they received audible admiration. Young men grouped lethargically about newsstands awarded them murmurs, exclamations, even—the ultimate tribute—whistles. Annabel and Midge passed without the condescension of hurrying their pace; they held their heads higher and set their feet with exquisite precision, as if they stepped over the necks of peasants.

Always the girls went to walk on Fifth Avenue on their free afternoons, for it was the ideal ground for their favorite game. The game could be played anywhere, and indeed, was, but the great shop windows stimulated the two players to their best form.

Annabel had invented the game, or rather she had evolved it from an old one. Basically, it was no more than the ancient sport of what-would-you-do-if-you-had-a-million-dollars? But Annabel had drawn a new set of rules for it, had narrowed it, pointed it, made it stricter. Like all games, it was the more absorbing for being more difficult.

Annabel's version went like this: You must suppose that somebody dies and leaves you a million dollars cool. But there is a condition to the bequest. It is

子惹人注目，轻薄而又妩媚。

此刻，她们正穿过马路走向第五大街，热风把她们的裙子吹得直打旋，她们受到了赞美。懒懒散散地围在报摊旁的那些小伙子一看见她们，先是叽叽喳喳，继而大声起哄，甚至——作为最高敬意——吹起口哨来。安娜博尔和米吉打这儿经过，倒也不屑于加快速度；反而把头抬得更高，把脚步跨得极其准确，活象一步跨过一个农民的脖子走过去似的。

这两个姑娘遇到空闲的下午。总是要上第五大街来闲逛的，因为要做她俩最喜欢的游戏，这条街可是个理想的地方。这个游戏在别的地方也能做，而且也确实做过，但是琳琅满目的商店橱窗最能激发这两个做游戏的人的兴致。

这个游戏是安娜博尔发明的，更确切地说，是她根据一个旧有的游戏加以引伸而成的。大体上仍然不外是“假使你有一百万元，你要做些什么事”这样一个古老的游戏。不过安娜博尔又给它拟订了一套新规则，缩小了它的范围，加强了它的针对性，使它的要求更严格了。象一切游戏一样，做起来越来越难，它就越能吸引人。

安娜博尔的一套办法是这样的：你先得设想，某人死了，留给你一百万元，不多不少。但是这笔遗产有个附带条件。那就是遗嘱里明文规定，这笔

stated in the will that you must spend every nickel of the money on yourself.

There lay the hazard of the game. If, when playing it, you forgot and listed among your expenditures the rental of a new apartment for your family, for example, you lost your turn to the other player. It was astonishing how many—and some of them among the experts, too—would forfeit all their innings by such slips.

It was essential, of course, that it be played in passionate seriousness. Each purchase must be carefully considered and, if necessary, supported by argument. There was no zest to playing it wildly. Once Annabel had introduced the game to Sylvia, another girl who worked in the office. She explained the rules to Sylvia and then offered her the gambit "What would be the first thing you'd do?" Sylvia had not shown the decency of even a second of hesitation. "Well," she said,

"the first thing I'd do, I'd go out and hire somebody to shoot Mrs. Gary Cooper, and then ... " So it is to be seen that she was no fun.

But Annabel and Midge were surely born to be comrades, for Midge played the game like a master from the moment she learned it. It was she who added the touches that made the whole thing cozier. According to Midge's innovations, the eccentric who died and left you the money was not anybody you loved, or, for the matter of that, anybody you even knew. It was

钱的一分一文都必须用在你自己身上。

这个游戏的难点就在这里。做的时候如果你忘了这一点，比方说，如果在你的开支中列入了为你们一家租一套新公寓这么一项，那你就输了一局，轮到对方接着来。由于这样的差错而连输不赢者——其中还有几个老手——多得令人惊讶。

当然，主要的是，这个游戏要做得热情而严肃。说出每一项购物开支时，都必须慎重考虑，必要时展开争论，支持自己的说法。胡说八道是没有趣味的。有一次，安娜博尔把这个游戏介绍给同一个办公室的另一个姑娘西尔维娅。她对西尔维娅解释了那套规则，然后便向她说出了开场白：“你要做的头一件事是什么？”西尔维娅表现得没有礼貌，连一秒钟也没有犹豫，便开口说：“哦，我要做的头一件事，就是出去雇个人开枪打死电影明星贾利·古柏的太太，然后……”这就应当看出，她这个人没有情趣。

