

图书在版编目(CIP)数据

上外—牛津英语分级读物. 第3级=Oxford Progressive English Reader / (英)狄更斯(Dickens, C.)等著.
—上海:上海外语教育出版社, 1998.3 (2000重印)
ISBN 7-81046-407-8

I. 上… II. 狄… III. 英语-语言读物, 文学
IV. H319.4: I

中国版本图书馆CIP数据核字(1999)第54460号

出版发行: 上海外语教育出版社
牛津大学出版社

(上海外国语大学内) 邮编: 200083

电话: 021-65425300 (总机), 65422031 (发行部)

电子邮箱: bookinfo@sflep.com.cn

网址: <http://www.sflep.com.cn> <http://www.sflep.com>

责任编辑: 王金鹤

印刷: 常熟市印刷二厂

经销: 新华书店上海发行所

开本: 850×1092 1/32 印张 20 字数 493 千字

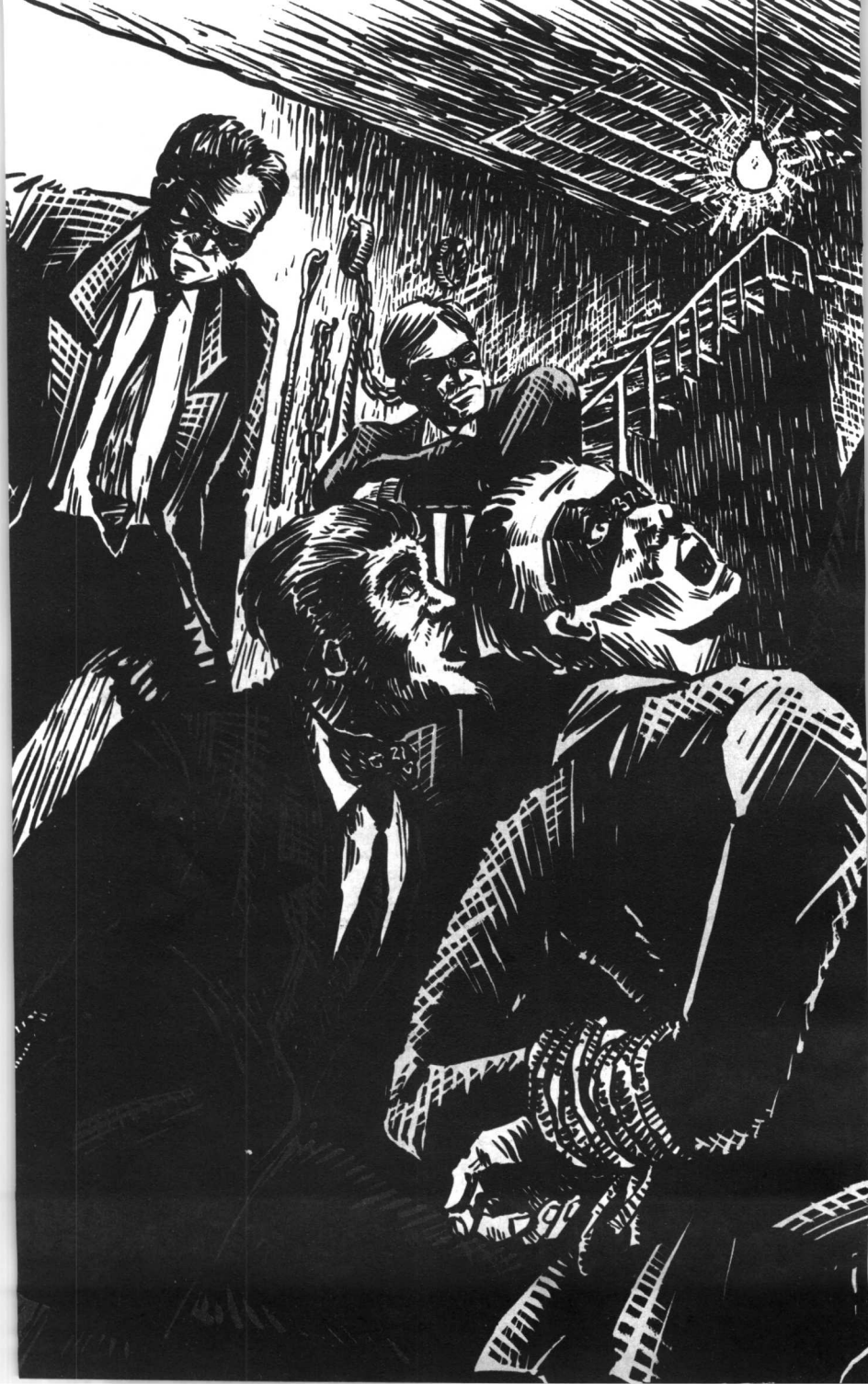
版次: 1998年3月第1版 2001年5月第5次印刷

印数: 10 000 册

书号: ISBN 7-81046-407-8 / G · 681

定价: 24.00 元

本版图书如有印装质量问题,可向本社调换





Tales of Crime and Detection

Edited by David Foulds

Hong Kong
Oxford University Press
Oxford

Originally published by Oxford University Press
(China) Limited

© Oxford University Press

This Chinese edition is licensed for sale in the
mainland part of China only and not for export
therefrom

English text and artwork © Oxford University
Press

Chinese text © Shanghai Foreign Language
Education Press (1998)

'Oxford' is a trademark of Oxford University Press

Tales of Crime and Detection

犯罪与侦探故事

编辑: David Foulds

Syllabus designer: David Foulds

Text processing and analysis by Luxfield Consultants Ltd

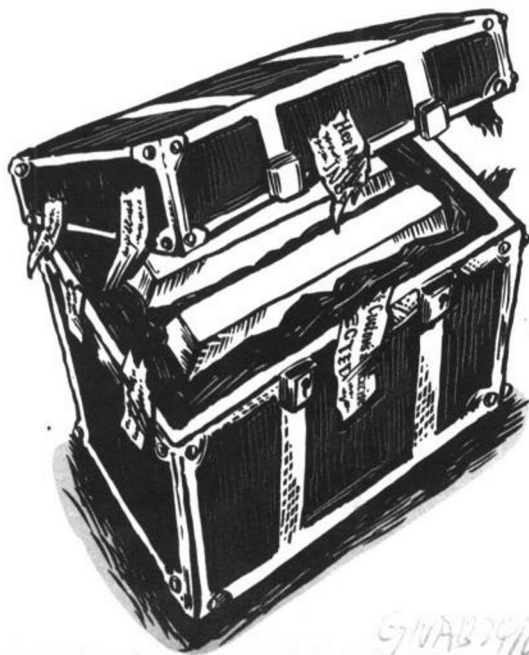
注释: 王 雨

Illustrator: 陈启贤

责任编辑: 王金鹤

CONTENTS

1 A TERRIBLY STRANGE BED	1
2 THE CAVE OF ALI BABA	13
3 SOLVED BY CHANCE	39
4 THE STOLEN GOLD BARS	59
QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES	85



A TERRIBLY STRANGE BED

The gambling house

Not long after I left college, I was living in Paris with an English friend. We were both young men and Paris was an exciting city, so we led a rather wild life.

One evening, we were walking along wondering how to amuse ourselves. My friend suggested going to Frascati's, a gambling house. I had been there many times before and had won and lost small amounts of money. I only played cards there because it amused me. But now I was tired of Frascati's. It was too respectable for me.

