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创刊十年美文精华版

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The Wallet

钱夹

by Arnold Fine 马静 译




王惟震 图


As I walked home one freezing day, I stumbled on a wallet someone had lost in the street. I picked it up and looked inside to find some identification so I could call the owner. But the wallet contained only three dollars and a crumpled letter that looked as if it had been in there for years. The envelope was worn and the only thing that was legible on it was the return address. I started to open the letter, hoping to find some clue. Then I saw the date-line -- 1924. The letter had been written almost sixty years earlier. It was written in a beautiful feminine handwriting, on powder-blue stationery with a little flower in the left-hand corner. It was a "Dear John" letter that told the recipient,

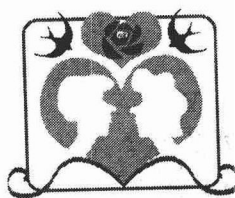
一个寒冷的日子，我在回家的路上偶然发现了一个遗失的钱夹。我拾起它并试图找到一些可联系失主的身份证明。但是皮夹中只有3元钱和一封被弄皱的信，这封信看来好像已经放在钱夹里很多年了。信封已磨损，惟有寄信人的住址还清晰可辨。我打开信，希望找到一些线索。信的落款日期是1924年，差不多写于60年前。信的秀秀笔迹出自女性之手，在淡蓝色信笺的左侧角落有一朵小花。这是一封“绝情

whose name appeared to be Michael, that the writer could not see him any more because her mother forbade it. Even so, she wrote that she would always love him. It was signed Hannah.

It was a beautiful letter, but there was no way, except for the name Michael, to identify the owner. Maybe if I called information, the operator could find a phone listing for the address on the envelope. The operator suggested I speak with her supervisor, who hesitated for a moment, then said, "Well, there is a phone listing at that address, but I can't give you the number." She said as a courtesy, she would call that number, explain my story and ask whoever answered if the person wanted her to connect 

信”，写给迈克尔的，发信人因她母亲的阻拦再不能见他。即便如此，她写道她仍会一直爱他。署名是汉娜。

这是一封精美的信，但是除了迈克尔的名字以外，没有其他办法确定皮夹的主人。或许询问信息台，话务员可以通过信封上的住址查到电话。话务员建议我和她的负责人说，那位负责人犹豫了一会儿，然后说：“嗯，有那个住址的电话号码，但我不能给你。”她说出于礼貌，她可以打那个电话，说明我的情况 



me.

I waited a few minutes and then the supervisor was back on the line. "I have a party who will speak with you." I asked the woman on the other end of the line if she knew anyone by the name of Hannah. She gasped. "Oh! We bought this house from a family who had a daughter named Hannah. But that was thirty years ago!" "Would you know where that family could be located now?" I asked. "I remember that Hannah had to place her mother in a nursing home some years ago," the woman said. "Maybe if you got in touch with them, they might be able to track down the daughter." She gave me the name of the nursing home, and I called the number. The woman on the phone told me the old lady had passed away some years ago, but the nursing home did have a phone number for where the daughter might be living. I thanked the person at the nursing home and phoned the number she gave me. The woman who answered explained that Hannah herself was now living in a nursing home. This whole thing is stupid, I thought to myself. Why am I making such a big deal over finding the owner of a wallet that has only three dollars and

后,看接电话的人是否愿意让她再与我联系。

我等候了几分钟,然后那位负责人回到线上:“有一位女士将会和你谈。”我问电话另一端的女士,她是否认识一个叫汉娜的人。她吃惊地说:“哦!我们从一户人家买来这栋房子,他们家的女儿叫汉娜。但已经是30年前的事了!”“你知道那户人家现在可能住在哪里吗?”我追问。“我记得汉娜数年以前将她的母亲送到一家养老院,”女人说,“如果你和他们联系,他们可能会找到她女儿。”她给了我养老院的名字,我拨通了电话。电话中的女人告诉我老妇人数年前就已经过世,但是养老院确实有个电话号码,老妇人的女儿可能住在那里。我谢过养老院的人并按她给我的号码去了电话。接电话的女人解释说现在汉娜自己也是住在一家养老院内。我想这整件事真是太傻了,为什么我费这么大的劲去找只有3美元和一封信的钱夹主人,而那封信差不多已有60年了?

