

An English-chinese Collation

My University Mother

我的大学·母亲

(苏)高尔基



中国戏剧出版社

英汉对照全译本

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图书在版编目(CIP)数据

我的大学·母亲/(苏)高尔基著;李文军译. —北

京:中国戏剧出版社,2005.7

(中英文对照全译本丛书. 第1辑)

ISBN 7-104-02123-X

I. 我... II. ①高... ②李... III. 英语—对照读物,
小说—汉、英 IV. H319.4:I

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(2005)第 069721 号

我的大学·母亲

策 划: 万晓咏

责任编辑: 吴淑苓

责任出版: 冯志强

出版发行: 中国戏剧出版社

社 址: 北京市海淀区紫竹院路 116 号嘉豪国际中心 A 座 10 层

邮政编码: 100089

电 话: 010—84042552(发行部)

传 真: 010—84002504(发行部)

电子信箱: fxb@xj.sina.net(发行部)

经 销: 全国新华书店

印 刷: 廊坊京华万圣印刷有限公司

开 本: 640mm×920mm 1/16

印 张: 29.5

字 数: 380 千

版 次: 2005 年 7 月北京第 1 版第 1 次印刷

书 号: ISBN 7-104-02123-X/I·847

定 价: 53.00 元

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我的大学

MY UNIVERSITIES

AND so, I was leaving for Kazan, to study at the University - no less!

The thought of University studies had been put into my head by a Gymnasium student, N. Yevreinov - a lovable youth, very handsome, with the tender eyes of a woman. He lived in a attic room in the same house with me. Seeing me often with a book under my arm, he grew so interested as to seek my acquaintance; and it was not long before he began to urge it upon me that I possessed an 'extraordinary gift for learning.'

'Nature created you to further science,' he declared, tossing his long hair back in graceful emphasis.

I did not yet know, then, that one might further science in the capacity of guinea pig; and Yevreinov made it so very clear that it was just such lads as I the universities were lacking. The memory of Lomonosov, of course, was evoked as a shining example. In Kazan, Yevreinov said, I would stay with him, studying through the autumn and winter to master the Gymnasium programme. Then I would take 'some few examinations - that was just how he put it; some few'; the University would grant me a scholarship. And in five years or so I would be a 'learned man.' It was all very simple; for Yevreinov, was nineteen, and his heart was kind.

He passed his examinations and left. Some two weeks later, I followed. In parting Granny told me: 'Don't you be cross with people. You're always so cross. Stern, you're getting to be, and too demanding. That comes down to you from Grandfather. And - well, what's your grandfather? Lived all these years, and ended up nowhere, the poor old man. You keep one thing in mind: it's not God that judges men. That's the devil's pastime. Well, goodbye...

And, brushing the scant tears from her dark, flabby cheeks, she said: 'We won't meet again. You'll be moving farther and farther off, restless soul, and I'll be dying.' I had drifted away from my dear grandmother of late, seeing her only rarely; but now it came to me with sudden pain that I would never again meet a friend so close, so much a part of me.

From the stern of the boat I looked back to where she stood, at the edge of the pier crossing herself and, with the corner of her worn old shawl, dry-

终于,我乘船去喀山大学上学了(时间大约是在1884年夏末或秋初)。

我想要上大学的念头,是因为受到一个叫尼·叶夫列伊诺夫的中学生的开导而产生的。他是位可爱的青年,长得很漂亮,有一双女性的温柔可亲的眼睛。那时他和我住在同一幢房子里,他住在阁楼上。他常常看到我手里拿着书本,这就引起了他对我的注意,于是我们就认识了。不久,叶夫列伊诺夫就让我相信:我有“罕见独特的科研能力”。

“您天生就是为科学服务的!”他对我说道,同时潇洒地甩动着他那马鬃似的长发。

那时候我还不懂得,即使是个只起着家兔作用的人也能为科学服务的。可是叶夫列伊诺夫如此令人信服地向我表明:大学里正需要我这样的年轻小伙子。不用说,米哈伊尔·罗蒙诺索夫(罗蒙诺索夫(1711—1765),俄罗斯著名学者、诗人。)的阴魂也被惊动了。叶夫列伊诺夫说,我去喀山后可以住在他那里,用一个秋季和一个冬季的时间,我就能完成中学的课程。只需考好“随便几门”课程(他是这样说的:“随便几门”),大学里就会提供我助学金,再过那么五年工夫,我就可以成为一个“学者”了。所有这一切看来都非常地简单,因为叶夫列伊诺夫那时只有十九岁,而他又有一颗善良的心。

他考完试后,就离开这儿了。大约过了两周,我也随之动身了。那天外婆送我时,一直劝告我:“你呀,不要再跟人家斗气了,你老是任性,又厉害又傲慢!这都是外公传给你的。可你外公算得了什么?这苦命的老头子,活着一辈子,结果成了个大傻瓜。你要记住一件事:上帝从不判断人们的是非,只有魔鬼才喜欢干这事呢!好啦,告别吧……”

她一面擦去她那褐色而松弛的脸颊上的寥寥几颗眼泪,一面说道:“我们以后再难见面了。你这个闲不住的孩子呀,又要远走高飞了,可是我呢?我就要入土了……”前一段时间,我曾离开过这个可亲的老人,甚至很少与她见面;此时此刻,我突然痛苦地感觉到,从今往后我不能见到这位如此贴心的亲人了。

站在轮船的尾部,我望着她在那边码头的边缘,用一只手在自己身上画十字,另一只手拿着旧披巾擦着她的脸和那双充满着光芒对

ing her face and her dark eyes, bright with inextinguishable love of alan.

