

百味人生美文精选  
(英汉对照)



# 倘若鸟儿回还

IF IT COMES BACK

◎ 明廷雄 / 译注



全国优秀出版社  
武汉大学出版社

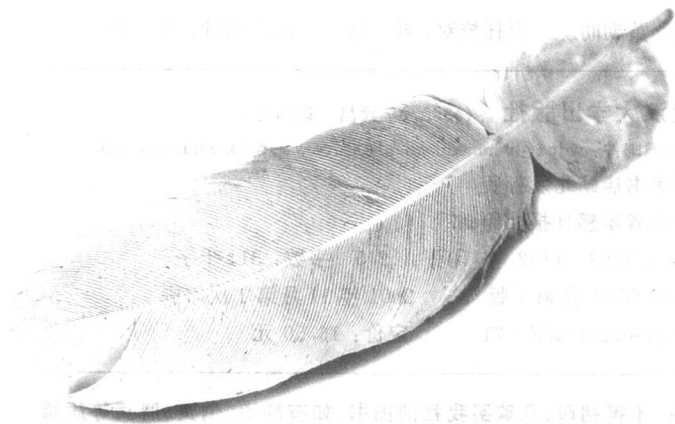
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## 前 言

多年前,跟众多英语学习者一样,我对沉闷乏味的阅读教材感到厌倦。主要有这样的原因:一是内容杂乱,面面俱到,提不起阅读的兴趣;二是语言点密集,应试性过强,提供的译文准确而生硬,难得有欣赏的空间。后来我在浏览海外的一些英文报刊时,有幸读到一种十分精美的生活小故事或是小感悟,这些小文章篇幅多在1 000~3 000字左右,内容贴近生活和人类的情怀,以小见大,寓意深刻,往往以一件事来说明或暗示人生的某种意义。其中许多作品语言简洁、流畅,文风清新、优美,修辞平朴、多姿,写技高超、娴熟,堪称佳作精品,读来耳目一新。每每碰上这样的文章,我总是等不及要一口气读完,我被其中那种说不出的美所吸引、所打动,不忍停下来稍候片刻。至于在阅读过程中可能遇到的语言障碍,则是早已被文中甜美的意境给冲淡了。毕竟,读头一遍不求甚解并不是什么大不了的问题,关键是要把握语篇的基本内容和整体意蕴。何况,我觉得这样还不过瘾,还要再读。于是我将部分自己最钟情的作品复印下来,反复地读(每读一次都有不同的品味和收获),长时间地回味,全神贯注地背诵和复述,最后发展到忍不住拿起笔将它们翻译出来,对两种语言的结构运用和美的表现进行仔细的比较和认真的揣摩。一段时间下来,我深感获益匪浅。

本书所译注的37篇美文故事正是本人多年来收集和选择的结果,有名家经典,也有无名小卒的珠玑之作;有最新外刊上的华彩篇章,也有久读不厌而广为流传的精神佳品。本书的目的就是让读者在娱乐式的阅读过程中,明显地增强对英语的领悟;在书中营造的各种故事情调中潜移默化,融会贯通,提升语言运用的能

力;在进行英汉两种语言的对阅时,领略诸如增译、省译、词类转换、词序调整、正说反译、反说正译等等各种翻译技法及其魅力所在。

至于阅读方法,可谓多种多样。你可以打开本书目录,挑自己中意的篇目“跳”着读,先“上瘾”,再“爱屋及乌”,漫及其他;可以翻到书中间往后或往前读,或干脆从书尾倒着开始读;当然也可以翻开第1页,from cover to cover,有计划地按着顺序读。总之,怎么喜欢怎么读;读了就会有收获,有长进。如果因为某些篇目偏易或偏难而放弃对整本书的阅读,那是很可惜的。“偏易”的语言,有时我们不会说,不会用,需要重复学习;而且,温故而知新。“难点”可以对照译文和注解,或者通过查阅词典来得到解决。脚踏实地、知难而进才是学习英语成功的秘诀。

