

张艳玲◎主编

The Most Inspiring Stories in The World

最鼓舞人的励志故事

上册

这些英文，都有共同的特点：经典、优美、百读不厌。既可以陶冶情操，增长知识，给人以快乐的感受，又可激励人们向上。这些美文历经时间的考验而沉淀下来，成为历代传诵不衰的美文。



新疆美术摄影出版社
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目 录

上 册

第一篇 生命篇

Three Days To See	3
假如给我三天光明	25
Give Us 15 Minutes A Day	43
每天只需 15 分钟	51
Make Proper Use Of Time	57
合理利用时间	59
This Is The Only Thing Which He Has	61
这是你唯一拥有的	63
What Everybody Wants	65
每个人究竟想要什么	76
Sorrows Of The Millionaire	85
百万富翁的悲哀	89



第二篇 态度篇

Attitude Is Everything	95
态度决定一切	99
Learn To Be Thankful	103
学会感恩	107
A Million Dollar Lesson	110
一堂价值一百万美元的课	112
Weakness or Strength	115
弱点还是强项	118
Against Idleness	121
反对怠惰	132

下 册

Of Constancy	139
论百折不挠	144
Don't Follow Blindly	148
不要盲目追随	150
Moving Thoughts	152
换种方式思考	156

第三篇 目标篇

Three kinds Of Goals	161
三种目标	163



How To Get Cooperation	165
怎样赢得合作	172
Job Hunting	177
求 职	181
That Men By Various Ways Arrive At The Same End	185
一个终点,几种途径	194
Let No Act Be Done Without A purpose	200
做事要有明确的目标	201
A Formula That Will Work Wonders For You	202
为你创造奇迹的一项公式	207
How To Make Important Decisions	211
如何做出重大决定	213

第四篇 成功篇

The Essence Of Win—Win Principle	217
双赢的真谛	219
Handling The Knowledge Explosion	221
应对知识爆炸	228
Risk To Succeed	233
为成功冒险	234
A Sure Way Of Making Enemies And How To Avoid It	235



如何避免与人树敌	243
Seize And Make Use OF Opportunity	248
把握并利用机会	250
Recognizing And Catching Chance	252
识别并抓住机会	253

第五篇 奋斗篇

Keep Swimming	257
游下去	258
Learning To Get Back Up	260
学会站起来	263
Work First, Fee Second	265
工作第一, 报酬第二	268
How To Communicate Effectively	271
如何有效地沟通	273
Work And Pleasure	275
工作和娱乐	278

第一篇 生命篇

即使能活上三千年，甚至三万年，你也应该记住：人所失去的，只是他此刻拥有的生活；人所拥有的，也只是他此刻正在失去的生活。因此，生命是长是短没有什么不同。此刻对于所有人都是一样的，那正在消失的也都是一样的。所以我们失去的不过是单纯的片刻；一个人不可能既失去过去，又失去未来——还没有经历的事情，怎么可能被夺走呢？



Three Days To See

Helen Keller

All of us have read thrilling stories in which the hero had only a limited and specified time to live. Sometimes it was as long as a year; sometimes as short as twenty-four hours. But always we were interested in discovering just how the doomed man chose to spend his last days or his last hours. I speak, of course, of free men who have a choice, not condemned criminals whose sphere of activities is strictly delimited.

Such stories set us thinking, wondering what we should do under similar circumstances. What events, what experiences, what associations should we crowd into those last hours as mortal beings? What happiness should we find in reviewing the past, what regrets?

Sometimes I have thought it would be an excellent rule to live each day as if we should die tomorrow.



row. Such an attitude would emphasize sharply the values of life. We should live each day with gentleness, a vigor, and a keenness of appreciation which are often lost when time stretches before us in the constant panorama of more days and months and years to come. There are those, of course, who would adopt the Epicurean motto of "Eat, drink, and be merry," but most people would be chastened by the certainty of impending death.

In stories the doomed hero is usually saved at the last minute by some stroke of fortune, but almost always his sense of values is changed. he becomes more appreciative of the meaning of life and its permanent spiritual values. It has often been noted that those who live, or have lived, in the shadow of death bring a mellow sweetness to everything they do.

Most of us, however, take life for granted. We know that one day we must die, but usually we picture that day as far in the future. When we are in buoyant health, death is all but unimaginable. We seldom think of it. The days stretch out in an end-



less vista. So we go about our petty tasks, hardly aware of our listless attitude toward life.