And there I was, in the semiTatar city. Cramped rooms in a small, onestorey house standing, all alone, on a low hill at the end of a narrow, poverty - stricken street. On one side the house faced a vacant lot, thickly overgrown with weeds - the scene of a onetime conflagration. Deep among the wormwood, the agrimony and horse sorrel, surrounded by elder thickets, loomed the ruins of a brick building; and beneath the ruins there was a big cellar, in which stray dogs lived and died. I remember it very well, that cellar: one of my universities.

The Yevreinovs - mother and two sons lived on a miserly pension. From my first days in their home, I perceived the tragic melancholy with a xieh the drab little widow, retting from the market, would lay out her purchases on the kitchen table and ponder her difficult problem; how to turn a few small bits of inferior meat into good and sufficient food for three healthy boys - not to speak of herself.

She spoke very little. Her grey eyes were set in the meek and hopeless obstinacy of a workhorse that has spent its strength to the last. Dragging its cart uphill, the poor horse knows that it can never make the top; yet still it pulls its load.

One morning, three or four days after my arrival, I was helping her with some vegetables in the kitchen. The boys were still asleep. Quietly, warily, she asked me: 'What have you come to town for?'

'To study. At the University.'

Her eyebrows slowly lifted, crinkling her sallow forehead. Her knife slipped, and gashed her finger. Sucking the wound, she sank on to a chair, but at once sprang up again, with a sharp: 'Ah, the devil!'

When she had tied up her finger with handkerchief, she said approvingly:

'You peel potatoes well.'

I should think I peeled them well! I told her about my work on the river boat. She asked: 'Do you think that's sufficient preparation for entering the University?'

In those days I had but little conception of humour. I took her question seriously, and explained to her the sequence of measures as a result of which the doors to the temple of learning were to open before me.

人们无限怜爱的黑眼睛。

于是,我就到了这座半鞑靼式的城市,居住在一座狭小的平房里。这座小屋孤零零地矗立在一条陋巷尽头的小土山上。小屋的一堵墙对着那片荒凉的、焚过火的场地,在这片荒地上,长出了密密麻麻的野草;在长着苦艾、牛蒡和酸模的杂草丛中,接骨木的灌木林里隆起一片砖瓦建筑物的废墟,废墟下面有一个特别大的地下室。一条条无家可归的狗栖息在那里,也都死在那里。这个地下室我将永远难忘,它是我所上的几所大学中的一所。

叶夫列伊诺夫一家(她母亲和她的另外两个儿子)以微薄的抚恤金为生。在刚到这里的最初的日子里,我不时看到这个脸色苍白而又瘦小的寡妇从市场回来,将买回的东西摊在厨房里的桌子上,她十分窘迫,发愁地算计起了一个难题:怎样把这些小块的肉为三个身强力壮的小伙子,做顿有足够分量的美餐呢?——即使不把她自己算在内。

她时常沉默寡言,在她那双灰色的眼睛里,透露出绝望、温顺而又倔强的劲儿,犹如一匹筋疲力尽的母马。这匹可怜的老马拉着大车上山,它明明知道:“我拉不动了”,却仍然在往上拉着!

在我来到这里的第四天早晨,我到厨房里帮她洗菜,当时孩子们还在睡觉。她低声而谨慎地向我问道:“您来这里干什么呢?”

“我来念书的,上大学。”

她抬起双眉,一并脑门上发黄的皮肤向上挪动。一不小心,菜刀切破了她自己的手指;她一边吮吸着伤口的鲜血,一边坐到了椅子上,但立即又跳了起来,说道:“啊,活见鬼……”

她用手绢裹好切伤的手指,接着夸奖我说道:

“您削土豆真是在行。”

是啊,我还能不在行吗!于是,我把曾经在轮船上干活的事讲给她听。她问道:“您以为,仅凭这点本事,您就能上大学了吗?”

那个时候,我对幽默一窍不通。我慎重地对待她的提问,讲述了我的行动步骤:我完成计划之后,科学殿堂的大门就会向我面前敞开的。

She sighed:

'Ah, Nikolai, Nikolai!'

Just at this point, Nikolai came into the kitchen to wash - sleepy, tousleheaded, and, as always, in excellent spirits.

'Some meat patties would be nice, Mother,' he said.

'Yes, they would,' the mother agreed.

Anxious to display my erudition in the culinary arts, I remarked that the meat was not good enough for patties, and, besides, that there was not enough of it.

At this Varvara Ivanovna became very angry, and directed at me a few such forceful words that my very ears flushed and seemed to grow. Flinging down the bunch of carrots she had been washing, she left the kitchen. Nikolai winked at me, and explained: She's in a mood. 'Settling down comfortably on bench, he informed me that women, generally were more nervous than men, such being the female make-up, as had been incontestably established by a certain eminent scientist - in Switzerland, if I remember correctly. An Englishman, one John Smart Mill, had also had something to say on this subject.

Nikolai greatly enjoyed the process of teaching me, and seized on every opportunity that offered for stuffing into my brain one or another essential item, ignorance of which must surely make life impossible. I would drink in his words eagerly; and after a while Foucault, de la Rochefoucauld, and de la Roche-Jaquelein would merge, in my mind, into one entity, and I would be quite unable to recall whether it was Lavoisier who had beheaded Dumas, or the other way around. The kindly youth was sincerely determined to 'make someone' of me.