然而不管怎么样,我还是打电话给汉娜所在的养

a letter that is almost sixty years old?

Nevertheless, I called the nursing home in which Hannah was supposed to be living, and the man who answered the phone told me, "Yes, Hannah is staying with us." Even though it was already 10 P. M., I asked if I could come by to see her. "Well," he said hesitatingly, "if you want to take a chance, she might be in the day room watching television."

I thanked him and drove over to the nursing home. The night nurse and a guard greeted me at the door. We went up to the third floor of the large building. In the day room, the nurse introduced me to Hannah. She was a sweet, silver-haired old-timer with a warm smile and a twinkle in her eyes. I told her about finding the wallet and showed her the letter. The second she saw the powder-blue envelope with that little flower on the left, she took a deep breath and said, "Young man, this letter was the last contact I ever had with Michael." She looked away for a moment, deep in thought, and then said softly, "I loved him very much. But I was only sixteen at the time and my mother felt I was too young. Oh, he was so handsome. He looked like Sean Connery, the actor."

"Yes," she continued, "Michael Gold-

老院,接电话的男人告诉我,“是的,汉娜是和我们在一起。”即使已经是晚上10点了,我还是问是否可以前去看她,那人犹豫地说:“好吧,你可以试试运气,她可能在客厅里看电视。”

我谢过了他并开车到养老院。值夜班的护士和一个守卫在门口接待了我。我们上了大楼的三层。在客厅中,护士向汉娜介绍了我。她是一个和蔼的老人,满头银发,面带微笑,神采奕奕。我告诉她关于捡到钱夹的事并给她看了信。她看见左边有花的淡蓝色信封的一刻,深深地吸了一口气并说:“年轻人,这封信是我和迈克尔的最后联系。”她把视线转向别处,陷入沉思,然后柔和地说:“我非常爱他,但是我那时只有16岁,我母亲觉得我年龄太小了。哦,他是如此英俊,看起来像演员肖恩·康纳利(好莱坞电影明星,曾主演过007,译者注)一样。”

“是的”,她继续说,“迈克尔·戈尔茨坦是一个非常好的人。如果你能找到他,告诉他我时常想念”

stein was a wonderful person. If you should find him, tell him I think of him often. And," she hesitated for a moment, almost biting her lip, tears welled up in her eyes, "I never did marry. I guess no one ever matched up to Michael..." I thanked Hannah and said good-bye. I took the elevator to the first floor and as I stood by the door, the guard there asked, "Was the old lady able to help you?" I told him she had given me a lead. "At least I have a last name. But I think I'll let it go for a while. I spent almost the whole day trying to find the owner of this wallet." I had taken out the wallet, which was a simple brown leather case with red lacing on the side. When the guard saw it, he said, "Hey, wait a minute! That's Mr. Goldstein's wallet. I'd know it anywhere with that bright red lacing. He's always losing that wallet. I must have found it in the halls at least three times."

"Who's Mr. Goldstein?" I asked, as my hand began to shake. "He's one of the old-timers on the eighth floor. That's Mike Goldstein's wallet for sure. He must have lost it on one of his walks." I thanked the guard and quickly ran back to the nurse's office. I told her what the guard had said. We went back to the

他,并且……"她犹豫了一会儿,几乎是咬着嘴唇,热泪盈眶,"我一直没有结婚,我想没有人比得上迈克尔……"我谢过汉娜并向她道别,乘电梯下一楼,当我站到门口时,那门卫问:"老人能帮助你吗?"我告诉他老太太已经给我线索,"至少我知道了姓氏,但我想我暂时放一阵子,因为我已经花费了几乎一整天时间来找这个钱夹的主人。"我取出钱夹,那是个朴实无华褐色带红边的皮夹。当门卫看到它的时候,他说,"嗨,等一下!那是戈尔茨坦先生的皮夹。无论在何处,只要见到那鲜亮的红边,我就能认出来。他总是丢失那个皮夹,我曾在门厅中至少发现过3次。"

