

书虫·牛津英汉对照读物

# The Unquiet Grave

M. R. JAMES

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外语教学与研究出版社  
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著 M. R. James

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## The Picture

For several years Mr Williams worked for the museum at the University of Oxford, enlarging its already famous collection of drawings and pictures of English country houses and churches. It is hard to imagine anything less alarming than collecting pictures of houses and churches, but Mr Williams found that even this peaceful work had its unexpected dark corners.

He bought many pictures for the museum from the London shop of Mr J. W. Britnell. Twice a year Mr Britnell sent a list of pictures to all his regular customers, who could then choose which pictures they wanted to look at before deciding whether to buy.

In February 1895 Mr Williams received a list from Mr Britnell with the following letter:

*Dear Sir,*

*I think you might be interested in Picture Number 978 in our list, which I will be happy to send to you if you wish.*

*J. W. Britnell*

Mr Williams turned to Number 978 in the list and found the following note:

Number 978. Artist unknown. Picture of an English country house, early nineteenth century. 25 centimetres by 40 cen-



## 画作



几年来,威廉斯先生一直在牛津大学博物馆工作,为该馆不断地增加其本已出名的有关英国乡村住房和教堂方面绘画作品的收藏。收集有关住房和教堂的绘画作品本无任何惊人之处,可威廉斯先生却发现即使是这样一项很平静的工作也有其意想不到之处。

他从伦敦 J. W. 布里耐尔先生的商店为博物馆买入大量绘画作品。布里耐尔先生一年两次为其所有的老主顾们寄上一份作品目录。这样,这些老主顾们便能够选择一下他们想看看哪些作品,然后决定是否购买。

1895 年 2 月威廉斯先生接到了布里耐尔先生寄来的目录和下面这封信:

亲爱的先生:

我想您可能对我们目录中的第 978 号作品感兴趣,如果您希望,我很乐意给您寄上。

J. W. 布里耐尔

威廉斯先生翻到目录中的第 978 号,发现了下面的说明:

第 978 号,作者不详,画面为一座 19 世纪早期英国乡村住房,长 40 厘米,宽 25 厘米,

**museum** *n.* a building with interesting things for people to visit. 博物馆。  
**enlarge** *v.* make or become larger. 扩大;增大。  
**collection** *n.* group of objects that have been collected and that belong together. 收藏品。  
**alarming** *adj.* causing fear and anxiety. 惊人的;吓人的。  
**regular** *adj.* happening, coming, doing something again and again at the same time each day, week, etc. 常规的;定期的。  
**artist** *n.* a person who paints or draws pictures. 画家。

timetres. £ 20.

It did not sound very interesting and the price seemed high. However, Mr Williams added it to the pictures that he asked Mr Britnell to send to him.

The pictures arrived at the museum one Saturday afternoon, just after Mr Williams had left. They were brought round to his rooms in college so that he could look at them over the weekend. Mr Williams found them on his table when he and his friend, Mr Binks, came in to have tea.

Picture Number 978 showed the front of quite a large country house. It had three rows of windows with the door in the middle of the bottom row. There were trees on both sides of the house and a large lawn in front of it. The letters A. W. F. were written in the corner of the picture. Mr Williams thought that it was not very well done, probably the work of an amateur artist, and he could not understand why Mr Britnell thought it was worth twenty pounds. He turned it over and saw that there was a piece of paper on the back with part of a name on it. All he could read were the ends of two lines of writing. The first said, '—ngly Hall'; the second, '—ssex'.

Mr Williams thought that it would be interesting to see if he could find the name of the house in one of his guidebooks before sending the picture back on Monday morning. Meanwhile, he put the picture on the table, lit the lamp because it was now getting dark, and made the tea.

While they were having tea, his friend picked up the

售价 20 英镑。

这幅画似乎没多大意思,而且价格似乎也偏高。可威廉斯先生还是在要求布里耐尔先生寄给他的画里加上了它。

一个周六的下午这些作品被送到了博物馆,这时威廉斯先生刚离开。于是这些画又被转到他在学院的住所,以便周末就能让他看到。威廉斯先生和朋友宾克斯先生进屋喝茶时发现了桌子上的那些画。

