



William Shakespeare

Jennifer Bassett

威廉·莎士比亚



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著 Jennifer Bassett

译 谢萍萍

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简介

1578 年艾汶河畔的斯特拉福镇。有位男孩坐在书桌旁专心地学习，他认真听课、拼命看书。可他在想些什么呢？

1587 年伦敦。一位年轻人首次到伦敦谋生。他听着闹市的喧嚣声，看看伦敦塔雄伟的大墙，望着泰晤士河的淙淙流水。“静谧的泰晤士河，潺潺地流淌，直到我唱完心中的歌。”

1601 年伦敦。泰晤士河上的船夫对人群大声喊着：“快来，快来，快来呀！‘环球剧院’快挤满人啦！”2000 多观众渡过河，前来观看莎士比亚的最新一部戏剧——《哈姆雷特》。

这本讲述莎士比亚生平故事的书是由托比叙述的。托比不是一个真实的人物——或许莎士比亚也曾有过这样一位朋友，不过，我们无法确知。但是书中的其他人物历史上确有其人。他们非常熟悉这位演员、诗人兼剧作家莎士比亚。他们称他“莎士比亚缙绅”，都认为他是英国最杰出的诗人。他的朋友本·琼生曾这样写道：

“他不属于一个时代，而是属于所有的时代。”

本书作者詹妮弗·芭斯特是位资历很深的教师和作家。她生活在英国西南的德文郡。

1**Toby remembers**

My name is Toby. I'm an old man, eighty-three this spring. My house is right in the middle of Stratford-upon-Avon, and I can watch the street market from my window. But I live very quietly now. I'm just an old man, sitting in a chair.

I once knew the greatest man in England. For thirty years I was his friend. I worked with him in the theatre, through the good times and the bad times. He was a good friend to me. He was also the best playwright, the best poet, that ever lived in England. Will Shakespeare was his name.

I saw all his plays in the theatre. People loved them. They shouted, laughed and cried, ate oranges, and called for more. All kinds of people. Kings, Queens, Princes, great lords and ladies, poor people, the boys who held the horses... everyone. Will Shakespeare could please them all.

He put me in a play once. Well, he used my name—Toby. *Twelfth Night* was the play, I remember. Sir Toby Belch. He was a big fat man, who liked drinking too much and having a good time. Queen Elizabeth the First watched that play—on Twelfth Night, the 6th of January, 1601. She liked it, too.

Will's dead now, of course. He's been dead more than thirty years, and no one sees his plays now. The Puritans have



1 托比的回忆

我叫托比，一位年迈的老人，今年春天年过 83 岁。家住艾汶河畔斯特拉福镇中心，透过窗户，便可以望到街道的闹市。我的生活平和宁静，毕竟我已是一位要在轮椅上安度晚年的老头子了。

我曾认识英国的一位最伟大的人物。我与他相交 30 年，同在剧团工作，也共同度过人生中欢乐与艰辛的岁月。他是我的好友，也是英国有史以来最优秀的剧作家，最杰出的诗人。他就是威尔·莎士比亚。

我看过他所有上演的戏剧。这些戏剧颇受欢迎，也一度令观众狂喜大悲，不过他们都希望能看到他更多的戏剧。形形色色的人，上自国王、王后、王子和豪富名女，下至贫苦百姓和牵马的脚夫……所有的人，威尔·莎士比亚都能令他们开心欢娱。

他曾将我写进剧本，剧中用了我的原名——托比。我记得剧名为《第十二夜》，剧中的托比·培尔契爵士又大又胖而且喜欢酗酒行乐。女王伊丽莎白一世于 1601 年 1 月 6 号观看了此剧——《第十二夜》，也很喜欢。

当然威尔现在已不在人世，他过世都 30 多年了，如今没有人能看到他的戏。自从清教

right *adj.* most suitable. 恰好。 **playwright** *n.* a writer of plays. 剧作家。 **lord** *n.* a noble man of high rank. 贵族。 **please** *v.* to make amusing remark; giving satisfaction (to). 取悦；使满足。 **Puritan** *n.* (in England and New England in the 16th and 17th centuries) (a member) of a religious group that wished to make religion simpler and opposed the use of ceremony in church services. (英格兰及新英格兰在 16 及 17 世纪的)清教徒(主张宗教简朴，反对宗教仪式)。

closed all the theatres. There's no singing, no dancing, no plays. It wasn't like that in my young days. We had a good time in London, Will and I...

I've no teeth now, and my hair has all fallen out, but I can still think—and remember. I remember when Will and I were young, just boys really...

徒关闭了所有的剧院,就不再有歌声、舞蹈和戏剧了。如今的情形同我年轻时与威尔在伦敦度过的快乐时光相比已经大不一样了。

现在虽然我一副老态,没有牙齿,头发也掉光了,但我还能思考——还能回忆,我记得威尔和我年轻的时候,还是孩子的时候……

2**Stratford-upon-Avon**

It was a sunny day in October 1579 when I first met Will, just outside Stratford, near a big field of apple trees. I saw a boy up in one of the trees. He had red hair and looked about two years older than me.