'Why don't we go to a different sort of place,' I asked my friend, 'a place where you don't have to be well-dressed?'

My friend replied that he knew such a place not too far away. 'It is just the sort of place you will like. It is not respectable at all, from what I have heard.'

We started out for the place, and arrived there very soon afterwards. Quickly entering the house, we went upstairs and left our hats and walking sticks with a doorman. Then we went into the gambling room. There were very few people there, but they were the kind of people I had foolishly wanted to see. I had thought it would be amusing, but I knew then, immediately, that what we had come to see was not at all funny.

The room was very quiet. At the gambling table there was a pale, thin, young man with long hair, who never said a word. He only stared fiercely at the cards in front of him. A fat player with an ugly face marked on a



piece of
paper how
many times red
or black came up. He
5 also did not say a word. Then
there was an old man, dressed in rather dirty clothes,
who had lost all his money and could no longer play.
He merely stared silently at the cards of the other
players. Even the croupier's voice sounded as if he had
10 no interest in what he was doing, as he collected or
paid out money. I had come to this place to laugh, but
it made me feel like crying instead.

I was feeling quite unhappy and so, in order to forget
how I felt, I looked for something exciting to do.
15 Unfortunately, the nearest excitement was the gambling
table, and so I began to play. Even more unfortunately,
as you will soon see, I also began to win. I won so
much and so quickly that I could hardly believe it. All
the other players in the room crowded around me, and
20 whispered that the stranger was going to win more than

the house could pay. They also looked very greedily at the large amount of money in front of me.