The same lethargy, I am afraid, characterizes the use of all our faculties and senses. Only the deaf appreciate hearing, only the blind realize the manifold blessings that lie in sight. Particularly does this observation apply to those who have lost sight and hearing in adult life. But those who have never suffered impairment of sight or hearing seldom make the fullest use of these blessed faculties. Their eyes and ears take in all sights and sounds hazily, without concentration and with little appreciation. It is the same old story of not being grateful for what we have until we lose it, of not being conscious of health until we are ill.

I have often thought it would be a blessing if each human being were stricken blind and deaf for a few days at some time during his early adult life.

Darkness would make him more appreciative of sight; silence would teach him the joys of sound.

Now and then I have tested my seeing friends to discover what they see.



Recently I was visited by a very good friend who had just returned from a long walk in the woods, and I asked her what she had observed... "Nothing in particular," she replied. I might have been incredulous had I not been accustomed to such repose, for long ago I became convinced that the seeing see little.

How was it possible, I asked myself, to walk for an hour through the woods and see nothing worthy of note? I who cannot see find hundreds of things to interest me through mere touch. I feel the delicate symmetry of a leaf. I pass my hands lovingly about the smooth skin of a silver birch, or the rough, shaggy bark of a pine. In the spring I touch the branches of trees hopefully in search of a bud the first sign of awakening Nature after her winter's sleep. I feel the delightful, velvety texture of a flower, and discover its remarkable convolutions; and something of the miracle of Nature is revealed to me. Occasionally, if I am very fortunate, I place my hand gently on a small tree and feel the happy quiver of a bird in full song. I am delighted to have the cool



waters of a brook rush thought my open finger. To me a lush carpet of pine needles or spongy grass is more welcome than the most luxurious Persian rug. To me the page ant of seasons is a thrilling and unending drama, the action of which streams through my finger tips.

At times my heart cries out with longing to see all these things. If I can get so much pleasure from mere touch, how much more beauty must be revealed by sight. Yet, those who have eyes apparently see little. The panorama of color and action which fills the world is taken for granted. It is human, perhaps, to appreciate little that which we have and to long for that which we have not, but it is a great pity that in the world of light the gift of sight is used only as a mere conveniences rather than as a means of adding fullness to life.

If I were the president of a university I should establish a compulsory course in "How to Use Your Eyes". The professor would try to show his pupils how they could add joy to their lives by really seeing what passes unnoticed before them. He would try to



awake their dormant and sluggish faculties.

Perhaps I can best illustrate by imagining what I should most like to see if I were given the use of my eyes, say, for just three days. And while I am imagining, suppose you, too, set your mind to work on the problem of how you would use your own eyes if you had only three more days to see. If with the on—coming darkness of the third night you knew that the sun would never rise for you again, how would you spend those three precious intervening days? What would you most want to let your gaze rest upon?

I, naturally, should want most to see the things which have become dear to me through my years of darkness. You, too, would want to let your eyes rest on the things that have become dear to you so that you could take the memory of them with you into the night that loomed before you.

If, by some miracle, I were granted three seeing days, to be followed by a relapse into darkness, I should divide the period into three parts.



The First Day

On the first day, I should want to see the people whose kindness and gentleness and companionship have made my life worth living. First I should like to gaze long upon the face of my dear teacher, Mrs. Anne Sullivan Macy, who came to me when I was a child and opened the outer world to me. I should want not merely to see the outline of her face, so that I could cherish it in my memory, but to study that face and find in it the living evidence of the sympathetic tenderness and patience with which she accomplished the difficult task of my education. I should like to see in her eyes that strength of character which has enabled her to stand firm in the face of difficulties, and that compassion for all humanity which she has revealed to me so often.

I do not know what it is to see into the heart of a friend through that “window of the soul”, the eye. I can only “see” through my finger tips the outline of a face. I can detect laughter, sorrow, and many other obvious emotions. I know my friends from the feel of their faces. But I cannot really picture their personalities by touch. I know their personalities, of course, through other means, through the thoughts they express to me,



through whatever of their actions are revealed to me. But I am denied that deeper understanding of them which I am sure would come through sight of them, through watching their reactions to various expressed thoughts and circumstances, through noting the immediate and fleeting reactions of their eyes and countenance.

Friends who are near to me I know well, because through the months and years they reveal themselves to me in all their phases; but of casual friends I have only an incomplete impression, an impression gained from a handclasp, from spoken words which I take from their lips with my finger tips, or which they tap into the palm of my hand.

How much easier, how much more satisfying it is for you who can see to grasp quickly the essential qualities of another person by watching the subtleties of expression, the quiver of a muscle, the flutter of a hand. But does it ever occur to you to use your sight to see into the inner nature of a friend or acquaintance? Do not most of you seeing people grasp casually the outward features of a face and let it go at that?

For instance can you describe accurately the faces of five good friends? some of you can, but many cannot. As