第 978 号作品画的是一座乡村大住房的正面。房子有三排窗户,门在底部那排的中间。住房的两侧是树,前面有一大块草地,画的一角写着 A. W. F. 几个字母。威廉斯先生觉得这幅画画得不怎么样,可能出自业余画家之手,他不明白为什么布里耐尔先生觉得它值 20 英镑。他把画翻过来发现后面有张纸,上面写着个不完整的名字。他能看到的只有两行字的结尾,第一行为“——宁利府”,第二行为“——塞克斯”。

威廉斯先生想看看周一上午把画寄回之前能不能在自己的某本旅行指南中找到这座房子的名字,他觉得这样做挺有意思的。他把画放在桌子上,这时天渐渐黑了,于是他点上灯,沏上了茶。

他们喝着茶,他的朋友拿起那幅画看着

**lawn** *n.* grass in a garden, which is cut often to keep it short. 草地; 草场。  
**amateur** *n.* someone who does something (e. g. painting, acting) as a hobby, without receiving money for it. 业余爱好者。

picture, looked at it and said, 'Where's this house, Williams?'

'That's just what I was going to find out,' said Williams, taking a book from the shelf. 'If you look at the back, you'll see it's Something Hall in either Essex or Sussex. Half the name's missing, you see. I don't suppose you recognize the house, do you?'

'No, I don't,' said Mr Binks. 'It's from Britnell, I suppose, isn't it? Is it for the museum?'

'Well, I would buy it if the price was two pounds,' replied Mr Williams, 'but for some reason he wants twenty pounds for it. I can't think why. It's not a very good picture and there aren't even any figures in it to make it more interesting.'

'I agree it's not worth twenty pounds,' said Binks, 'but I don't think it's too bad. The light seems rather good to me and I think there is a figure here, just at the edge, in the front.'

'Let me see,' said Williams. 'Well, it's true the light is quite well done. Where's the figure? Oh, yes! Just the head, in the very front of the picture.'

And indeed there was — right on the edge of the picture — just the head of a man or a woman, who was looking towards the house. Williams had not noticed it before.

'Still,' he said, 'though it's better than I thought at first, I can't spend twenty pounds of the museum's money on a pic-

问道：“威廉斯，这座房子在哪儿？”

“我正想查找一下呢，”威廉斯先生说，从书架上取下一本书。“你看一下背面，上面写着是埃塞克斯或苏塞克斯的什么府。名字少了一半，我想你大概也不认识这座房子吧？”

“不认识，”宾克斯先生说，“我想是布里耐尔寄来的吧？是不是要卖给博物馆？”

“是呀，如果售价是两英镑，我会买的，”威廉斯先生说，“可不知什么原因他要 20 英镑。我真不知这是为什么。这张画画得并不好，而且画面上连个人影都没有，没有什么看头儿。”

“我也觉得这画不值 20 英镑，”宾克斯说，“不过我并不觉得它有多糟糕。我认为画中明亮部分似乎还很不错，而且我看这儿有个人，就在前部边上。”

“我看看，”威廉斯先生说，“哦，明亮部分确实处理得不错。人在哪儿？噢，看到了！只有头部，在画面的最前部。”

确实如此——就在画面边缘——只有一个男人或女人的头部，在看这房子。威廉斯此前并没注意到这一点。

“不过，”他说，“虽然它比我刚开始认为的好一点儿，我还是不能把博物馆的 20 镑

*figure n human form, esp. the appearance and what it suggests. 人形；(尤指)体态；身材。*

ture of a house I don't even know.'

Mr Binks, who had some work to finish, soon left and Mr Williams spent the time before dinner trying to find the name of the house in his guidebooks.

'If I knew the letter before the "—ngly",' he said to himself, 'it would be easy enough. But there are many more names ending in "—ngly" than I thought.'

Dinner in Mr Williams' college was at seven o'clock and afterwards a few of his friends came back to his rooms to play cards. During a pause in the game Mr Williams picked up the picture from the table without looking at it and passed it to a man named Garwood, who was interested in pictures. Garwood looked at it and said:

'This is really a very fine picture, you know, Williams. The light is very well done, in my opinion, and though the figure is rather unpleasant, it is quite interesting.'

'Yes, isn't it?' said Williams, who was too busy giving drinks to his guests to look at the picture again.

