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当代美国短篇小说选读



当代美国短篇小说选读

(英汉对照)

黄锡祥 选注

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当代美国短篇小说选读

AUGUST 2002: NIGHT MEETING

by Ray Bradbury

Before going on up into the blue hills, Tomás Gomez stopped for gasoline at the lonely station.^①

“Kind of^② alone out here, aren’t you, Pop?” said Tomás.

The old man wiped off the windshield of the small truck. “Not bad.”

“How do you like Mars, Pop?”

“Fine. Always something new. I made up my mind when I came here last year I wouldn’t expect nothing, nor ask nothing, nor be surprised at nothing.^③ We’ve got to forget Earth and how things were. We’ve got to look at what we’re in here, and how different it is. I get a hell of a lot of fun out of just the weather here. It’s Martian weather. Hot as hell daytimes, cold as hell nights.^④ I get a big kick out of the different flowers and different rain.^⑤ I came to Mars to retire and I wanted to retire in a place where everything is different. An old man needs to have things different. Young

① 这段汉译是对全段融会贯通后的再现。译文起首二句，点出全篇意境，原文意思保留，译笔别具一格。

② kind of...: 有点儿……。常用口头语，有时候写成 kinda。

③ I wouldn’t expect nothing, nor ask nothing, nor be surprised at nothing: 一不求，二不问，三不惊。=I wouldn’t expect anything, nor ask anything, nor be surprised at anything。用双重(甚至多重)否定来表示否定，在不规范的现代英语中很常见。本篇许多对话中都出现这种语言现象。

④ daytimes=in the daytime; nights=at night. 美语用法。

⑤ I get a big kick out of the different flowers and different rain: 这儿花也不同，雨也不同，可有趣呢。kick: 兴味、刺激。俗语。

二〇〇二年八月：邂逅

[美]雷·布拉德伯里

无可译

群山苍翠。加油站孤零零的。入山之前，汤默思在这儿停车加油。

“您在这儿，没个左邻右里呀，老大爷。”

老头摸着车头的挡风玻璃，说：“还好。”

“您觉得火星怎么样，老大爷？”

“妙极了。看不尽的新鲜事。我去年来的时候就打定主意，不管什么，一不求，二不问，三不惊。咱们得忘记地球，忘记过去。咱们得看看周围这一切。跟地球大不相同呢。就说天气吧，真有意思。火星天气：白天热得要命，晚上冷得要命。这儿花也不同，雨也不同，可有趣呢。我是告老来火星的，想找个样样跟地球不同的地方过日子。老头嘛，就得这样。不是老头不睬你，

people don't want to talk to him, other old people bore hell out of him. So I thought the best thing for me is a place so different that all you got to do is open your eyes and you're entertained. I got this gas station. If business picks up too much, I'll move on back to some other old highway that's not so busy, where I can earn just enough to live on and still have time to feel the different things here."

"You got the right idea, Pop," said Tomas, his brown hands idly on the wheel. He was feeling good. He had been working in one of the new colonies for ten days straight and now he had two days off and was on his way to a party.

"I'm not surprised at anything any more," said the old man. "I'm just looking. I'm just experiencing. If you can't take Mars for what she is, you might as well go back to Earth. Everything's crazy up here, the soil, the air, the canals, the natives (I never saw any yet, but I hear they're around), the clocks. Even my clock acts funny. Even time is crazy up here. Sometimes I feel I'm here all by myself, no one else on the whole damn planet. I'd take bets on it. Sometimes I feel about eight years old, my body squeezed up and everything else tall. Jesus, it's just the place for an old man. Keeps me alert and keeps me happy. You know what Mars is? It's like a thing I got for Christmas seventy years ago—don't know if you ever had one—they called them kaleidoscopes, bits of crystal and cloth and beads and pretty junk. You held it up to the sunlight and looked in through at it, and it took your breath away.^⑥ All the patterns! Well, that's Mars. Enjoy it. Don't ask it to be nothing else but what it is.^⑦ Jesus, you know that highway right there, built by the Martians, is over sixteen centuries old and still in good condition? That's one dollar and fifty cents, thanks and good night."