We were playing Red and Black, a game I had played in many European cities. But I had never become a real gambler, and I only played for amusement. I always had a lot of money and never won or lost very much. I could always just laugh and go away. I had never before wanted to win so much that I would be very unhappy if I lost.

This time it was different. For the first time in my life I had gambling fever. The more I won, the more excited I became. My head felt as if I were ill with too much drink. I left everything to chance, following no plan, and I was lucky.

Soon the other players stopped playing, as the amounts I was betting were too high for them. But they all stayed to watch, breathlessly, as I played alone against the bank. I threw more and more money onto the table, and the excitement grew greater every time I won. The more I won, the more I played. With every win, fresh heaps of gold were pushed over to me. I could hear cries of surprise from the crowd. The only one who was calm all this time was my friend. After a while he came to my side and whispered to me that we should leave this place. He told me to be satisfied with what I had already won. He begged me several times to leave with him but I paid no attention. When I spoke rudely to him, he left.

The old soldier

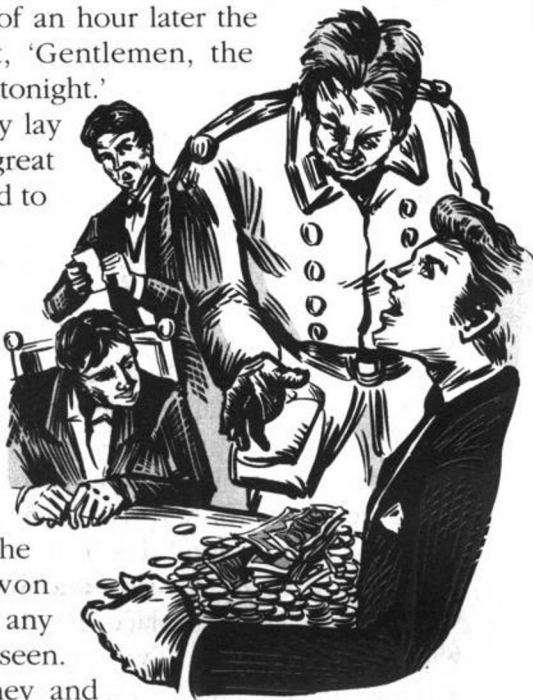
A little later, a man dressed as a soldier was encouraging me to go on betting. He handed me two coins that had fallen to the floor, and urged me to try to break the bank. He assured me that he had never seen such luck in his whole life.

I could only think about winning, and therefore did not notice how suspicious he looked. He called himself an old soldier, but he did not look much like one. His eyes were very red, and his nose was broken. His hands
5 were the dirtiest I had ever seen.

But, at the time, I did not notice all these things, and only listened to those who told me to go on playing. However, a quarter of an hour later the croupier called out, 'Gentlemen, the
10 bank will close for tonight.' All the bank's money lay in front of me in great heaps. It all belonged to me now.

I was pushing my hands into all this wealth when the old soldier gave me some advice. 'Tie
15 it all up in your handkerchief just like we used to do with bits of food in the army. You have won
20 more than could fill any pocket I have ever seen. Tie up all the money and
25 gold, and make sure you leave nothing behind.'

He picked up another coin from the floor. 'Tie it up with
30 a strong double knot, then it will all be safe. You are indeed a lucky man. I only wish we had been so lucky in the war. If the enemy had shot bundles of money like that at us ... Well, there is just one thing I ask you to do. Drink a bottle of champagne with an old soldier
35 before we say goodbye.'



'An excellent idea, my good friend,' I cried. 'A bottle of champagne! Let us drink to good luck.' We soon began to act like very old friends, shouting, 'Long live England! Long live France!' and other friendly words. We finished one bottle and I immediately called for another. That one was finished just as quickly, but now I began to feel very hot. 'My good soldier,' I cried like a madman, 'I feel quite strange. The wine you asked me to drink has set me on fire. Let us drink a third bottle to put the fire out!'

When the soldier heard me shouting like that, he shook his head. He then called out, 'Coffee!' He quickly got up and went to another room. To my surprise, everyone else who had been sitting about also got up and left. Perhaps they had all hoped to take advantage of me while I was drunk. Now they realized that some coffee would bring me back to normal again, so they did not want to wait any longer. Anyway, they all left.