"谁是戈尔茨坦先生?"我问,手开始颤抖。"他是8楼的一位老人,那肯定是迈克尔·戈尔茨坦的皮夹,他准是在散步时弄丢的。"我向门卫道了谢就很快跑回护士办公室,告诉她门卫说的话。我们乘电梯去楼上,我祈祷戈尔茨坦先生还没睡。

到了8楼,楼层护士说:"我想他在客厅中,他喜欢晚上看书,他是一个可爱的老人。"我们走进惟一

elevator and got on. I prayed that Mr. Goldstein would be up.

On the eighth floor, the floor nurse said, "I think he's still in the day room. He likes to read at night. He's a darling old man." We went to the only room that had any lights on, and there was a man reading a book. The nurse went over to him and asked if he had lost his wallet. Mr. Goldstein looked up with surprise, put his hand in his back pocket and said, "Oh, it is missing!" "This kind gentleman found a wallet and we wondered if it could be yours." I handed Mr. Goldstein the wallet, and the second he saw it, he smiled with relief and said, "Yes, that's it! It must have dropped out of my pocket this afternoon. I want to give you a reward."

"No, thank you," I said. "But I have to tell you something. I read the letter in the hope of finding out who owned the wallet." The smile on his face suddenly disappeared. "You read that letter?" "Not only did I read it, I think I know where Hannah is."

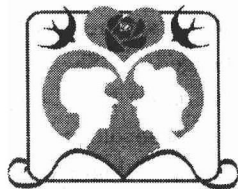
He suddenly grew pale. "Hannah? You know where she is? How is she? Is she still as

灯的房间,一位老人正在看书。护士走过去问他是否遗失了钱夹。戈尔茨坦先生惊奇地抬起头,手摸向他背后的口袋,"哦,它是不见了!" "这位好心的先生拾到了一个钱夹,我们想它可能是你的。"我将钱夹递给了戈尔茨坦先生,他看见钱夹时,松了一口气,笑了,并说:"是的,就是它!一定是今天下午从我的口袋里掉出来的。我要酬谢你。"

"不,谢谢您,"我说,"我必须告诉你一件事,为了找到钱夹的主人,我看了里面的信。"他脸上的微笑突然消失,"你看了那封信?" "我不仅看了信,还知道汉娜在哪里。"

他脸色突然变得苍白,"汉娜?你知道她在哪儿?她还好吗?她还是那么漂亮吗?请快告诉我。"他请求说,"她很好……就和你当初认识她时一样漂亮。"我柔和地说。

老人露出期待的微笑,问:"你可以告诉我她在哪儿吗?我想明天打电话给她。"他抓着我的手继续说:"你知道吗,先生?我是那么地爱着那个女孩,以



pretty as she was? Please, please tell me," he begged. "She's fine... just as pretty as when you knew her." I said softly.

The old man smiled with anticipation and asked, "Could you tell me where she is? I want to call her tomorrow." He grabbed my hand and said, "You know something, Mister? I was so in love with that girl that when that letter came, my life literally ended. I never married. I guess I've always loved her."

"Michael," I said, "come with me." We took the elevator down to the third floor. The hallways were darkened and only one or two little night lights lit our way to the day room, where Hannah was sitting alone, watching the television.

The nurse walked over to her. "Hannah," she said softly, pointing to Michael, who was waiting with me in the doorway. "Do you know this man?" She adjusted her glasses, looked for a moment, but didn't say a word.

Michael said softly, almost in a whisper, "Hannah, it's Michael. Do you remember me?" She gasped. "Michael! I don't believe it! Michael! It's you! My Michael!" He walked slowly toward her, and they embraced. The nurse and I left with tears streaming down our faces. "See," I said. "See how the good Lord works! If it's meant to be, it will be."