⑥ take one's breath away: 令人惊叹不已。

⑦ Don't ask it to be nothing else but what it is. = Don't ask it to be anything else but what it is. 双重否定表示肯定。同注⑥。

同是老头又叫你厌烦，不如找个样样新奇的地方，睁眼就开心。我这个加油站，要是生意太好，得搬到偏僻一点的路上。挣的够过活就行；可要有空去感受这儿的种种新奇。”

“您这个想法不错呀，老大爷，”汤默思说；方向盘上黝黑的双手暂且偷闲。此刻他身心愉快。在一个新建的移民区一口气干了十天，赢得两天假期，今晚大联欢，正宜驱车赴会。

“如今我是见怪不怪，”老头说：“什么都看一下，什么都体验一下。不接受火星的现实，不如回地球算了。这儿没有一样不荒唐：土壤、空气、运河、土人（没见过，听说有）、时钟。连我的时钟都作怪了。这儿连时间都荒唐。有时候觉得这个混帐行星上只有自己，再没别人；拿这个打赌我都敢呢。有时候又觉得自己好象才八岁，身子压缩了，别的东西都很高大。好家伙，这种地方对老头正合适。叫我一天到晚挺精神，挺开心。火星是什么？就象我七十年前过圣诞节得到的一件东西——不知道你玩过没有——叫做万花筒，装的是亮晶晶、滴溜溜、红红绿绿、零零碎碎的废物。对着阳光一看，可真令人惊叹。那些图案哪！火星也就是这么回事。欣赏欣赏吧。别要求它变成另外一个样子。好家伙，你看这条大道，火星一千六百多年前造的，如今还很好呢。总共一块半钱，谢谢。晚安。”

Tomás drove off down the ancient highway, laughing quietly.

It was a long road going into darkness and hills and he held to the wheel, now and again reaching into his lunch bucket and taking out a piece of candy. He had been driving steadily for an hour, with no other car on the road, no light, just the road going under, the hum, the roar, and Mars out there, so quiet. Mars was always quiet, but quieter tonight than any other. The deserts and empty seas swung by him,^⑧ and the mountains against the stars.

There was a smell of Time in the air tonight. He smiled and turned the fancy^⑨ in his mind. There was a thought. What did Time smell like? Like dust and clocks and people. And if you wondered what Time sounded like it sounded like water running in a dark cave and voices crying and dirt dropping down upon hollow box lids, and rain. And going further, what did Time look like? Time looked like snow dropping silently into a black room or it looked like a silent film in an ancient theater, one hundred billion faces falling like those New Year balloons down and down into nothing. That was how Time smelled and looked and sounded. And tonight—Tomas shoved a hand into the wind outside the truck—tonight you could almost touch Time.

He drove the truck between hills of Time. His neck prickled and he sat up, watching ahead.

He pulled into a little dead Martian town, stopped the engine, and let the silence come in around him. He sat, not breathing, looking out at the white buildings in the moonlight. Uninhabited for centuries. Perfect, faultless, in ruins, yes, but perfect, never-

⑧ The deserts and empty seas swung by him: 荒漠沧海, 沧海荒漠, 悠悠然飘过他的身旁, ……——此景是地球人在火星古道上驱车所见。译者用倒装和重叠结合, 译出desert 和 empty sea 的复数, 加上用“悠悠然飘过”处理 swung, 深得译事之奥秘。不仅译出了意思, 且译出动感和原文中如诗般的韵味, 令读者不禁为之神往。

⑨ fancy: 奇想。

古道上，汤默思驾车疾驰，暗自发笑。

此去路漫漫，伸向黑暗，深入群山。他掌握着方向盘，不时伸手从小提桶里拿糖果吃。沉着向前，走了一小时，不见别的车辆，不见灯光，只见古道从车下滑过。发动机如吟如啸。汽车外，火星一片静寂。火星就是这么静的，不过今夜比往常更静。荒漠沧海，沧海荒漠，悠悠然飘过他身旁。还有那衬着星空的群山。