He promised it confidently. But - he lacked the time and the proper conditions for systematic guidance of my education. Blinded by the egoism and thoughtlessness of youth, he did not see how his mother had to strain and shift to make ends meet. Still less was this noticed by his brother, a slow, untalkative schoolboy.

But I had long been adept in the intricate conjury of kitchen chemistry and economics. I dearly perceived the desperate strivings of this woman, daily compelled to fool her children's stomachs and to feed

她叹了口气。

"啊,尼古拉,尼古拉……"

这时候,尼古拉到厨房洗脸来了。他睡眼惺忪,一头乱发。他总是乐呵呵的。

"妈妈,若能包顿饺子吃就好啦!"

"嗯,好吧。"母亲欣然地答道。

我想炫耀一回我对烹饪艺术的知识,于是说道,"这肉做饺子不好,而且也太多了。"

瓦尔瓦拉·伊万诺夫娜立刻大发雷霆,冲我说了几句非常厉害的话,以至于使我双耳充血、发胀起来。她将一把胡萝卜扔到桌上,离开了厨房。尼古拉向我挤了挤双眼,解释她的举动:"情绪很糟……"他在板凳上安坐下来,接着告诉我:总而言之,女人都比男人更加神经质,这是她们的天性。有一位名望很大的学者,好像是个瑞士人,对于这一点曾经给予无可争辩的论证,英国人约翰·斯图尔特·穆勒(约翰·斯图尔特·穆勒(1806—1873),英国经济学家和哲学家。)就这个问题也谈了一些类似的见解。

尼古拉很喜欢教导我,于是他就利用每一个适当的机会,给我灌输一些生活中必不可少的知识。我如饥似渴地听着他的话语。后来,我竟然把佛克·拉罗士佛克和拉罗士查克林(佛克(1819—1868),法国物理学家。拉罗士佛克(1613—1680),法国作家。拉罗士查克林(1772—1794),法国大革命时期保皇派首脑。)三个人混成了一个人。我也记不清是谁砍了谁的脑袋,是拉瓦锡(拉瓦锡(1743—1794),法国化学家。)砍了杜模力(杜模力(1739—1823),法国大革命时期的将军。)的脑袋呢,还是正好相反呢?这位漂亮可爱的青年真诚地希望"将我教育成人"。

他十分有信心地向我保证要这么做。但是他没有空闲,也没有其他应有的条件来认真地教导我。他那少年的轻率与自我的陶醉,使他看不见母亲是怎样竭尽全力、煞费心地支撑着家庭。他的弟弟是个沉默寡言、难以相处的中学生,就更难觉察到这一点了。

然而,我已经对厨房经济和化学的复杂戏法的微妙了如指掌。我清楚地看到这个女人非常精明的本领,她不得不天天喂饱自己孩子的肚皮,而且还要喂养我这个其貌不扬、举止

a young stranger of unprepossessing appearance and uncouth manners. Naturally enough, every crumb of bread I swallowed here weighed heavily on my conscience. I began to search for work.

Leaving the house in the early morning, I would stay away until I was sure dinner was over; and in bad weather I would spend these hours in the shelter of the cellar in the vacant lot. Sitting there among the dead dogs and cats, breathing the odours of putrefaction, listening to the pouring rain and the moaning wind, I soon began to understand that the University was an empty dream; that I would have done more wisely to nm away to Persia.

This, after picturing myself as a greybearded wizard, creator of means for growing wheat and rye with kernels the size of apples, and potatoes that would weigh a pood apiece – not to speak of numerous other benefactions for this earth, on which life was so confoundedly difficult, difficult not only for me.

I had already learned to dream of strange adventures and prodigious deeds. This was a great help to me in life's hard days; and, hard days being many, I grew more and more proficient at such dreaming. I looked for no outside assistance, and set no hopes on luck or chart, ce. But I was gradually developing an unyielding obstinacy of will; and the more difficult life became, the stronger, even the wiser, I felt myself to be. I realized in very early life that a man is made by the resistance he presents to his surroundings.

To keep from starving, I would go to the Volga wharves, where one could easily earn fifteen or twenty kopeks. Here, among the stevedores, tramps, and thieves, I felt like a rod of iron thrust into hot coals; for every day was saturated with intense and searing impressions.

Here I looked upon a whirling world in which men's instincts were coarse, their greed naked and undisguised. I was attracted by these people's bitterness against life, attracted by their attitude of mocking hostility towards everything on earth, and of carelessness towards themselves. All that I myself had experienced drew me to these people, urged the desire to plunge wholly into their caustic world. Bret Harte's tales, and the innumerable cheap novels I had read, still further intensified this world's attraction for me.