‘What are you doing up there?’ I called.

‘Just getting a few apples,’ he said, smiling.

‘Those are Farmer Nash’s apples,’ I said, ‘and he’ll send his dogs after you if he sees you.’

‘Mr Nash has gone to market,’ the boy said. ‘Come on! They’re good apples.’

The next minute I was up the tree with him. But Will was wrong. Farmer Nash wasn’t at the market, and a few minutes later we saw his angry red face above the wall on the far side of the field.

Will and I ran like the wind and only stopped when we reached the river. We sat down to eat our apples.

Will was fifteen, and lived in Henley Street, he told me. His father was John Shakespeare, and he had a sister, Joan, and two younger brothers, Gilbert and Richard. There was another sister who died, I learnt later. And the next year he had another brother, little Edmund—the baby of the family.

‘Now, what about you?’ he asked.

‘There’s only me and my sister,’ I said. ‘My parents are

2 艾汶河畔的 斯特拉福镇



我第一次遇见威尔是在 1579 年 10 月的一天。那天,阳光明媚,就在斯特拉福镇外一座大苹果园附近,我看见有棵苹果树上坐着一位小男孩,长着红棕色头发,看模样大概大我两岁。

“你在上边干什么?”我问道。

“摘苹果。”他笑着答道。

“那可是纳什农场主的苹果,”我说,“如果他发现了,就要放狗咬你的。”

“纳什先生去集市了,”男孩说道,“来吧!苹果不错。”

一会儿我也上了树。但是威尔错了,纳什先生并没去集市,几分钟后我们看见果园那端墙头露出一张气得发红的脸。

威尔和我见势撒腿就跑,一口气跑到河边才坐下来吃苹果。

威尔告诉我,他 15 岁,住在亨里街。家中有父亲约翰·莎士比亚,妹妹琼和两个弟弟,吉尔伯特和理查。我后来说说他另有一位姐姐死了。第二年他又添了一个弟弟——威尔家的赤子小埃德蒙。

“那么你呢?”他问道。

“家里只有我和姐姐,”我说,“父母

sunny *adj.* having bright sunlight. 阳光充足的。
outside *prep.* 在外面;向……之外。
farmer *n.* a man who owns or plans the work on a farm. 农场主,农民。
market *n.* a building, square, or open place where people meet to buy and sell goods, esp. food, or sometimes animals. 市场,集市场所。
learn *v.* (learned or learnt) to become informed (of). 得知,获悉。

dead, and we live with my mother's brother. He's a shoe-maker in Ely Street and I work for him. What do you do?'

'I go to Mr Jenkins' school in Church Street,' Will said. 'Every day, from seven o' clock until five o' clock. Not Sundays, of course.'

I was sorry for him. 'Isn't it boring?' I asked.

'Sometimes. Usually it's all right.' He lay back and put his hands behind his head. 'But we have to read and learn all these Latin writers. I want to read modern writers, and English writers, like Geoffrey Chaucer. Can *you* read?' he asked.

'Of course I can read!' I said. 'I went to school.'

Will sat up and began to eat another apple. 'I want to be a writer,' he said. 'A poet. I want that more than anything in the world.'



We were friends from that day, until the day he died. We met nearly every day, and he taught me a lot about books and poetry and writers. He always had his nose in a book.

When Will left school, he worked for his father in Henley Street. John Shakespeare was a glove-maker, and he had other business too, like buying and selling sheep. But Will wasn't interested.

'What are we going to do, Toby?' he said to me one day. 'We can't spend all our lives making shoes and gloves!'

'Well,' I said, 'we could run away to sea and be sailors. Sail round the world, like Francis Drake.'

死后我们住在舅舅家。他是埃利街的一个鞋匠，我为他打工。你现在干什么？”

“我在教堂街詹金斯先生的学校就读，”威尔说，“每天从上午7点到下午5点上学，当然不包括星期天。”

我真为他难过。“这难道不乏味吗？”我问道。

“偶尔有这种感觉，不过通常觉得学校的生活也不错。”他仰身躺下，双手枕着头，“在学校，我们不得不学习所有那些拉丁作家的作品。可我只想阅读现代作家和英国作家的作品，比如杰弗利·乔叟。你会看书吗？”他问道。

“当然会啦！”我说，“我上过学。”

威尔坐起来又吃了一个苹果。“我想成为作家，”他继续说道，“诗人。世上再没有比这更令我神往的。”



自那天起我们就成了莫逆之交，直到他过世。我们几乎每天见面，他教了我许多书本和文学上的知识。他总是埋头博览群书。

威尔离开学校后就在亨里街帮助父亲料理生意。约翰·莎士比亚是一位手套工匠，同时经营其他生意，如羊的买卖生意。但威尔对做生意却不感兴趣。

“托比，接下来你有什么打算？”有一天他问我。“我们不能一辈子都做鞋和做手套吧！”