A strange cup of coffee

The croupier had gone to eat his dinner in another room, and so, when the soldier returned, we were all alone in the room. He was very serious now, and explained that he had asked the lady of the house to make me some strong coffee. 'You must drink it, and then you will be well again. You must be careful. Some of the people who were gambling here tonight know that you have won a lot of money. They are all good people, of course, but sometimes they cannot stop themselves doing something bad. When you feel well again, you must get a carriage and ask the driver to take you straight home through the large, well-lit streets. That way you will arrive home safely, thanks to the advice of an honest old soldier.'

Just then the coffee arrived. My throat felt dry because I had drunk so much wine, and so I drank a whole cup at once. But immediately I felt worse than before. The whole room began to turn round and
5 round, and the soldier seemed to be jumping up and down in front of me. I could hear a terrible ringing sound in my ears, and I felt quite helpless. I stood up and had to hold on to the table for balance. I could just manage to say that I felt too ill to return home.

10 The soldier said, 'My friend, it would be better if you were to stay here for the night. You cannot walk properly. It would be mad for you to try to return home like that. The beds here are quite good. I am staying here tonight, and I think you should do the same.
15 Tomorrow you can go home in daylight and you will be completely safe.'

I felt so ill that I could only think of guarding my handkerchief full of money. I wanted to lie down somewhere and go to sleep. I accepted the soldier's
20 suggestion and, with his help, I went upstairs to the room they gave me. We then shook hands and we agreed to have breakfast together in the morning.

As soon as I was alone, I ran to the wash-bowl, drank some water from the jug, and put my head in the cold
25 water. After sitting down to calm myself, I slowly began to feel better. The bedroom was a pleasant change from the gambling room below. The lights were not so bright, and the air was cool. Already I felt much better.

But now I was thinking of all the dangers of sleeping
30 in a gambling house. However, the greater dangers of wandering about in the streets of Paris with all that money made me decide to stay there.

I made sure that the door was locked properly. I also pushed a heavy wooden box that had been under the
35 bed against it. I looked under the bed and into the

cupboard, and then examined the locks on the windows. After I had made sure of my safety, I undressed and lay down on the bed.

But, strangely, I could not sleep. I could not even close my eyes because I was still so excited. The events of the day had been so unusual. I rolled this way and that, but I could not find a comfortable position. I was wide awake. I tried to roll myself up in a little ball, like a kitten. I turned to the left and I turned to the right. It was no good; I knew I would have a sleepless night. 5 10

There were no books to read, but I knew I must find something to keep my mind busy, otherwise I would imagine all sorts of awful things. Then I would be very ill indeed in the morning.

I sat up and looked around the room. The moonlight coming through the window lit the room very brightly. I could see everything quite clearly. To pass the time, I made up a little game. I would look carefully at each object in the room and see what thoughts came into my mind. Very often, looking at something can bring back memories, but no matter how hard I looked, no thoughts came into my head. All I could do was to count the objects in the room. 15 20

The first thing was the bed I was lying on. It was very old with four big wooden posts, one at each corner. This was very unusual in Paris. The posts held up a cover which was like a roof made of some kind of cloth. All around the top there was a strip of cloth about six inches wide. There were curtains hanging from the top of the bed on all sides. They were tied open to the four posts. It was the kind of bed that our grandfathers and grandmothers used to sleep in. 25 30

Next I looked at the wash-stand. The water I had spilled before was still falling to the floor, drop by drop. The floor was made of bricks. My clothes were spread 35

out over two small chairs. There was another old chair in one corner of the room with torn white covers. The dressing-table was broken and the mirror on it was old and dirty. On the wall hung a picture of a man wearing
5 a Spanish hat with five large feathers in it. He was looking up and so I decided that I would also look up.

Was the bed moving?

All I could see was the top of the bed, so I looked at the picture again. The feathers in the hat were long.
10 There were three white ones and two green ones. The moonlight coming through the window was quite bright.

For a while I sat on the bed quietly, not thinking about anything at all. I nearly fell asleep. Then I looked
15 back at the picture once again. There was something wrong with it. I looked harder. Something was missing.



The feathers were gone. In fact, the whole hat was gone. Had the man taken off his hat? That was impossible. Something dark was covering the man's face.

Was the bed moving?

5

I rolled onto my back and stared up. Was I dreaming? Had I gone mad? Was the top of the bed really coming down towards me?