When his visitors had gone, Williams had to finish writing a letter, so it was after midnight before he was ready to go to bed. The picture lay face upwards on the table where Garwood had left it and, as Williams was putting out the lamp, he saw it. For a moment he was too surprised to move, then he slowly picked up the picture and stared at it in horror. In the middle of the lawn, in front of the unknown house, there was a figure where there had been no figure earlier. It was crawling on

花在我居然都不知道的一所房子的画上。”

由于手头还有事要做，宾克斯先生过了会儿就走了。吃饭前威廉斯先生试图在旅行指南中找到这幢房子的名字。

“如果我知道‘——ngly’前面的字母，”他自言自语道，“就容易多了。不过以‘——ngly’结尾的名字比我想像的多得多。”

威廉斯先生所在的学院7点钟开饭，吃完饭他的几位朋友回到他的房间打牌。中间停下来时，威廉斯先生从桌子上拿起那幅画，连看都没看就递给一位名叫加伍德的，这人对绘画很感兴趣。加伍德看了看说：

“您看，威廉斯先生，这幅画确实很不错。我觉得画面的明亮部分处理得很好。虽然人物不那么让人愉快，不过还是挺有意思的。”

“噢，是吗？”威廉斯先生答道，当时他正忙着给客人们倒饮料，顾不上再看那画儿一眼。

客人们走后，威廉斯先生还得写完一封信，所以他准备上床休息时已经是后半夜了。加伍德当时是把那张画画面朝上放在桌子上的。威廉斯先生要关灯时看了它一眼。这时他惊讶得简直不能动了，接着他慢慢把它拿起来，惊恐地盯着看起来。在草坪中间，那座不知名房子的前面原来没有人的地方出现了一个人。它正朝那房子爬着，身

**pause** *n.* a short but noticeable break (in activity, speech). 停顿。**guest** *n.* a person who is invited to visit or stay in a house. 宾客；客人。**crawl** *v.* to move slowly on hands and knees. 爬；爬行。

hands and knees towards the house, and it was covered in a strange black garment with a white cross on the back.

After a second or two Mr Williams took the picture by one corner and carried it to an empty room. There, he locked it, face downwards, in a cupboard, then closed and locked the door of the empty room. He went back to his own room and locked the door behind him. Before going to bed, he sat down and wrote a note describing in detail the extraordinary change in the picture since he had received it.

He was glad to remember that Mr Garwood, who had looked at the picture earlier in the evening, had also seen a 'rather unpleasant' figure. He decided that in the morning he must ask someone to look carefully at the picture with him, and he must try very hard to discover the name of the house. He would ask his neighbour, Mr Nisbet, to have breakfast with him. Then he would spend the morning looking for the house in his guidebooks.

Mr Nisbet arrived at nine o'clock and the two men sat down to breakfast. When they had finished, Mr Williams, feeling both nervous and excited, hurried to the empty room. He unlocked the cupboard, took out the picture, still face downwards, and, without looking at it, went back to his own room and put it into Nisbet's hands.

'Now, Nisbet,' he said, 'I want you to tell me what you see in that picture. Describe it, please, in detail. I'll tell you why afterwards.'



上罩着件样子古怪、后背上带着个白十字架的黑外衣。

一两秒钟后，威廉斯先生拎起画的一角把它拿进了一间空屋子。他把画面朝下锁在橱子里，然后把那间空屋子的门关上锁好。回到自己的房间他也随手锁上了门。上床前，他坐下来写了张条，详细描述了他收到那幅画后画面出现的奇特变化。

想起加伍德先生傍晚看这幅画时也发现有个“不那么让人愉快”的人影，他很高兴，于是决定上午一定要再找人一起好好看看这幅画，而且他必须尽力找到这幢房子的名字。他要请邻居尼斯比特先生来和他共进早餐。然后上午的时间还是用来在旅行指南中查找这套房子。

9点钟，尼斯比特先生来了，于是俩人坐下来吃早餐。吃完后，威廉斯先生心情紧张而激动地快步走进那间空屋子，打开橱子拿出那幅画面仍然朝下的画，连看都没看便回到他的房间，把画放进尼斯比特先生手里。

“哎，尼斯比特，”他说，“我想让你告诉我你在这幅画里看到了什么，请详细描述一下。过会儿我会告诉你为什么要这样做。”

**garment** *n.* something you wear; any piece of clothing. 衣服。**describe** *v.* say what sb. or sth. is like. 描写；描述。**detail** *n.* small, particular fact or item. 细节；琐碎的事。**extraordinary** *adj.* beyond what is usual or ordinary. 非常的；特别的。**nervous** *adj.* easily worried or frightened. 紧张的；担忧的。