

书虫·牛津英汉对照读物



THE THIRTY-NINE STEPS

John Buchan

三十九级台阶



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Nick Bullard 改写

王云 译

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著 John Buchan

译 王云

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简介

理查德·哈内走回他伦敦的公寓，感到百无聊赖。他想，在英格兰好像什么令人激动的事情也不曾发生过。也许他该回非洲去。然而，那天晚上来了一位叫斯卡德尔的客人，给他讲了一个离奇的故事。

一周以后，哈内卧在苏格兰荒原的石楠丛中，饥肠辘辘，筋疲力尽。一架小飞机在他头顶的蓝天上低空盘旋。哈内一动不动地躺着，希望谢天谢地飞机不要发现他，同时琢磨着口袋里斯卡德尔的黑色小笔记本。斯卡德尔在笔记本里记着“黑石”，这个神秘的黑石是谁呢？那个“三十九级台阶”又怎么那么重要？六月十五日伦敦会出什么事？

而斯卡德尔已经被害，哈内的敌人在苏格兰的山山岭岭日夜追捕他，他必须自己搞清这是为什么。如果他的敌人抓住他，就会把他杀掉……

约翰·巴肯(1875—1940)：苏格兰作家，政治家，曾任加拿大总督。他有许多著作，最有名的是理查德·哈内系列惊险小说，其中包括《三十九级台阶》，该书写于一九一五年，后改编成著名导演希区科克执导的电影。

1

The man who died

I returned to my flat at about three o'clock on that May afternoon very unhappy with life. I had been back in Britain for three months and I was already bored. The weather was bad, the people were dull, and the amusements of London seemed as exciting as a glass of cold water. 'Richard Hannay,' I told myself, 'you have made a mistake, and you had better do something about it.'

It made me angry when I thought of the years I had spent in Africa. I had spent those years working very hard and making money. Not a lot of money, but enough for me. I had left Scotland when I was six years old, and I had never been home since. For years I had dreamt of coming home to Britain and spending the rest of my life there, but I was disappointed with the place after the first week. And so here I was, thirty-seven years old, healthy, with enough money to have a good time, and bored to death.

That evening I went out to dinner and sat reading the newspapers afterwards. They were full of the troubles in south-east Europe, and there was a long report about Karolides, the Greek Prime Minister. He seemed to be an honest man, but some people in Europe hated him. However, many people in Britain liked him, and one newspaper said that he was the only man who could prevent a war starting. I remember wondering

1 死人

五月的那个下午三点来钟我回到寓所，过得很不开心。回到英国三个月，我已经厌烦了。伦敦的气候糟糕，人也没劲，各种娱乐好像没味的白水一杯。我暗暗对自己说：“理查德·哈内，这回你错了，最好想办法改过吧。”

想到在非洲的岁月我就有气。我呆了那么多年，拼命干活挣钱。现在钱虽然不多，但足够我用的。自从六岁我离开苏格兰就再也没回过家。那么多年我一直梦想回英国老家来度我的余生，然而才回来一周，就对这个地方大失所望。眼前的情况是，本人三十七岁，身体健康，有足够的钱享受，但无聊得要死。

那天晚上我出去吃饭，然后坐在那儿读报纸。报纸上报道的都是关于东南欧的动乱，其中有一篇关于希腊首相卡罗里德斯的长篇报道。这个人看来是个实在人，可是欧洲一些人却讨厌他。可是也有些英国人喜欢他，有一家报纸说只有他能防止战争爆发。我记得我当时琢磨能否在东南欧找个工



amusements *n.* something that causes one's time to pass enjoyably. 娱乐，消遣。**had better do something should, must.** 最好，必须。**disappointed** (*with*) *adj.* unhappy at not seeing hopes come true. 失望。**have a good time enjoy oneself.** 度过愉快的时光。

if I could get a job in south-east Europe; it might be a lot less boring than life in London.

As I walked home that night, I decided to give Britain one more day. If nothing interesting happened, I would take the next boat back to Africa.

My flat was in a big new building in Langham Place. There was a doorman at the entrance to the building, but each flat was separate, with its own front door. I was just putting the key into my door when a man appeared next to me. He was thin, with a short brown beard and small, very bright eyes. I recognized him as the man who lived in a flat on the top floor of the building. We had spoken once or twice on the stairs.

‘Can I speak to you?’ he asked. ‘May I come in for a minute?’ His voice was shaking a little.

I opened the door and we went in.

‘Is the door locked?’ he asked, and quickly locked it himself.