然而安娜博尔和米吉无疑生来就是同志，因为米吉一学会这个游戏，立刻便做得象个高手。也就是她，又进行了加工润色，使整个游戏做起来心情更舒坦些。按照米吉的革新来说，那个寿终正寝给你留下遗产的怪人，并不是你所喜欢的任何人，而且甚至不是你所认识的任何人。那个人不过是在某个地方看见过你，当时他心里想：“这个姑娘理应

somebody who had seen you somewhere and had thought, "That girl ought to have lots of nice things. I'm going to leave her a million dollars when I die." And the death was to be neither untimely nor painful. Your benefactor, full of years and comfortably ready to depart, was to slip softly away during sleep and go right to heaven. These embroideries permitted Annabel and Midge to play their game in the luxury of peaceful consciences.

Midge played with a seriousness that was not only proper but extreme. The single strain on the girls' friendship had followed an announcement once made by Annabel that the first thing she would buy with her million dollars would be a silver-fox coat. It was as if she had struck Midge across the mouth. When Midge recovered her breath, she cried that she couldn't imagine how Annabel could do such a thing—silver-fox coats were so common! Annabel defended her taste with the retort that they were not common, either. Midge then said that they were so. She added that everybody had a silver-fox coat. She went on, with perhaps a slight toss of head, to declare that she herself wouldn't be caught dead in silver fox.

For the next few days, though the girls saw each other as constantly, their conversation was careful and infrequent, and they did not once play their game. Then one morning, as soon as Annabel entered the office, she

拥有许许多多的好东西。我死时，要留给她一百万元。”而且他的死既非过早，又无痛苦。你的这个恩人已经寿终天年，泰然自若地准备离别人间，他在熟睡之际悄然长逝，直升天堂。这样加以润饰，就使安娜博尔和米吉在做这个游戏时心安理得，毫无内疚。

米吉做这个游戏，不仅相当认真，而且极端严肃。两个姑娘的友情中只出现过一次紧张状态，那是因为有一回安娜博尔居然宣称，她要是有了上百万元，她要买的头一件东西就是一件银狐皮大衣。她说这种话简直像打了米吉一个嘴巴子。当米吉喘过气来的时候，不禁叫嚷说，她不能理解安娜博尔怎么会这样做——银狐皮大衣太平常了！安娜博尔为自己的爱好辩护时反驳说，这种大衣也不算平常。米吉听了说，是很平常。她还说，人人都有一件银狐皮大衣。她也许还轻轻地把头一扬，进而宣布说，她死时可不愿意让人发现她穿的是银狐皮。

此后一连好几天，两个姑娘虽说仍旧常见面，她们的谈话可谨慎了，也不多了，而且一次也没做过这种游戏。有一天早晨，安娜博尔一进办公室，

came to Midge and said she had changed her mind. She would not buy a silver-fox coat with any part of her million dollars. Immediately on receiving the legacy, she would select a coat of mink.

Midge smiled and her eyes shone. "I think," she said, "you're doing absolutely the right thing."

Now, as they walked along Fifth Avenue, they played the game anew. It was one of those days with which September is repeatedly cursed; hot and glaring, with slivers of dust in the wind. People drooped and shambled, but the girls carried themselves tall and walked a straight line, as befitted ~~the~~ young heiresses on their afternoon promenade. There was no longer need for them to start the game at its formal opening. Annabel went direct to the heart of it.

"All right," she said. "So you've got this million dollars. So what would be the first thing you'd do?"

"Well, the first thing I'd do," Midge said, "I'd get a mink coat." But she said it mechanically, as if she were giving the memorized answer to an expected question.

"Yes," Annabel said. "I think you ought to. The terribly dark kind of mink." But she too, spoke as if by rote. It was too hot; fur, no matter how dark and sleek and supple, was horrid to the thoughts.

They stepped along in silence for a while. Then Midge's eye was caught by a shop window. Cool, lovely