About three weeks later, I got a call at my office from the nursing home. "Can you break away on Sunday to attend a wedding? Michael

至于收到那封信时,我的生命就结束了,我一直未娶,因为我始终爱着她。"

"迈克尔,"我说,"跟我来。"我们乘电梯到三楼,走廊很昏暗,只有一两个小夜灯照着我们到客厅,汉娜正独自坐在那儿看电视。

护士走到她跟前。迈克尔和我等候在门口,护士指着迈克尔轻声说:"汉娜,你认识这个男人吗?"她扶了扶眼镜,看了一会儿,但沉默不语。

迈克尔轻轻地,几乎在耳语:"汉娜,我是迈克尔。你还记得我吗?"她一下激动起来:"迈克尔!我不敢相信!迈克尔!是你!我的迈克尔!"他慢慢走向她,两人拥抱在一起。护士和我泪流满面地走开



王惟震 图

and Hannah are going to tie the knot!"

It was a beautiful wedding, with all the people at the nursing home dressed up to join in the celebration. Hannah wore a light beige dress and looked beautiful. Michael wore a dark blue suit and stood tall. They made me their best man. The hospital gave them their own room, and if you ever wanted to see a seventy-six-year-old bride and a seventy-nine-year-old groom acting like two teenagers, you had to see this couple. A perfect ending for a love affair that had lasted nearly sixty years.

了。“看,”我说,“上帝的安排!如果事情注定要这样,那就一定会这样。”

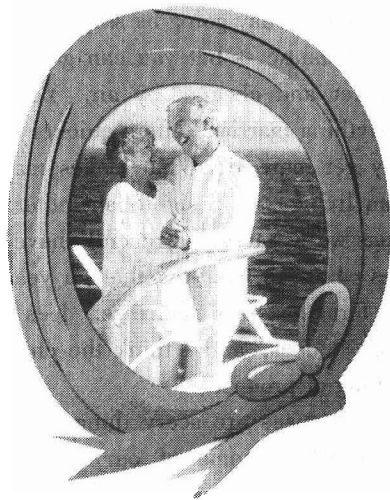
大约3个星期后,我在办公室接到养老院打来的电话,“你能在星期日抽空参加一个婚礼吗?迈克尔和汉娜要喜结良缘了!”

婚礼办得很热闹,养老院的所有人都盛妆打扮前来庆祝。汉娜穿着一件浅米色连衣裙,看起来很漂亮。迈克尔穿着深蓝色的西装,站得笔直。他们让我做男傧相。医院给了他们俩自己的房间,如果你要想看看76岁的新娘和79岁的新郎就像两个十几岁的年轻人,那你一定得来见见这对夫妇。一份持续了60年的爱终于得到了完美的结局。

The Power of a Promise

婚姻誓言的力量

by Elizabeth Sherrill 谢琼 译



My dear granddaughter,

You've been on my mind ever since this ship left New York, and I know why. You're exactly the age I was -- two months short of your twentieth birthday -- when Papa John and I were married 50 years ago. But it's what happened onboard this morning that's brought me down to our stateroom to write to you.

Today one of the events in the schedule caught our eyes: 11: 00 A. M.: Renewal of Marriage Vows; Archdeacon Robert Willing; The Yacht Club.

It sounded like the very thing for a fiftieth-anniversary celebration. The couples would face each other and answer "I do" to the traditional promises. Of course, Kerlin, my mind went at once to the conversation you and I had at Christmastime. I was telling you we'd chosen the Queen Elizabeth II for this trip because it was on her namesake, the Queen Elizabeth, en route to Europe in 1947, that Papa John and I first met. "We fell in love and were married in Switzerland just four months later." I said. And you said, "I might fall in love someday, Gran, but I'd never take a chance on marriage!"

I understood that reaction, Kerlin, with partnerships so fluid today. I remember your telling me rather wistfully, when you were in grade school, that all your friends there in Nashville had two Christmases -- one with their mother, one with their father.