‘I’m very sorry,’ he said to me. ‘It’s very rude of me. But I’m in a dangerous corner and you looked like the kind of man who would understand. If I explain, will you help me?’

‘I’ll listen to you,’ I said. ‘That’s all I promise.’ I was getting worried by this strange man’s behaviour.

There was a table with drinks on it next to him, and he took a large whisky for himself. He drank it quickly, and then put the glass down so violently that it broke.

‘I’m sorry,’ he said. ‘I’m a little nervous tonight. You

作；那里大概绝不会像伦敦的生活这样无聊。

当晚回家的时候我下定决心在英国再呆一天便走人。如果没有什么叫人感兴趣的事，我就乘下一班船回非洲去。

我的寓所在兰厄姆一幢新大楼里。大楼的入口处有个看门人，但每个寓所各自独立，都有个前门。我刚刚把钥匙插进锁孔，突然见旁边有个人。他身材瘦削，留着褐色的短胡子，眼睛不大却很有光彩。我认出他就住在这幢大楼的顶楼。在楼梯上我们说过一两次话。

“可以和您说句话吗？”他问道。“我可以进去呆一会儿吗？”他的声音有点儿发颤。

我打开门，我们进了屋。

“门锁上了吗？”他问我，随后自己赶快把门锁上。

“很抱歉，”他对我说，“我这样做很失礼，我现在身处险境，您看着是个明白人。如果我讲出来您能帮我吗？”

“我会听您说的，”我答道，“目前就能答应这么多。”这个陌生人的举止让我不安。

在他身旁的桌子上放着饮料，他给自己倒了一大杯威士忌。他一饮而尽，然后把杯子重重一放，力量太大，以致于杯子打破了。

“对不起，”他说，“今天晚上我有点儿紧

I was just putting the key into my door when a man ... At the moment I put the key... a man did something. 我刚把钥匙插在门孔里，一个人突然……。
rude adj. (of a person or behaviour) not at all polite. 无礼的、不礼貌的。

see, at this moment I'm dead.'

I sat down in an armchair and lit my pipe.

'How does it feel?' I asked. I was now almost sure that the man was mad.

He smiled. 'I'm not mad-yet. Listen, I've been watching you, and I guess that you're not easily frightened. I'm going to tell you my story. I need help very badly, and I want to know if you're the right man to ask.'

'Tell me your story,' I said, 'and I'll tell you if I can help you.'

It was an extraordinary story. I didn't understand all of it, and I had to ask a lot of questions, but here it is:

His name was Franklin P. Scudder and he was an American, but he had been in south-east Europe for several years. By accident, he had discovered a group of people who were working secretly to push Europe towards a war. These people were clever, and dangerous. Some of them wanted to change the world through war; others simply wanted to make a lot of money, and there is always money to be made from a war. Their plan was to get Russia and Germany at war with each other.

'I want to stop them,' Scudder told me, 'and if I can stay alive for another month, I think I can.'

'I thought you were already dead,' I said.

'I'll tell you about that in a minute,' he answered. 'But first, do you know who Constantine Karolidis is?'

张。您看,现在我已死了。”

我在扶手椅上坐下来,点着烟斗。

“死是什么感觉?”我问他。当时我差不多肯定这人是疯子。

他笑了。“我没有疯——还没有。请听我说,我一直在观察您,我猜您不那么容易被吓住。我想给您讲讲我的事。我极需帮助,并且想知道我是否求对了人。”

“那就说说吧,”我说,“然后我才能告诉您我是否能帮您的忙。”

他的故事非同一般,我并不全明白,不得不问好多问题,下面就是他的故事。

他叫富兰克林·P·斯卡德尔,是个美国人,已经在东南欧呆了几年。他偶然发现一伙人正在密谋把欧洲推向战争。这伙人狡猾而险恶。有的想通过战争改变世界,有的想发财,打仗总是能发财的。他们计划唆使俄国与德国互相打起来。

“我想制止他们,”斯卡德尔对我说,“如果我能多活一个月,我想我能做到。”

我说:“我原以为您已经死了。”

“过一会儿再谈这件事,”他说,“首先,您知道康斯坦丁·卡罗里德斯是谁吗?”

I didn't understand all of it
I understood part of it. 我
不完全理解。By accident
without any cause or
reason, by chance. 偶然。
at war with each other in
the state of war with each
other. 打仗、进行战争。
stay alive continue to be
alive. 还(继续)活着。

‘The Greek Prime Minister. I’ve just been reading about him in today’s newspapers.’