I could not believe my eyes. Slowly, silently, the cover was coming down towards me. I felt ice-cold and my blood seemed to stand still. I turned my head again to look at the picture. This way I could check if the bed really was moving.

10

One quick look and I knew the terrible truth. Now the man's face was completely hidden. Then the whole picture was gone. I was so frightened that I could not move a muscle, and I lay on the bed waiting for the top of the bed to come all the way down. When it covered me, I knew that I would not be able to breathe. It would suffocate me.

15

20

There was now only a little light coming from the moon, but I could still see the cover moving down, closer and closer. At the last moment, like an animal trying to save its life, I rolled off. My shoulder touched the edge of the cover, but there was just enough room for me to escape.

25

Now I could see the top of the bed. The cover, which I had thought was just a large cloth, was really a very thick mattress. It was being pressed down hard onto the lower mattress that I had been lying on. There was not enough room for my hand to go between the two. I could see that the top mattress was moved up and down the four posts by a big wooden screw. This screw went through a hole in the ceiling to the room above. Someone must be up there, turning the screw

30

35

and making the cover come down. The whole thing was a machine for murdering people. I did not think that such awful things still existed in a modern city like Paris.

5 After I had watched all this, I began to think much more clearly, and I understood what had happened to me. Something had been put into my coffee to make me fall asleep, but they had put in too much and it had had the opposite effect. I had been very foolish to trust
10 those people in the gambling house. They were criminals who wanted to kill me for my money. Then I thought of all the men who had come here just like me, and who had died in this bed. The thought made me feel very cold again.

15 After about ten minutes, the top of the bed moved up again, just as slowly and silently as it had come down. At the top neither the screw nor the hole in the ceiling could be seen. It was just an ordinary old four-poster bed again.

20

A lucky escape

I was able to move now, and I began to think of my escape. Quickly I put my clothes on, but I had to be absolutely quiet. If I made even the smallest noise, the murderers would hear it and try to kill me. I would not
25 be so lucky the second time. I listened but there was no sound anywhere. The box I had pushed in front of the door was still there, but I did not dare to think of what might be inside it. It could not be moved quietly, and I thought it would be too dangerous to escape
30 through the house anyway. There was only one way out — through the window.

The room was on the second floor and looked down into a small street. Slowly I crept to the window and

opened it very carefully. It took about five minutes but it seemed like five hours. It was too high to jump to the ground, but luckily there was a pipe beside the window which went all the way down. I did everything as quietly as a thief.

5

Just as I started to climb out of the window, I remembered the money under the pillow. I did not want those people in the house to have it even though I did not need it. Just then I thought I heard the sound of someone breathing outside my room. My heart almost stopped but it was only the wind blowing under the door. No one was there.

10

As soon as I was on the street, I ran to a police station that I knew was not too far away. I told an officer the story, but I was so out of breath that he thought I had drunk too much wine. However, when I finished the whole story, he believed me. Six men got ready and we all went to the house through the quiet streets.

15

Two policemen stood guard at the back of the house and the rest of us went to the front door. The officer told me to hide behind another policeman, and then knocked on the door. A light appeared at an upstairs window and the officer shouted, 'Open up, in the name of the law!'

20

A man who was only half-dressed opened the door. 'What do you want?'

25

'We want to see the Englishman who is sleeping in this house.'

'He went away hours ago.'

'He did not go away. His friend went away but he stayed. Take us to his room!'

30

'Honestly he —'

'He slept here,' interrupted the officer, 'but he found the bed uncomfortable and complained to us. We want to see it!'

35

The officers tied up the man who had opened the door, and everybody went upstairs. Everyone in the house was caught, even the 'old soldier'.

After looking at my room we went upstairs to the
5 room above it. Everything looked very ordinary, but one of the officers knocked on the floor in a few places. One place sounded strange, and the men opened the floor there. In the floor we could see the handle which was used to turn the big screw. Some of us then went
10 back to my room while the others lowered the bed again. I told the officer that this time it made a lot more noise. 'This is the first time my men have done it. The criminals have had a lot of practice,' explained the officer.

15 The rest of the story is quite simple. The 'old soldier' was the master of the gambling house. Many years before, he had been dismissed from the army for stealing. The croupier and the woman also knew about the bed. Who knows how many men had been
20 murdered there? The three of them went to prison and the house was closed, and I became the most famous person in Paris for a whole week.

There was one very good result. I never played Red and Black again. When I see the green top of a
25 gambling table, I always think of the top of that bed coming down to suffocate me.