Reverend Robert Willing urged us old-marrieds to take a message to young people today. Can we really, I wonder? Can our experience mean anything now? So much has changed! In 1947 you traveled by ship because that was the way you got to Europe. You married because that was the way two people in love could live

我亲爱的孙女：

从海轮离开纽约以来，我一直为你牵肠挂肚，我知道这是为什么。你现在的年龄是差2个月到20岁，50年前，当我和你爷爷约翰结婚时，我正好是你现在的年龄。由于今天上午在船上发生的事，使我来到舱房给你写信。

今天的日程表中有一项引起了我们的注意：上午11点钟：神父罗伯特·威林在帆船俱乐部主持重申婚姻誓言仪式。

这看来很像是一次庆祝金婚的盛典。老夫老妻们要面对面地对传统的婚姻誓言说：“我愿意。”克林，我很自然地回想起我祖孙俩在圣诞节的谈话。当时我告诉你我和你爷爷这次外出乘“伊丽莎白女王2号”是因为它的名字；1947年我就是在乘坐“伊丽莎白女王”海轮赴欧洲途中与你爷爷约翰首次相逢的，我俩一见倾心，4个月后来在瑞士结婚了。你对我说：“某天我也会爱上一个人，但是，奶奶，我绝对不会结婚。”

克林，我理解你对婚姻的看法，目前的婚姻关系确实很不稳定。我记得当你上小学时就曾经面带羡慕之情地告诉我说，你在纳什维尔的小朋友们个个每年要过两次圣诞节——一次跟妈妈过，另一次跟爸爸过。

牧士罗伯特·威林要求我们这些老年夫妇将有关婚姻的传统见解传达给当今的年轻人。我弄不明白我们是否能办到。我们老人的生活体验对当今的时尚仍然有意义吗？已经发生了多大的变化呵！1947年我们乘海轮去欧洲，是因为只有海轮可乘；人

together. Today going by ship is an option -- traditional and romantic -- but you can get where you're going quicker and cheaper by air. You can get seemingly everything marriage offers quicker and cheaper too. So why get married? What makes marriage any different from living with a significant other? Most of the weddings we've attended recently have been between couples who've lived together for years. When they take the formal step of marriage, does anything change? I think it does, and I think the change is precisely the making of promises.

Promises are scary things. To keep them means relinquishing some of our freedom; to break them means losing some of our integrity. Though we have to make them today, promises are all about tomorrow -- and the only thing we know for sure about tomorrow is that we don't know anything for sure!

And it's not just the outer world that changes in unforeseeable ways; it's you yourself. Every new experience -- new responsibilities, new contacts -- changes your perspective.

There's something that makes promises between two people still riskier: Your partner keeps changing too. In a long-ago letter to my grandmother I wrote, "On the ship today I met an Army veteran who's on his way to the University of Geneva, just like me!" The veteran, of course, was Papa John, and through the years I've kept on meeting him. Different ages, different stages -- he's always someone new.

Your grandfather has written about his struggle with alcohol, so you know how difficult those times were for us. And I'm sure he never expected to be nurse, housekeeper and sole functioning parent to three small children when I went into a clinical depression.

Yet out of both those traumas, tremendous growth and joy eventually came. And the reason, I think, lies in the power of promise. The power of a promise is that it keeps partners together while the tough times turn into healing, closeness and deepened love. If we drop in and out of relationships, we don't stick around long enough to allow these good things to happen.

Don't be afraid, Kerlin, if you fall in love someday, to make that lifelong commitment. The two of you won't be setting sail alone!