粗野的外来年轻人。自然,每分给我的一片面包,就像一块石头那样沉重地压在我的心头。我准备寻找工作,不论什么样的工作。

每天一大早,我就离开家里,为了避免吃闲饭。遇上恶劣的天气,我就躲进那荒地上的地窖里,坐在那里听着呼呼大作的风雨声,闻着死猫死狗的臭味,我顿时就领悟到:上大学——这只不过是梦想而已,如果当初我去了波斯,可能会是明智一些。

于是,我就把自己想象成一个白胡子的巫师,一旦使用魔法,就能让谷粒长成苹果那般大小,能让土豆长到一普特(一普特合 16.38 公斤。)的重量。总而言之,我为了这个大地,为了这个不仅仅是我一个人走得极度艰难的大地,臆想出了许多造福于民的事。

我已学会幻想异乎寻常的奇遇和伟大的献身行为。在生活极度艰难的日子里,这些幻想对于我非常有帮助。因为艰难的日子漫长,所以我更加善于幻想了。我不期待他人的援助或希冀有幸运的机遇,我的意志逐渐变得顽强起来,生活条件越是困难,我就觉得自己越是坚强,甚至越是聪明了。我很早就已经懂得,人生是在对周围环境的反抗中得到造就的。

为了不至挨饿受冻,我经常到伏尔加河的码头上,在那儿可以很容易地挣得十五到二十戈比的工钱。在那个地方,在那些装卸工、流浪汉和痞棍中间,我仿佛觉得自己是一块被投进烧红的煤炭里的生铁。每天每日,我脑海中都充满着大量强烈的、火辣的印象。

在那个地方,那些赤裸裸地贪求无厌而任性粗鲁的人们,在我的面前放荡无羁地消遣。我喜欢他们那种对生活的憎恶,喜欢他们对世界上的一切所持有的嘲笑和敌视,却对自己无忧无虑的态度。我以往的亲身经历驱使我和他们接近,我投入到他们那个颇富刺激性的圈子里去的愿望因此油然而生。我曾经读过的勃来特·哈特(勃来特·哈特(1839—1902),美国小说家。)的作品和大量“低级趣味的”小说,更加激起我对这个阶层的人们的同情与好感。

There was Bashkin, professional thief and former normal school student — a consumptive man, often and brutally beaten. Eloquently, he admonished me: 'What makes you so bashful, like a shrinking girl? Afraid to lose your honour? A girl — her honour's all she's got to lose. For you, it's just a yoke. An ox is honest; but an ox can fill its belly on hay.'

Bashkin was small and redheaded, and went about clean-shaven like an actor. His soft, smooth movements brought to mind a kitten. Towards me, he adopted an instructive, protective attitude; and I could see that with all his heart he wished me luck and happiness. Highly intelligent, he had read many good books, of which *The Count of Monte Cristo* pleased him best of all.

'That book has heart in it, and purpose, too,' he said.

He was a lover of women, and spoke of them ecstatically, smacking his lips with relish, a sort of spasm passing over his racked body. It had something unwholesome about it, this spasm, something physically repulsive. But I listened eagerly to his talk, sensing its beauty.

'Women, women, he would intone, his sallow cheeks flushing, his dark eyes glowing with enthusiasm. 'For a woman, I'd do anything. Like the devil, woman knows no sin. Live in love — there's nothing better ever been invented!'

He had a fine gift for *nan'ation*. Without effort, too, he would compose touching little *ditties* for the prostitutes, on the sorrows of crossed or unrequited love. These were sung in all the Volga towns.

Among others, he was the author of that very widespread song: When a girl is plain and poor, And dressed all out of fashion, Who on earth will marry her? Not a living creature!

I had a well-wisher in Tmsov — shady character. This was a fine-looking man, foppishly dressed, with a musician's delicate fingers. He kept a little shop in the Admiralty district. The sign said, 'Clock Repairing'; but Tmsov's business was the sale of stolen goods. 'Don't you let yourself drift into thieves' tricks, Maximich,' he would say to me, stroking his greying beard impressively and screwing up his bold and crafty eyes. 'That's not your road, I can see. You're the soulful kind.'

· 有一个叫巴什金的职业小偷,他曾经是位师范学院的学生,而今变得穷途末路,而且患有肺病。他不无风趣地对我说:“你怎么像个姑娘,总是畏畏缩缩的,难道是否害怕失去童贞?对姑娘说来,贞操当是她全部的财富。可对你来说,那只不过是枷锁罢了。公牛倒是规规矩矩的,可那是它吃饱干草的缘故!”

巴什金有一头浅棕红色的头发,如演员那般把脸刮得光亮亮的,他那矮小的身材,机灵轻柔的动作特别像是一只小猫。他常以教师和保护人的态度对待我,我看得出来,他是诚心实意地希望我获得成功和幸福。他很聪明,读过不少好书,最喜欢读的是《基度山伯爵》(《基度山伯爵》又译作《基度山恩仇记》,法国作家大仲马(1802—1870)的作品)。

“这本书中既有人生的目标,又不乏有真情。”他说道。

他非常喜欢女人,谈论起女人来津津有味,眉飞色舞,那衰弱无力的身体也痉挛起来;这种病态的痉挛令我感到厌恶,然而我还是专注地听着他的谈论,觉得他的话语十分优美而动听。

“女人呀,女人呀!”他唱歌似的说道,蜡黄的脸上泛起了层层红晕,他那双黑黑的眼睛闪烁着赞叹的光芒。“为了女人,任何事情我都肯干。对于女人来说,这像魔鬼一样,根本不存在罪孽!活在这个世上,永远寻找不到比爱恋着女人更为美妙的事情啦!”