今夜，仿佛闻到时间的气味。他微微一笑，顿生遐想。有意思。时间是什么气味？如尘埃，如时钟，如众人。时间的声音呢？如黑洞流泉，如百姓呼号，如粪土洒在空箱上，如降雨。时间的形象呢？如雪片悄悄掉进暗室，如古老电影院中无声影片上亿万人的面孔象新年的气球纷纷坠落，落呀，落呀，落入虚无。这就是时间的气味、声音、形象。而今夜——汤默思伸手探探车外的风——今夜几乎摸得着时间。

他驾车穿过时间的万重山岭。忽然脖子感到刺痛，他警觉起来，注视前方。

他驶入昔日火星人聚居的一座小小的死城，停车关了发动机，让静寂潜入车中，笼罩自己。他屏息端坐，看见月华流照的屋宇依然皎洁。荒弃了不知多少世纪，却还那么完美。是的，完

theless.

He started the engine and drove on another mile or more before stopping again, climbing out, carrying his lunch bucket, and walking to a little promontory where he could look back at that dusty city. He opened his thermos and poured himself a cup of coffee. A night bird flew by. He felt very good, very much at peace.

Perhaps five minutes later there was a sound. Off in the hills, where the ancient highway curved, there was a motion, a dim light, and then a murmur.

Tomás turned slowly with the coffee cup in his hand.

And out of the hills came a strange thing.

It was a machine like a jade-green insect, a praying mantis, delicately rushing through the cold air, indistinct, countless green diamonds winking over its body, and red jewels that glittered with multifaceted eyes. Its six legs fell upon the ancient highway with the sounds of a sparse rain which dwindled away, and from the back of the machine a Martian with melted gold for eyes looked down at Tomás as if he were looking into a well.

Tomás raised his hand and thought Hello!^⑩ automatically but did not move his lips, for this was a Martian.^⑪ But Tomás had swum in blue rivers on Earth, with strangers passing on the road, and eaten in strange houses with strange people, and his weapon had always been his smile. He did not carry a gun. And he did not feel the need of one now, even with the little fear that gathered about his heart at this moment.

The Martian's hands were empty too. For a moment they looked across the cool air at each other.

It was Tomás who moved first.

⑩ thought Hello: 想打招呼(但没叫出声)。

⑪ for this was a Martian: 因为面前果真是个火星星人。was 在原文中用斜体, 表示强调, 故译“果真是”。

美，尽管已成废墟。

他开车走了一两英里又停住，拿着手提桶下车，到海角小丘上回头再看看那千年尘封的死城。他打开保温瓶，倒出一杯咖啡。夜空飞过一只鸟。他感到很舒坦，很宁静。

过了五分钟左右，听见响声。山中古道拐弯处有动静，有微光，接着传来低沉的嗡嗡响。

汤默思慢慢转过身来，手里还拿着那杯咖啡。

山中跑出一只怪物。

是机器，却象碧绿的昆虫；仿佛轻巧的螳螂冲破山间的寒气，身形一时看不清，只见宝光万点，或红或青，闪烁闪烁，六条腿在古道上奔驰，声如细雨。越来越近，终于止步；机上有个火星，眼似熔金，俯视汤默思，有如窥探井中奥秘。

汤默思举手打招呼，心里自然而然想叫一声“喂！”可是他沒有开口，因为面前果真是个火星。汤默思在地球上常到春水如蓝的大河中游泳，河畔不时有陌生人经过，也曾在异乡的客舍同陌生人共桌进餐，从来靠的是他那唯一的武器——微笑。他不带枪，此刻也不觉得需要有枪，尽管心里有点害怕。

那个火星手里也没拿什么。夜凉如水，两人相看无语。

还是汤默思采取主动。

“Hello !” he called.

“Hello !” called the Martian in his own language.