With love from us both, Gran

们结婚是因为他们相爱,想要生活在一起,就非此不可。今天人们旅行乘轮船是多种交通工具中的一种选择;人们认为它既有传统意义,又有浪漫情趣。如果你想节省时间和金钱,你完全可以坐飞机。婚姻也与此相似。你即便不结婚,同样可以又快又省地得到婚姻所能提供的一切。那么人们为什么还要结婚呢?是什么使婚姻不同于与你器重的人同居呢?目前我们参加的婚礼往往都是同居多年的一对恋人举行的婚礼。当他们采取结婚这一正式步骤时,会有什么变化发生呢?我想确实是会有变化发生,这变化确切地说就是双方作出的承诺和誓言。

誓言令人生畏。恪守誓言意味着我们要放弃某些自由,违反誓言则意味着丧失某种人格。虽然我们做出誓言是在今天,但是誓言的意义却是在于明天——而对明天的不确定性是我们对明天的惟一了解。

不仅外部世界会发生不可预见的变化,你自身也要发生变化。每种新的体验——新的责任,新的交往——都会使你的想法改变。

某一情况会使两人之间的誓言更具有风险,那就是你的配偶也在不停地改变。很久以前,我在一封给我奶奶的信中写道:"今天我在轮船上遇见了一位陆军老兵,他和我一样正要去日内瓦大学。"那位老兵当然就是你爷爷约翰。在持续数十年的时间里,我总是与他相守。人的年龄在变,社会环境在变,但在我眼里,你爷爷总是风采依然。

你爷爷曾经写下他与酗酒做斗争的过程。你可以得知在他酗酒的年月里,我们经受过多大困难。我敢断言,在此之前他绝对意想不到,在我患抑郁症时,他既要当护士,又要当管家,还要成为一个单独照料3个孩子的父亲。

在经历这两种家庭创伤之后,终于盼来了巨大的进步和欢乐。我想,其原因就在于誓言的力量。誓言的力量在于促使夫妻双方配合一致来克服艰难岁月,来求得平顺、融洽和爱情的深化。如果在夫妻关系上不能持之以恒,就不会有足够的时间相守,也就看不到美好生活的来临。

克林,你不要害怕,如果某天你坠入爱河,就不妨做出这一终生承诺。你和你深爱的人是不会各自单独扬帆出海的。

爱你的爷爷奶奶



一个忙碌的股票经纪人的浪漫史



The Romance of a Busy Broker

by O. Henry 柳伟 译

Pitcher had worked for many years in the office of Harvey Maxwell, the stockbroker. Pitcher was a quiet man. He didn't usually let his face show his feelings. But this morning he looked surprised -- and very interested. Harvey Maxwell had arrived energetically as usual at 9:30. But this morning, the young lady who was his secretary had arrived with him. Pitcher watched them with interest. Harvey Maxwell didn't pay attention to Pitcher. He said only a quick "Good morning," and ran to his desk. He dug energetically into the mountain of letters and telegrams that waited for him.

The young lady had been the stockbroker's secretary for a year. She was beautiful, and she dressed simply. Unlike some secretaries, she never wore cheap glass jewelry. Her dress was grey and plain, but it fitted her body nicely. With it she wore a small black hat with a green-gold flower at the side. This morning her face shone with happiness. Her eyes were bright, her face a soft pink. Usually she walked straight inside to her own desk. But this morning she stayed in the outside office. She walked over near Maxwell's desk. Maxwell didn't seem to be a man anymore.

皮彻在股票经纪人哈维·马克斯韦尔的办公室里已工作好多年了。他是个不苟言笑的人,很难从脸上看出他的心情。但是今天早上他却露出了惊异的表情——并表现出了极大的兴趣。哈维·马克斯韦尔依旧精力充沛地在9:30赶到了办公室。但是今天早上,他年轻的秘书小姐是和他一起来的。皮彻饶有兴趣地看着他们。哈维·马克斯韦尔并没有在意他,只是匆匆地与他打了个招呼,然后就冲向自己的办公桌,一头扎进了等他处理的成堆信件和电报里。

年轻的秘书已为股票经纪人工作了一年。她漂亮迷人,但却穿着朴素。她不像其他秘书那样,从不戴廉价的玻璃首饰。她的衣服偏灰色而淡雅,但却十分合体。与其衣着搭配的是,她常戴一顶黑色小帽,帽边上有一朵青金色的小花。这天早上她的脸上洋溢着幸福的光芒。两眼亮亮的,脸颊微红。通常她会径直走到里间自己的办公桌前。但是今天早上她在外间的办公室停了下来,来到马克斯韦尔的办公桌旁。马克斯韦尔这时看起来已不再是一个有血有肉的凡人,他已走进一

He had changed into a busy New York stockbroker. He'd become a machine of many moving parts.