‘Right. He’s the only man who can stop the war. He’s intelligent, he’s honest, and he knows what’s going on-and so his enemies plan to kill him. I have discovered how. That was very dangerous for me, so I had to disappear. They can’t kill Karolides in Greece because he has too many guards. But on the 15th of June he’s coming to London for a big meeting, and his enemies plan to kill him here.’

‘You can warn him,’ I said. ‘He’ll stay at home.’

‘That’s what his enemies want. If he doesn’t come, they’ll win, because he’s the only man who understands the whole problem and who can stop the war happening.’

‘Why don’t you go to the British police?’ I said.

‘No good. They could bring in five hundred policemen, but they wouldn’t stop the murder. The murderer will be caught, and he’ll talk and put the blame on the governments in Vienna and Berlin. It will all be lies, of course, but everybody will be ready to believe it. But none of this will happen if Franklin P. Scudder is here in London on the 15th of June.’

I was beginning to like this strange little man. I gave him another whisky and asked him why he thought that he was now in danger himself.

He took a large mouthful of whisky. ‘I came to London by a strange route-through Paris, Hamburg, Norway, and Scotland. I changed my name in every country, and when I got

“是希腊的首相。我刚刚在今天的报纸上读到他的消息。”

“对。他是唯一能制止这场战争的人。他精明诚实，了解现状——所以他的敌人就打算把他干掉。我已经发现他们用什么方法。对我来说这就很危险了，所以我必须躲起来。在希腊他们杀不了卡罗里德斯，因为他有许多卫士。但是他准备在六月十五日来伦敦参加一个大会，他的敌人要在这儿把他干掉。”

我说：“您可以事先告诉他。他就会呆在家里了。”

“他的敌人就要他这样。假如他不来，他们就赢了，因为只有他才了解问题的全部，才能制止战争爆发。”

“那您为什么不去找英国警察？”我问。

“没有用。他们会带来五百名警察，但也不能阻止这次谋杀。动手杀人的会被抓住，他也会招供，但会把责任都推到维也纳和柏林政府的头上。那自然都是谎话，但是人们会马上相信这套。然而，如果富兰克林·P·斯卡德尔六月十五日在伦敦，这种事就绝不会发生。”

我逐渐开始喜欢这个小个子陌生人。我又给他倒了一杯威士忌，问为什么他认为自己处于危险之中。

他喝了一大口威士忌。“我是通过一条人们不熟悉的路线——穿过巴黎、汉堡、挪威和苏格兰来伦敦的。每到个国家我就更

blame (for) v. consider someone responsible for something bad. 责备；责怪；把……归咎于。

to London, I thought I was safe. But yesterday I realized that they're still following me. There's a man watching this building and last night somebody put a card under my door. On it was the name of the man I fear most in the world.

'So I decided I had to die. Then they would stop looking for me. I got a dead body-it's easy to get one in London, if you know how-and I had the body brought to my flat in a large suitcase. The body was the right age, but the face was different from mine. I dressed it in my clothes and shot it in the face with my own gun. My servant will find me when he arrives in the morning and he'll call the police. I've left a lot of empty whisky bottles in my room. The police will think I drank too much and then killed myself.' He paused. 'I watched from the window until I saw you come home, and then came down the stairs to meet you.'

It was the strangest of stories. However, in my experience, the most extraordinary stories are often the true ones. And if the man just wanted to get into my flat and murder me, why didn't he tell a simpler story?

'Right,' I said. 'I'll trust you for tonight. I'll lock you in this room and keep the key. Just one word, Mr Scudder. I believe you're honest, but if you're not, I should warn you that I know how to use a gun.'

'Certainly,' he answered, jumping up. 'I'm afraid I don't know your name, sir, but I would like to thank you. And could I use your bathroom?'