他是一个演讲故事的天才,而且还能够不费吹灰之力,为妓女们编造出一些不幸爱情的扣人心弦的哀歌。他的歌曲唱遍了伏尔加河沿岸的所有城市。

那一首广为流行的歌曲就是他创作的:我家一贫如洗,长得又不美,粗衣淡饭,没有绫罗绸缎。因为这般,贤惠淑女总是难结良缘……

有一个行为不正的人,叫做特鲁索夫,他待我也挺好。这个人相貌堂堂,衣着讲究,有乐师那样纤巧的手指。他在舰船修造厂区开了一个小铺子,挂着“钟表匠”的招牌,然而干的却是销赃的勾当。“彼什科夫,你可不该去学那些小偷小摸的混帐事!”他微微眯起他那狡黠而果断的眼睛,神气地捋着斑白的胡须,对我说道,“我看得出来,你走的是另外一条路,你是个看重精神生活的人。”

‘What do you – mean, the soulful kiM?’

‘Why, the ones that are never envious – only curious to know.’ that was not a true description of me. I was often envious, of many things. Thus, I envied Bashlın his gift of talking – his peculiar, verselike style, his unexpected figures and turns of speech. I recall the beginning of one of his tales of amorous adventure: ‘One cloudyeyed night I was huddled, like an owl in a hollow tree, in a boarding house in the beggarly town of Sviyazhsk. It was autumn, October. A lazy little rain was coming down, and the wind soughed just the way a Tatar sings when someone s been mean to him – an endless o – o – o. – oo – oo – oo...

‘... And then she came, so light and rosy, like a cloud at sunrise, and in her eye, a lying purity of soul. “Dear love,” she says, and her voice rang true, “Ihaven’t sinned against you.” I knew she was lying, and yet – I believed her. My mind knew for certain, but my heart just couldn’t believe she was false.’

He would talk with halfclosed eyes, his body swaying rhythmically, his hand rising softly, in a frequently repeated gesture, to touch his chest, over his heart.

His voice was dull and colourless, yet his words were vivid, with something of the nightingale throbbing through them.

I envied Trusov, too. This man told fascinating tales about Siberia, Khiva, Bukhara. He spoke amusingly, yet with tremendous bitterness, of the lives of the clerical hierarchy. And one day he declared mysteriously of Tsar Alexander III: ‘This tsar’ – he’s a past master in his business.’

Trusov, I thought, must be one of those ‘villains’ who at the end of a novel, to the reader’s astonishment, turn into highsouled heroes.

Sometimes, of a stuffy night, these people would cross to the meadow bank of the little Kazanka River. There, among the bushes, they would drink, and eat, and talk of their affairs – or, more often, of the intricacies of life, Of the strange confusion of human relationships. Above all, they talked of women: talked of them with malice or with melancholy – movingly, at times, and almost always as though peering into a dark place where things sinister and unknown might lurk.

“看重精神生活是什么意思?”

“那就是说,看重精神生活的人对于任何东西都不会有羡慕,只有好奇……”他这样说我是不很正确的,因为我对许多人和许多事都非常地羡慕,尤其值得一提的是,巴什金那奇特的诗歌般的调子,出人意想的比喻和用词,他说话的技巧,就常令我羡慕不已。我记得他讲一个爱情故事的开头是这样的:“一个夜色朦胧的晚上,我像一只蛰伏在树洞里的鸱,呆在穷困偏僻的斯维亚日斯克城的旅店里,正值秋季的十月份,天上下着绵绵细雨,风儿不时吹来刮去,像是一个遭受委屈的鞑靼人在慢声唱着没有尽头的哀歌:噢—噢—噢—呜—呜—呜……

“……瞧,她来了,她轻盈的步态,红润的肌肤,宛如旭日东升时的彩霞。她那纯洁的眼神却是刻意伪装的。她以恳切的声音说道:‘亲爱的,我没有对不起你。’我明明知道她在撒谎,却依然相信这是真话!凭理智我知道得一清二楚,可是情感上我如何也不相信她在骗我!”

他一面演讲着,一面有节奏地摇晃着身子,眼睛半开半闭,不时用手轻轻地抚摸自己的心窝。

他的声音低沉而沙哑,但是所说的话语却那么娓娓动听,有如夜莺的歌声一般动人心弦。

我也还羡慕特鲁索夫。这个人十分有趣地讲述西伯利亚、希瓦和布哈拉,特别气愤地嘲笑高级僧侣们的生活。有一次他竟然神秘地讲起沙皇亚历山大三世:“这位沙皇做自己的事情是个能手!”

我觉得特鲁索夫很像小说里描写的一类“坏人”:在小说结尾时候,出乎读者意料之外,这些“坏人”竟然又变成了宽宏大量的英雄人物。

有的时候,在闷热的夜晚,这些人渡过喀山小河,来到对岸的草地上和灌木林中,在那里一面吃喝,一面交谈着各自的事情。谈论得更多的是有关生活的错综复杂,奇怪纠葛的人际关系等等,对女人更是高谈阔论。他们怀着不乏愤恨而忧伤的心情来谈论女人,有时谈得感人肺腑;他们总是怀着一种向黑暗窥视的感觉——在那黑暗中充满了非常可怕的思想不到的事情。在那星光暗淡的黑色天幕下,浓郁地长满柳丛的闷热洼地里,

I spent two or three nights with them over there, under a dark sky studded with lacklustre stars. We lay in the stuffy warmth of a little hollow, thickly overgrown with willow bushes. Through the darkness, damp because the Volga was so near, boat lights crawled, golden spiders, in every direction; and along the black mass of the bluff bank shone scattered lumps and veins of fire – the windows of homes and taverns in the wealthy village of Uslon. The paddles of steamboat wheels beat dully against the water. Sailors shouted, on a passing train of barges; and their hoarse cries were like the howling of wolves. Somewhere a hammer tapped iron. A plaintive song floated over the water – somebody's soul, gently smouldering. The song cast ashy melancholy on the heart.