"Well -- what is it? Is anything wrong?" Maxwell asked his secretary. He wasn't looking at her. His eyes were on his mail. Letters and telegrams lay on his desk like snow. "It's nothing," she said softly. She moved away with a little smile. "Mr. Pitcher," she said, coming over to him, "Did Mr. Maxwell ask you to hire another secretary yesterday?" "Yes, he did," answered Pitcher. "I asked the secretarial school to send over a few this morning." "I will do the work as usual, then," said the young lady, "until someone comes to fill the place." And she went to her desk at once. She hung up the black hat with the green-gold flower in its usual place.

Harvey Maxwell was always a busy stockbroker, but today he was even busier than usual. The ticker tape machine began to throw out tape. The desk telephone began to ring. Men crowded into the office, buying and selling, crying and yelling. Boys ran in and out with telegrams. Maxwell pushed his chair against the wall. He ran energetically from ticker tape to telephone, jumping like a dancer.

In the middle of all this action and yelling, the stockbroker realized that someone new had arrived. He first saw a high mountain of golden hair under a large round hat. Then he noticed some large glass jewelry. Underneath all this was a young lady. Pitcher came forward to explain. "Here is the lady from the secretarial school. She came for the job."

Maxwell turned around with his hands full of papers and ticker tape. "What job?" he yelled. His face looked angry.

"The secretarial job," Pitcher said quietly. "You told me yesterday to call the school. I asked them to send one over this morning."

"You're losing your mind, Pitcher! Why would I tell you a thing like that? Miss Leslie has worked well for a whole year here. The job is hers while she wants to stay. There is no job here, Madam. Tell the secretarial school, Pitcher. Don't bring any more of them in here!"

The lady angrily walked out of the office. Pitcher thought to himself that Maxwell was getting more forgetful every day. The office became busier and busier.

个繁忙的纽约股票经纪人的角色。他成了一个由许多活动部件组成的机器人。

"嘿，怎么了？有问题吗？”马克斯韦尔向他的秘书问道。他并没抬头看她，两眼也没离开信件。信件和电报像雪片一样堆在他的桌子上。“没什么，”她轻声说，微微一笑走开了。“皮彻先生，她走向皮彻，“昨天马克斯韦尔先生是否让你再招一位秘书？”“是啊，他是这么说的，”皮彻答道，“我已经告诉秘书学校今天上午选送一些人来。”“那在有人来接替我之前，我先继续工作，”年轻的女秘书说完立即走向自己的办公桌，把带青金色的黑帽挂在以往的地方。

作为股票经纪人，哈维·马克斯韦尔总是忙得不可开交。而今天要比以往更忙。自动收报机已开始工作。桌上的电话也响了起来。人们涌进办公间，买进卖出，叫着嚷着。取送电报的人进进出出。马克斯韦尔把椅子推到墙边，在打字机和电话之间劲头十足地来回跑动，就像一个舞蹈演员一样不知疲倦。

就在一片繁忙和叫嚷之中，这位股票经纪人意识到有陌生人走进来。他首先看到的是一个硕大的圆帽下一头金色的长发。接着是一大串玻璃首饰。再下面才是一位年轻的小姐。皮彻走上前解释到，这位小姐是秘书学校的，她来应聘。”

马克斯韦尔转过身，手中仍拿着文件和电报纸。“什么工作？”他高声嚷道，脸上现出了怒容。

“秘书工作呀，您昨天让我给秘书学校打电话招人。我让他们今天送一个人过来。”皮彻轻声说道。

“皮彻，你一定是记错了！我怎么能要你做这种事？莱斯利小姐在这儿一年来干得很不错。如果她愿意的话，这工作仍由她干。小姐，这儿没有多余的工作。皮彻，告诉秘书学校别再派人来了。”