本书的文稿均系本人对照英文原文翻译和加注(文章的题目有些是直译,有些则是根据语篇内容,撇开题目原意,“另起炉灶”译出)。有少数篇目在翻译过程中参考了别处的译文,在此谨向有关人士表示诚挚的谢意。

本书的编排方式将吸收期刊的一些艺术加工手段,比如按文章内容分成若干板块,每篇文章加写题头语等。另外,为方便读者对照阅读,英、中文段落都进行了对应的编号;注释除编号外,放在译文版面另辟的纵栏上,便于查阅。

由于交稿时间仓促,加之本人水平有限,书中可能存在理解不透、表达不力的地方,欢迎广大读者批评指正。

本书的读者对象是:大中专院校英语专业学生、非英语专业学生以及社会上有一定基础的英语爱好者。

最后,我要特别感谢我的妻子李战荣女士,她承担了整本书的打印和校对工作。没有她的热心支持和全力帮助,我不可能顺利完成书稿。我还要特别感谢武汉大学出版社外语编辑室主任王春阁女士,是她在我译注此书的过程中,不断给我鞭策和鼓励,使我

## 前 言

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终于能够如期完稿。另外,本书责任编辑黄朝昉女士的辛勤劳动使这本书最终能同读者见面。她的敬业精神给我留下了美好的印象。

明廷雄

2001年5月30日

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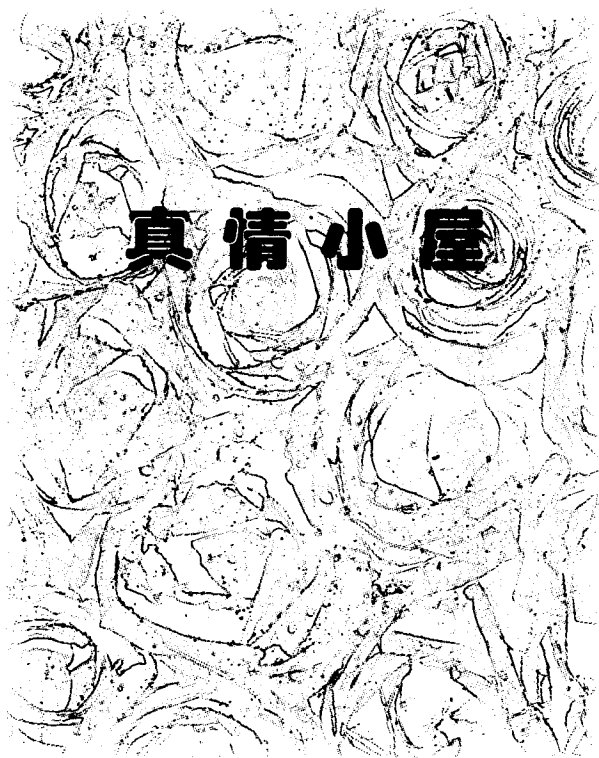
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*It is not the object so much as the connection that I cherish.*

## **My Irreplaceable Treasure**

*By* W. W. Meade

[1] Recently I gave a dinner party for some close friends. To add a touch of elegance to the evening, I brought out the good stuff—my white Royal Crown Derby china with the fine blue-and-gold border. When we were seated, one of the guests noticed the beat-up *gravy boat*<sup>1</sup> I'd placed among the newer, better dinnerware. "Is it an heirloom?" she asked tactfully.

[2] I admit the piece does look rather conspicuous<sup>2</sup>. For one thing, it matches nothing else. It's also old and chipped. But that little gravy boat is much more than an heirloom to me. It is the one thing in this world I will never *part with*<sup>3</sup>.

[3] The story begins more than 50 years ago, when I was seven years old and we lived in a big house along the Ohio River in New Richmond, Ohio. All that separated the house from the river was the street and our wide front lawn. In anticipation of high water, the ground floor had been built seven feet above grade<sup>4</sup>.