And it was more melancholy still to hear the softly flowing talk of my companions. Musing on life, each spoke of what lay closest to his heart, barely listening to the others. Sitting or lying in the shadow of the willow bushes, smoking, and drinking now and then, without greed, of vodka or beer, they would go drifting back along the vague paths of memory.

'Well, there was this that happened to me,' someone might say, out of the night that pressed him to the earth.

And when he had told his tale, the others would murmur their assent:

'Yes, such things happen too. AH sorts of things may happen.'

'Happened,' happens, 'used to happen,' sounded in my ears, until it seemed to me that in this night these people had entered their last hours of life. Everything had already happened; nothing would ever happen more!

This feeling tended to alienate my thoughts from Bashkin and Trusov. Still, they attracted me; and, by the logic of all I had experienced, it would have been only natural for me to take their road. My outraged hope rising to higher things, of attaining an education – this, too, impelled me to follow them. In hours of hunger, bitterness, despair, I felt myself fully capable of crime – and not only against the 'sacred institute of property.' The romantic spirit of youth, however, kept me from leaving the path I was fated to tread.

Besides Bret Harte, with his love of humanity,

我和他们一起度过了两夜。这里临近伏尔加河,因此夜晚空气非常湿润,船上的桅灯酷似一只只金色蜘蛛在黑暗中向四面八方爬去。在那黑压压一大片岩石的河岸之上,闪现着一团团火球和一条条火龙,这是富庶的乌斯隆村里的旅店和村民住房的窗户发出的光亮。轮船的轮片打击着河水,发出低沉的声音。水手们在驳船队上,异常紧张地吼叫着,某处有人一边用锤子敲击着铁板,一边拉长了凄凉的声音歌唱,稍稍地排解着心灵的哀伤,那歌声给人们的心头蒙上一层淡淡的忧愁。

更为令人忧愁的是,凝听着这些低声倾泻内心的话语——他们思考着生活,各自叙说自己的事情,几乎谁也不去听谁的。他们在灌木林里或是坐着,或是躺着,吸着烟卷,偶尔喝一点伏特加和啤酒,然后他们追溯着一件件难以忘怀的往事。

“瞧,我经历过这样一件事情。”黑夜中,趴在地上的一人说道。

听完了他所叙述的事情,人们都不无感叹地说:

“这是常有的事,都是常有的事……”

“有过”,“这都是常有的”,“还有过不少呢”,我听着这样的话,觉得今夜人们已经活到了生活的尽头,一切似乎都已经有过,再没有任何东西可以期待的了!

这使我和巴什金和特鲁索夫渐渐地疏远起来,然而,我还是喜欢他们。依据我的经历来推理,我和他们走同一条道路是十分自然的。我那上大学念书的希望受到了凌辱,在这种情况下,我跟他们靠近起来了。在那贫苦饥寒、满腔愤怒的时刻,我觉得自己完全能够去犯罪,不仅仅是去反对那“神圣的私有制”。然而,青年人的浪漫思想不允许我脱离我注定要走的道路。

那时候,除了人道主义的勃来特·哈特和

and various Cheap novels, I had already read quite a number of really serious books. These aroused aspirations to other things: things only vaguely envisioned, but of greater weight than all I saw around me.

At the same time, I was forming a new type of acquaintanceships, receiving new impressions. Gymnasium students often gathered in the empty lot by the Yevreinovs' home, to play at gorodki; and I was strongly drawn to one of them, Guri Pletuyov.

This was a swarthy youth, with blueblack hair like a Japanese and a face covered with tiny black spots, as though gunpowder had been robbed into the skin. Irrepressibly jolly, skilful at games and witty in conversation, he had the makings of many and varied talents. And, like most talented Russians, he lived on what Nature had given him making no effort to consolidate or develop his gifts.

Loving music, and endowed with a delicate ear and a sensitive understanding, he played remarkably well on the gusli, the balalaika, the accordion - yet made no attempt to master finer and more difficult instruments. He was poor, and badly dressed; but his torn, rumpled shirt, patched trousers and down-at-heel boots fitted very well with his reckless spirit, his expansive gestures, his swift movements and sinewy frame.

He was like one just recovered from a long and painful illness; or like a prisoner, only yesterday released. Everything life offered was new to him, and pleasant. Everything aroused him to noisy merriment. He skipped about the world like a humming top.

Learning how difficult and precarious a life I led, he proposed that I come to stay with him, and study to be a village teacher. And so I found myself in that strange, gay slum dwelling, the 'Marusovka,' tamihar, probably, to many a generation of Kazan students; a big, tumbledown building on Ribnoryad skaya, captured - to every appearance - from its owners by a host of halfstarved students, prostitutes, and, besides these, varied human wreckage - beings that seemed to have out-lived themselves. Pletuyov lived in the hall space under the attic stairs,

He had a cot under the stairs, and, by the window at the end of the hall, a table and a chair. Nothing more. There were three rooms opening on this hall, two occupied by prostitutes and the third by

一些低级趣味的小说以外,我已经读过了不少严肃的书籍,这些书本鼓励我去追求某种还不十分明确的东西,这个东西比我见过的一切都具有更为重大的意义。

在这个时期里,我又认识了几个人,获得了一些新观感。一群中学生经常到叶夫列伊诺夫住所旁边的空地上来玩击棒游戏。这其中有个叫古里·普列特尼奥夫的中学生,深深地把我吸引。