小姐转身气冲冲地走出办公室。皮彻心里想马克斯韦尔变得越来越爱忘事了。办公室更加忙碌起来。买卖的订单就像鸟儿一样飞进飞出。这就是股市，钱的世界。在这里没有个人的情感空间，也没有大自然的闲适和宁静。

午饭时分，办公室里渐渐静了下来。马克斯韦尔站在桌边，两手握满了电报，钢笔

Orders to buy and sell came and went like birds flying. This was the stock market, the world of money. There was no room in it for the world of human feelings or the world of nature.

Near lunchtime, everything quieted down. Maxwell stood by his desk with his hands full of telegrams. His pen was behind his ear. His hair stood up on his head. Suddenly through the open window came a smell of flowers, like the thin breath of spring. This was Miss Leslie's smell, her own and only hers. The smell seemed to bring her before him. The world of the stock market disappeared.

"I'll do it now," said Maxwell softly.
"I'll ask her now. Why didn't I do it long ago?"

He ran into her office. He jumped towards her desk. She looked up at him with a smile. Her face turned a soft pink. Maxwell put his hands on her desk. They were still full of papers.

"Miss Leslie," he said, hurrying, "I only have a moment to talk. I want to say something important in that moment: Will you be my wife? I haven't had time to show you, but I really do love you. Speak quickly please -- there's the telephone."

"Why what are you talking about?" cried the young lady. She stood up and looked at him strangely.

"Don't you understand?" Maxwell asked quickly, looking back at the phone on his desk. "I want you to marry me. I've stolen this moment to ask you, now, while things have quieted down a little. Take the telephone, Pitcher!" he yelled. "Will you, Miss Leslie?" he added softly.

The secretary acted very strange. At first she seemed surprised. Then she began to cry. But then she smiled through her tears like the sun through rain. She put her arm around the stockbroker's neck.

"I know now," she said. "It's this business that put it out of your head. I was afraid, at first. But don't you remember, Harvey? We were married last evening at 8:00, in the little church around the corner."

夹在耳后,头发也乱蓬蓬地立在脑袋上。突然透过敞开的窗户飘进来了一股花香,有股淡淡的春天的味道。这是莱斯利小姐身上的味道,这是她特有的。这味道好像一下子把莱斯利小姐带到了眼前。股票的世界消失了。

"我马上就说,现在就去问她。我为什么不早点开口呢?"马克斯韦尔轻声念叨着。

他跑进她的办公室,冲到她的办公桌前。莱斯利小姐抬起头微笑着看着他,脸色不由得微微泛红。马克斯韦尔把两手放在桌子上,手里还攥满了文件。

"莱斯利小姐,"他急匆匆地说,"我只有一



王惟震 图

小会儿时间跟您聊聊。有件重要的事要跟您说:您愿意嫁给我吗?我没有时间向您详细地表白,但我真的爱你。请您快说话——我那边有个电话要接。"

"什么,你到底在说什么呀?"年轻的女士大声说道。她站起来,莫名其妙地看着他。

"难道你不明白我说的话?"马克斯韦尔迅速地问道,回头看了看自己桌上的电话。"我想让你嫁给我。我挤出这点儿时间来征求你的意见,正好现在刚刚不那么忙了。皮彻!去接电话!"他大喊道。"莱斯利小姐,您愿意嫁给我吗?"他又轻声地问了一遍。

秘书小姐的反应很怪异。最开始她看起来有些吃惊,然后开始哭了起来。但后来她又透过泪水现出一线微笑,就像雨过天晴后露出的太阳。她用一只胳膊搂住了经纪人的脖子。

"我知道。"她说,"都是因为生意的事,让你记不起来了。最初,我很害怕。但是哈维,难道你不记得了,就在昨天晚上8:00我们在街角的那个小教堂举行的婚礼啊?"