我珍视的与其说是这件器皿本身，还不如说是通过它而建立起来的同已故亲人的联系。

## 人生珍品

[美] W. W. 米德

[1]最近我举办了一场晚宴，招待几位亲密的朋友。为了给那个晚上增添一点优雅的情趣，我摆出了一样奇珍异宝——绘有精美蓝边和金边的白色皇冠德比牌瓷器。大伙儿就座后，其中一位客人注意到了这只残破的船形肉卤盘——我已把它放在了满桌新颖而别致的餐具当中。“这是一件传家宝么？”她乖巧地问道。

[2]我承认这只盘子看起来确实惹人注目。首先，它跟其他任何东西都不相匹配。其次，它古旧而且伤痕累累。但对我而言，这只小小的船形肉卤盘绝不只是一件传家之宝。它是这个世界上我一生都不会放弃的珍爱之物。

[3]故事发生在 50 多年前，当时我才 7 岁，我们家住在俄亥俄州新里士满俄亥俄河岸边的一幢大房子里。房子跟河水只隔着一条街道和房前宽阔的草坪。考虑到河水有上涨的可能，房子一楼的地板比地面水准高出 7 英尺。

### Notes 注释：

1. gravy boat: 船形肉卤盘
2. conspicuous: 惹人注目的
3. part with: 放弃
4. grade: 地面水准, 参考水准面



[4] Late in December the heavy rains came, and the river climbed to the tops of its banks. When the water began to rise in a serious way, my parents made plans in case the river should invade our house. My mother decided she would pack our books and her fine china in a small den<sup>5</sup> off the master bedroom.

[5] The china was not nearly as good as it was old. Each piece had a gold rim and a band of roses. But the service<sup>6</sup> had been her mother's and was precious to her. As she packed the china with great care, she said to me, "You must treasure the things that people you love have cherished. It keeps you in touch with them."

[6] I didn't understand, since I'd never owned anything I cared all that much about. Still, planning for disaster held considerable fascination for me.

[7] The plan was to move upstairs if the river reached the seventh of the steps that led to the front porch. We would keep a rowboat downstairs so we could get from room to room. The one thing we would not do was leave the house. My father, the town's only doctor, had to be where sick people could find him.

[8] I checked on the river's rise several times a day and lived in a state of hopeful alarm that the water would climb all the way up to the house. It did not disappoint. The muddy water rose higher until, at last, the critical seventh step was reached.

[9] We worked for days carrying things upstairs, until, late one afternoon, the water edged over the threshold and rushed into the house. I watched, amazed at how rapidly it rose.

[4]12月下旬下起了大暴雨,河水涨到河沿上。河水刚开始猛涨时,我的父母就制定出了各种应急方案,以防河水淹进我们的房子。妈妈决定将我们所有的书籍以及她精美的瓷器搬出大卧室,放入楼上的小书斋。

[5]这些瓷器丝毫也看不出年代久远的痕迹。每一件都绘有金边和玫瑰花束。这套食具是我外婆遗留下来的,对我妈显得十分珍贵。她一边小心翼翼地把它包好,一边对我说:“你得珍惜这些你所爱的人曾经珍惜过的东西。这可以保持你同他们的联系。”

[6]我当时并不懂她的意思,因为我从未拥有过什么能令我如此珍爱的器皿。不过,为抵抗灾难出谋划策,我感到兴趣盎然。

[7]家里的计划是,如果河水上涨到通向前廊的第七级台阶,我们就搬到楼上去。我们将在楼下系一条划艇,以便能够从一个房间到达另一个房间。我们就是不愿意离开自己的家园。父亲是镇上惟一的一名大夫,他得守在病人能找到他的地方。