他那黝黑的皮肤,发青的头发,非常像个日本人。他满脸是雀斑,仿佛脸上擦上了火药末似的。他总是兴高采烈的,玩耍起游戏来很是机灵,谈起话来也很俏皮,他身上充满着各种智慧的光芒。他几乎跟所有富有天才的俄罗斯人一样,凭借天赋的才能过日子,

无须努力去提高和发展这些才能了。他具有灵敏的听觉,对于音乐有着极其高超的鉴赏力。他喜爱音乐,能够像演员那样演奏古斯里琴(古斯里琴是俄国古代的一种弦乐器)、三弦琴和手风琴,却不想去掌握更高难的乐器。他家境贫寒,没有一件好衣裳,然而,他那皱皱巴巴的破衬衫、缀满补丁的裤子以及千疮百孔的靴子与他那豪放的性格、身体的麻利动作以及大幅度的手势非常相称。

他像一个长期患了重病之后刚刚康复的人,或者像昨天才从监牢里释放出来的囚徒。生活中的一切,对他都是那么新鲜、那么惬意,使他感到热闹非凡,他跳跳又蹦蹦,仿佛像满地飞窜的花炮。

他知道我生活困难,处境险恶,于是建议我搬去和他住在一块,并且奉劝我去当乡村教师。所以,我就住进了这个奇怪而快乐的、叫做“马鲁索夫卡”的贫民窟。大概不止一代的喀山大学的学生们都很熟悉它。这是座雷布诺里亚德街上年久失修、破破烂烂的大房子,似乎是那些挨饿受冻的大学生、妓女和被时代淘汰了的无用人的幽灵从房主那里夺取过来的。

普列特尼奥夫住在从走廊通到阁楼的楼梯底下,那里放着他的一张单人床,在走廊尽头的窗户旁边摆着一张桌子和一把椅子,这就是他的全部家具了。这条走廊通往三间屋子,

a consumptive mathematician, formerly a seminary student — a tall, gaunt, almost fearful looking man, overgrown with rough, reddish wool and dressed in filthy rags that barely covered his nakedness. Through the holes in these rags, one could glimpse his horrible, bluish skin and skeleton ribs.

He seemed to feed on nothing but his own nails, which were always gnawed to the quick. Day and night, he worked over some sort of drafts and calculations, coughing incessantly — a dull, booming cough. The prostitutes were afraid of him, thinking him insane; but, out of pity, they would leave bread, tea, and sugar outside his door. He would come out and pick up these packets, wheezing like a tired horse with the effort. If they forgot, or for some reason were unable, to bring their offerings, he would stand in his doorway, shouting huskily into the hall: 'Food!'

His eyes, sunk in dark pits, glittered with the pride of a madman, rejoicing in the knowledge of his own majesty. At long intervals, he would be visited by a tiny, hunchbacked monster with a twisted leg — a greyhaired creature, with powerful spectacles, perched on a swollen nose, and with the sallow face of a castrate, set in a crafty smile. They would shut the door tight and sit for hours in silence. A strange hush would seem to emanate from the room. Once, however, late at night, I was wakened by the mathematician's hoarse voice, roaring furiously: 'And I say, a prison! Geometry's a cage, that's what it is! Yes, a mousetrap! A prison!'

The hunchbacked monster tittered shrilly, repeating over and over some queer word I did not know. Then, suddenly, the mathematician yelled: 'To hell with you! Get out!'

While the visitor retreated down the hall, with an angry hissing and squealing, hurriedly wrapping himself in his broad cloak, the mathematician stopped in the doorway, a lank, fearful figure, clutching at his tangled hair, and wheezed: 'Euclid's a fool! A fool! I'll prove God has more brains than that fool Greek!'

Then he went in, banging the door so savagely that something in his room fell clattering to the floor.

This man, as I soon discovered, was attempting

两间屋里住着妓女,第三间里住着一个害痲病,教会学校毕业从事数学研究的人。这个人既高又瘦,瘦骨嶙峋得简直让人害怕,浑身长满了浅浅的棕红色硬毛,肮脏破旧的衣服勉强遮盖着身子;从那衣服的破洞里露出可怕的微微发育的皮肤和骷髅似的肋骨。

他好像只靠吃自己的指甲过活——把指甲啃得快要出血了。他每日每夜地制图、运算,不断地咳嗽,发出低沉的声音。妓女们以为他是个精神失常的人,都非常害怕他,然而,她们出于怜悯,常常在他的门口悄悄地放上一些面包、茶叶与食糖,他就将这一包包的东西从地上捡起来,拿回到屋里,一面呼哧呼哧地喘着气,犹如一匹筋疲力尽的马似的。若是她们忘记或者由于什么原因不能给他送礼物来,他就打开房门,朝着走廊沙哑地喊道:“拿点面包过来!”

在他那眼窝深陷的黑色眼睛里,闪耀着幸福狂热者自命不凡的骄傲神色。有时一个长相丑陋的驼子来看看他,一只脚向外翻着,肿胀的鼻子上撑起一副深度的眼镜,头发花白,在他(阉割派教徒(阉割派是俄国18世纪末的一个宗教派别,认为肉欲是罪恶,应阉割。))蜡黄的脸上现出狡猾的微笑。她们紧紧地关起房门,在奇怪的宁静中,默默地呆上好几个小时。只有一次在深夜里,这个数学家沙哑的怒吼声将我惊醒了:“我说——这就是监狱!几何学——是鸟笼!是的,是捕鼠器!是的,是监狱!”