They did not understand each other.

“Did you say hello ?” they both asked.

“What did you say ?” they said, each in a different tongue.

They scowled.

“Who are you ?” said Tomás in English.

“What are you doing here ?” In Martian; the stranger’s lips moved.

“Where are you going ?” they said, and looked bewildered.

“I’m Tomás Gomez.”

“I’m Muhe Ca.”

Neither understood, but they tapped their chests with the words and then it became clear.

And then the Martian laughed. “Wait !” Tomás felt his head touched, but no hand had touched him. “There !” said the Martian in English. “That is better !”

“You learned my language, so quick !”

“Nothing at all !”

They looked, embarrassed with a new silence, at the steaming coffee he had in one hand.

“Something different ?” said the Martian, eyeing him and the coffee, referring to them both, perhaps.

“May I offer you a drink ?” said Tomás.

“Please.”

The Martian slid down from his machine.②

A second cup was produced and filled, steaming. Tomás held it out.

Their hands met and—like mist—fell through each other.

“Jesus Christ !” cried Tomás, and dropped the cup.

② The Martian slid down from his machine: 火星入翩然下机。slid down 当然可译为“滑下”，但这样便失去了神韵。注意这是个“火星入”。

“喂！”他喊。

“喂！”火星人应了一声，用的是自己的语言。

双方互不理解。

“你是跟我打招呼吗？”两人相问。

“你说什么？”两人言语不通。

双方面露愠色。

“你是谁？”汤默思说的是英语。

“你在这儿干什么？”对方说的是火星话。

“你要上哪儿？”两人提出同样的问题，表情带着同样的迷惑。

“我叫汤默思。”

“我叫穆赫。”

还是不懂。两人再说一遍，拍拍自己胸膛。这回懂了。

火星人放声大笑。“等一等！”汤默思感觉自己的头受到触动，可没看见触动他的手。“行啦！”火星人说起英语来了：“这下子好了！”

“你学了我的语言，这么快！”

“没什么了不起的！”

又一阵沉默，双方都有点尴尬，目光转向汤默思手里那杯热气腾腾的咖啡。

“新东西？”火星人说话时盯着他和咖啡，也许兼指二者。

“喝一杯？”汤默思以问代答。

“好的。”

火星人翩然下机。

汤默思再拿一只杯，倒了咖啡，热气腾腾，递给火星人。

两手相交，如烟如幻，交而不接。

“耶稣基督！”汤默思一声惊呼，杯子坠地。

“Name of the Gods !” said the Martian in his own tongue.

“Did you see what happened ?” they both whispered.

They were very cold and terrified.^⑩

The Martian bent to touch the cup but could not touch it.

“Jesus !” said Tomás.

“Indeed.” The Martian tried again and again to get hold of the cup, but could not. He stood up and thought for a moment, then took a knife from his belt. “Hey !” cried Tomás. “You misunderstand, catch !” said the Martian, and tossed it. Tomás cupped his hands. The knife fell through his flesh. It hit the ground. Tomás bent to pick it up but could not touch it, and he recoiled, shivering.

Now he looked at the Martian against the sky.

“The stars !” he said.

“The stars !” said the Martian, looking, in turn, at Tomás.

The stars were white and sharp beyond the flesh of the Martian, and they were sewn into his flesh like scintillas swallowed into the thin, phosphorescent membrane of a gelatinous sea fish. You could see stars flickering like violet eyes in the Martian’s stomach and chest, and through his wrists, like jewelry.

“I can see through you !” said Tomás.

“And I through you !” said the Martian, stepping back.

Tomás felt of his own body and, feeling the warmth, was reassured. I am real, he thought.

The Martian touched his own nose and lips. “I have flesh,” he said, half aloud. “I am alive.”

Tomás stared at the stranger. “And if I am real, then you must be dead.”

“No, you !”

“A ghost !”

^⑩ They were very cold and terrified: 两人毛骨悚然。用一个普通的汉语成语巧妙译出原文。