“对呀，”我说，“我们跑到海上当海员去，像弗朗西斯·杜雷克一样环绕地球航行。”

shoe-maker *n.* 鞋匠。
bore *v.* (*boring*) *to make* (someone) tired or uninterested, esp. by continual dull talk. (贬义)令人厌烦。
modern *adj.* of present time, or of the not far distant past; not ancient. 现代的；近代的。
nearly *adv.* almost; not quite or not yet completely. 几乎，近乎。
glove *n.* 手套。
interested *adj.* concerned; having or showing interest. 关切的，感兴趣的，表现出兴趣的。
sailor *n.* a person with a job on a ship, esp. one who is not a ship's officer. 船员，水手。

Drake sailed back to Plymouth in 1581, after his three-year journey round the world, but we were still in Stratford. We made lots of plans, but nothing ever came of them.

Will was still reading a lot and he was already writing poems himself. He sometimes showed them to me, and I said they were very good. I didn't really know anything about poetry then, but he was my friend.

Will was not happy with his writing. 'I've got so much to learn, Toby,' he said. 'So much to learn.'

Poor Will. He had a lot to learn about women, too. One day in October 1582 he came to my house with a long face.

'I'll never leave Stratford,' he said.

'Why not?' I asked. 'We'll get away one day. You'll see.'

'Perhaps *you* will,' he said, 'but I'm going to be married in a few weeks' time. To Anne Hathaway.'

My mouth fell open and stayed open. 'Married! To Anne Hathaway? Is that the Hathaways over at Shottery?'

'Yes,' Will said. I was working on some shoes on the table, and Will picked one up and looked at it.

'Well, er, she's a fine girl, of course,' I said uncomfortably. 'But... but, Will, she's twenty-six and you're only eighteen!'

'I know,' Will said. 'But I've got to marry her.'

'Oh no!' I said. 'You mean, she's...'

'That's right,' said Will. 'In about six months' time I'm going to be a father.'

杜雷克在环绕地球航行三年后于 1581 年回到普利茅斯,可我们还是呆在斯特拉福镇。尽管也制定了种种计划,但始终未付诸行动。

这段时间威尔依然博览群书并开始自己写诗,偶尔给我看他写的诗。虽然嘴上我都说他的诗写得不好,实际上我对诗歌是一窍不通。只不过他是我的好友我才这么说而已。

威尔对自己的诗歌并不满意。“托比,我要学的东西太多了。”他说,“实在太多了。”

可怜的威尔。他还得学会了解每个人。1582 年 10 月的一天他来到我的住处,神情沉郁。

“我永远不能离开斯特拉福镇了。”他说。

“为什么不能?”我问道,“总有一天我们会离开此地。你等着瞧。”

“或许你还行,”他说,“但过几个星期我就要结婚了。同安·哈瑟维结婚。”

·听此言我张着嘴愣了好久。“结婚。同安·哈瑟维结婚?你是说肖特雷邻乡哈瑟维家的女儿?”

“没错,”威尔说。当时我在做鞋,威尔拿起桌上的一支鞋,看看。

“当然,嗯,她是个好姑娘,”我同情地说道,“不过……不过,威尔,她已经 26 岁了,你才 18 岁呀!”

“我知道,”威尔说,“但是我非娶她不行。”

“哦,不可能这样吧!”我说,“你是说,她已经……”

“你猜对了,”威尔说道,“再过 6 个月我就要当爸爸了。”

sail *v.* (of any ship) to travel on the water. (指任何船于水上)航行。**journey** *n.* a trip of some distance. 旅行,旅程。**marry** *v.* to take (a person) in marriage. 结婚。**uncomfortably** *adv.* 不舒服地。**mean** *v.* have in mind as or for a purpose. 意为。

3

The actors come to town

Will married Anne Hathaway in November, and she came to live in Henley Street. John Shakespeare was pleased that his oldest son was married, but I don't think Will's mother wanted him to marry so young. Families cost a lot of money, and John Shakespeare was having a lot of money troubles in those days. Times were hard in Henley Street.

Susanna was born the next May. All babies look the same to me, but Will was very pleased with her.

'Look, Toby, she's got my eyes,' he said happily. 'She's going to be as beautiful as the Queen of Egypt, and as clever as King Solomon.'

'Oh yes?' I said. 'All parents talk like that about their children. I don't believe a word of it.'

I didn't see much of Will's wife. I knew she didn't like me. To her, I was one of Will's wild friends, who got him into trouble. She came from a very serious, Puritan family. Lots of church-going, and no singing or dancing.

Soon there was another baby on the way, and one evening in February 1585 I hurried round to Henley Street to hear the news. Will's sister, Joan, opened the door, and then Will came running down the stairs.

'It's two of them!' he said. 'Twins! A girl and a boy. Isn't that wonderful!'