[8]我每天查看几次河水上涨的情况,并惊恐地预料河水会一路漫进屋里。果然不出所料,浑浊的河水不断地高涨,终于淹到了至关重要的第七级台阶。

[9]连着几天,我们忙于把东西搬到楼上,一直忙到有一天下午五六点钟,河水徐徐地漫过门槛,冲进屋里。我监视着水情,发现河水上涨的速度快得惊人。

### Notes 注释:

5. den: 私室;书斋

6. service: (进餐、喝茶等用的)整套器具



[ 10 ] After the water got about a foot deep inside the house, it was hard to sleep at night. The sound of the river moving about downstairs was frightening. Debris<sup>7</sup> had broken windows, so every once in a while some floating battering ram—a log or perhaps a table—would bang in to the walls and make a sound like a distant drum.

[ 11 ] Every day I sat on the landing<sup>8</sup> and watched the river rise. Mother cooked simple meals in a spare bedroom she had turned into a makeshift kitchen. She was worried, I could tell, about what would happen to us. Father came and went in a small fishing boat. He was concerned about his patients and possible outbreaks of dysentery, pneumonia or typhoid.

[ 12 ] Before long, the Red Cross began to pitch<sup>9</sup> tents on high ground north of town. "We are staying right here," my father said.

[ 13 ] As the water continued to rise, I kept busy rowing through the house and looking at the furniture that had been too big to move upstairs. I liked to row around the great cozy couch, now almost submerged<sup>10</sup>, and pretend it was an island in a lake.

[ 14 ] One night very late I was awakened by a tearing noise, like timbers creaking. Then there was the rumbling sound of heavy things falling. I jumped out of bed and ran into the hallway. My parents were standing in the doorway to the den, where we had stored the books and my mother's beloved china.

[ 15 ] The floor of the den had fallen through, and all the treasures we had tried to save were now on the first floor, under the stealthily<sup>11</sup> rising river. My father lit our camp light, and we went to the landing to look. We could see nothing except the books bobbing<sup>12</sup> like little rafts on the water.



[10]当屋里的积水深达一英尺时,晚上就很难睡个安稳觉了。河水在楼下四处撞击的声音叫人惊恐万分。随水冲进来的碎石片击碎了窗户玻璃,偶尔,某件飘浮在水上的撞击物——一根圆木,也有可能是一张桌子——会猛烈地撞到墙上,发出的声音就像远方传来的鼓声。

[11]每天我都坐在楼梯平台上,看着河水上漲。妈妈把楼上一间空余的卧室临时当做厨房用,做一些简单的饭菜。我看得出来,她对我们将要面临的一切深感忧虑。父亲则坐在一条小渔船上来来去去。他担心他的病人以及可能突然蔓延开来的痢疾、肺炎和伤寒等诸多疾病。

[12]不久,红十字会开始在小镇北面的高地上架设帐篷。“我们就呆在家里,”父亲说。

[13]河水继续上涨,我不停地划着船,在屋里来回穿梭,看一看那些没法搬上楼去的大件家具。我喜欢划到那张舒适的长沙发椅的四周转悠,如今它差不多浸在水下了,我把它设想成为一座湖心岛。

[14]一天深夜,一阵猛烈撕扯的声音将我惊醒,就好像是木头在吱吱嘎嘎地断裂。接着传来重物坍塌时的隆隆声。我跳下床,冲进过道。父母正站在小书斋的门口。小书斋里存放着全家人的书籍和妈妈那套珍爱的瓷器。

[15]小书斋的地板已经塌陷下去,我们一直设法保全的珍贵瓷器如今都落到楼下的地板上了,淹没在不停暗涨的河水里。父亲点亮露营用的灯,我们借着灯光到楼梯平台上察看。除了书籍像小木筏一样飘浮在水面上,什么也看不见。

Notes 注释:

7. debris: (破坏物的) 碎片;瓦砾堆

8. landing: 楼梯平台

9. pitch: 搭(帐);扎(营)

10. submerge: 浸没;淹没

11. stealthily: 暗中地;偷偷地

12. bob: 上下跳动;浮动