名改姓，到了伦敦，我觉得安全了。可是昨天我发现他们仍然在跟踪我。有个人监视着这座大楼而且昨天晚上不知道是谁把一张名片塞到门下面。名片上的名字是这个世界上我最惧怕的人。

“所以我下决心必须死掉。这样他们就会不再找我。我搞到一具死尸——在伦敦只要你知道门路，搞个死尸并不难——然后用一个大衣箱把死尸弄到房间。那个死人和我年纪相符，只是面貌和我不同。我给他穿上我的衣裳，拿枪朝他脸上开了几枪。等早晨我的仆人来了会发现我而且会报警。我在房间留下了许多空威士忌酒瓶。警察会以为我饮酒过度，自己送了命。”他停了一下，“我从窗户向外观察，一直看到您回家，然后我才下楼来见您。”

这个故事真是奇中之奇。然而根据我的经历，最奇怪的故事往往是真事。而且，假定这个人进到我房间想害我，为什么他不讲简单一点呢？

“好吧，”我说，“今晚我就相信您这一回好了。我把您锁在这间屋里，我拿着钥匙。斯卡德尔先生，听我说一句话。我相信您是个诚实人，但是如果您不诚实，我可警告您，我也知道枪怎么用。”

“那是自然，”他回答着，激动得跳了起来。“先生，恐怕我还不知道您叫什么，但我要感谢您。我能使用您的浴室吗？”

body *n.* *corpse, dead body.* 尸体。 **pause** *v.* *break in activity or speech for a short but noticeable time.* 停顿。 **stairs** *n.* *a fixed length of steps built for going from one level to another.* 楼梯；阶梯。

When I next saw him, half an hour later, I didn't recognize him at first. Only the bright eyes were the same. His beard was gone, and his hair was completely different. He walked like a soldier, and he was wearing glasses. And he no longer spoke like an American.

'Mr Scudder—' I cried.

'Not Mr Scudder,' he answered. 'Captain Theophilus Digby of the British Army. Please remember that.'

I made him a bed in my study, and then went to bed myself, happier than I had been for the past month. Interesting things did happen sometimes, even in London.

* * *

The next morning when my servant Paddock arrived, I introduced him to Captain Digby. I explained that the Captain was an important man in the army, but he had been working too hard and needed rest and quiet. Then I went out, leaving them both in the flat. When I returned at about lunchtime, the doorman told me that the gentleman in flat 15 had killed himself. I went up to the top floor, had a few words with the police, and was able to report to Scudder that his plan had been successful. The police believed that the dead man was Scudder, and that he had killed himself. Scudder was very pleased.

For the first two days in my flat, he was very calm, and spent all his time reading and smoking, and writing in a little black notebook. But after that he became more restless and

半个小时以后,我再见到他,乍一看都认不出来了。只有那双炯炯发光的眼睛依然如旧。胡子不见了,头发也与刚才完全不同。走起路来像个军人,戴着一副眼镜。说话也不再像美国人了。

“斯卡德尔先生——”我叫了起来。

“不是斯卡德尔先生,”他回答说,“英国陆军上尉西奥费乐司·迪格比。请记住这个名字。”

我在书房给他铺了一张床,然后就自己回去睡觉,感到一个月来从没这么高兴过。刺激的事有时到底碰得上,甚至在伦敦也一样。

第二天早晨我的仆人帕多克来了,我把迪格比上尉介绍给他。我说上尉在军队是个重要人物,他工作得太辛苦了需要休息和安静。然后我就出门去,把他们俩留在房里。大约午饭时我回来,看门人告诉我住在十五号房的先生自杀了。我上了顶楼,和警察谈了几句,就回来告诉斯卡德尔他的计划成功了。警察相信那个死尸就是斯卡德尔,而且是自杀的。斯卡德尔听了很高兴。

他在我寓所住的前两天神态非常平静,一直在读书,吸烟,在一个黑色的小笔记本上写东西。然而此后他变得坐卧不宁,惴惴

study n. a room used for studying. 书房。 *servant* n. a person who is paid to cook and clean for another person. 仆人。 *had a few words with the police* had a little talk with the police. 和警察说了几句话。

nervous. It was not his own danger that he worried about, but the success of his plan to prevent the murder of Karolides. One night he was very serious.

‘Listen, Hannay,’ he said. ‘I think I must tell you some more about this business. I would hate to get killed without leaving someone else to carry on with my plan.’

I didn’t listen very carefully. I was interested in Scudder’s adventures, but I wasn’t very interested in politics. I remember that he said Karolides was only in danger in London. He also mentioned a woman called Julia Czechenyi. He talked about a Black Stone and a man who lisped when he spoke. And he described another man, perhaps the most dangerous of them all – an old man with a young voice who could hood his eyes like a hawk.

The next evening I had to go out. I was meeting a man I had known in Africa for dinner. When I returned to the flat, I was surprised to see that the light in the study was out. I wondered if Scudder had gone to bed early. I turned on the light, but there was nobody there. Then I saw something in the corner that made my blood turn cold.

Scudder was lying on his back. There was a long knife through his heart, pinning him to the floor.