驼背的丑八怪那尖细的嗓子发出嘻嘻的笑声,反反复复地说着一个奇怪的词,可是这个数学家突然吼叫起来:“滚蛋!滚!”

驼背的丑八怪那尖细的嗓子发出嘻嘻的笑声,反反复复地说着一个奇怪的词,可是这个数学家突然吼叫起来:“滚蛋!滚!”他的客人滚到走廊里,裹上了宽敞的披风,愤恨地嘟哝着,又不时尖叫几声。这个瘦高而又可怕的数学家站在门口,把手指插进蓬乱的头发表里,声音沙哑地喊叫道:“欧几里得(欧几里得(公元前315—前255),古希腊几何学家。)是个傻瓜!傻瓜——瓜……我可以论证上帝比这个希腊人更有智慧!”

他使劲把房门碰上,震得他屋里的什么东西轰隆一声掉了下来。

不久,我听说这个人想要根据数学来证明

to prove the existence of God by means of higher mathematics. He died, however, without attaining his end.

Pletnyov worked in a printing office, as night proofreader for a newspaper. He earned eleven kopeks a night. If I did not manage to earn anything, we would live the day through on four pounds of bread, two kopeks' worth of tea, and three kopeks' worth of sugar. And I had very little time for earning money, because I had to study.

Learning cost me tremendous labour. Particularly oppressive was the science of grammar, with its hideously narrow, ossified forms, into which I found myself utterly incapable of squeezing the Russian tongue – so alive and so difficult, so capriciously versatile. Soon, however, to my relief, we discovered that I had begun my studies 'too early' – that, even should I pass the examinations for village teachers, I could not receive an appointment, because I was too young.

Pletnyov and I slept on the same cot – he in the daytime, I at night. When he got home, early in the morning, worn out by his night's work, his face swarthier than ever, his eyes inflamed, I would hurry off to the tavern for hot water – we had no samovar, of course – and then, at the table by the window, we would breakfast on bread and tea. Guri would reel off the news in the morning's paper, and recite the latest comic verses by a drunken columnist who signed himself 'Red Domino.'

Guri always amazed me by his light attitude towards life. He treated life, it seemed to me, much as he did the fat-faced woman Galkina, procuress and trader in secondhand ladies' finery.

It was from this woman that he hired his little hole under the stairs. Having no money to pay for these 'chambers,' he paid instead in jokes, accordion music, and sentiment songs – delivered in a light tenor, with a glint of scorn in his eyes. The woman Galkina had been in the chorus at the opera in her youth, and knew how to value a tune. Not infrequently, she would be moved to tears. The, tiny drops would roll profusely from her brazen eyes and down her puffy, purple cheeks – mark of the drinkard and the glutton. She would brush the tears from her cheeks with puffy fingers, then wipe her fingers carefully on a filthy handkerchief.

'Ah, Guri, Guri,' she would exclaim, with a

上帝的存在,但是他还没来得及完成这件事就死了。

普列特尼奥夫在一家印刷厂里干报纸的夜班校对员的工作,一夜可以挣得十一戈比的工资。假使我来不及出去做工挣钱,那么我一昼夜就只能吃上四磅面包、两戈比的茶和三戈比的糖。我没有充足的时间去做工,因为我还要学习。

我正在非常困难地钻研各门学科,那些死板得反常的语法规则特别令我苦恼,我根本无法把生动的、难度大的、变幻莫测而又灵活性强的俄语弄进僵死的语法框架里去。然而,不久我高兴地发现,我的学习为时“过早”了。纵然我能够考上,取得当乡村教师的资格,因为我的年龄,也不会得到教师职位的。

普列特尼奥夫和我同睡在一张单人床上,我在夜间睡,而他在白天睡。他干上一整夜的工作,一夜不睡使他疲倦不堪,脸色变得更加黝黑了,熬得两只眼睛又红又肿的。他早晨一回来,我马上跑到小饭馆里去打开水,因为我们没有茶饮,这是很自然的。随后,我们便在窗户旁边坐了下来,当着面包喝茶。古里给我讲报纸上的各种新闻,朗读署名为“红色多米诺”那嗜酒成癖的小品文作家的打油诗。

古里那种对人生玩世不恭的态度使我颇为惊奇,我觉得他对待生活的态度,就像他对待那个买卖女人旧衣饰兼做拉皮条的胖脸蛋婆娘加尔金娜一样。

他是从这个婆娘手里租下那楼梯底下的屋角的,但是他没有钱付“房租”,只好说说逗人高兴的笑话,拉拉手风琴,唱唱动听的歌曲来顶替房租;当他用男高音唱起歌来,他那双眼睛便闪烁着讪笑的神情。婆娘加尔金娜年轻的时候当过歌剧合唱演员,在歌曲方面是在行的。她经常感动得流泪:从她那恬不知耻的眼睛里流出许多细微的泪珠,淌到她这个酒鬼和馋鬼的肿胀而发育的脸颊上,她用胖乎乎的手指拭去脸颊上的眼泪,然后再拿一条污秽的手绢细致地擦着手指。

“啊! 古罗奇卡(古罗奇卡是古里的爱