

(英语原著版·第六辑)
中译经典文库·世界文学名著

★★★★★
落叶归根的艰难旅途



AS I LAY DYING

(UNABRIDGED)

我弥留之际

■ William Faulkner

《我弥留之际》是美国作家福克纳于1930年发表的代表作，也是“约克纳帕塔法世系”的重要小说之一，讲述美国南方农民本德伦为遵守对妻子的承诺，率全家将妻子的遗体运回家乡安葬的“苦难历程”。小说完全由本德伦一家、众邻居及相关人员的五十九节内心独白构成，从多个角度讲述了这个故事，是作者运用多视角叙述方法及意识流法的又一杰作。

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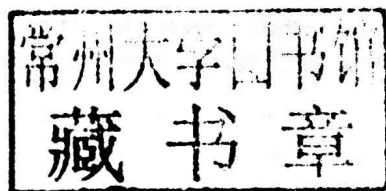
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出版前言

一部文学史是人类从童真走向成熟的发展史，是一个个文学大师用如椽巨笔记载的人类的心灵史，也是承载人类良知与情感反思的思想史。阅读这些传世的文学名著就是在阅读最鲜活生动的历史，就是在大师们做跨越时空的思想交流与情感交流，它会使一代代的读者获得心灵的滋养与巨大的审美满足。

中译出版社以中外语言学习和中外文化交流为出版方向，向广大读者提供既能提升语言能力又能滋养心灵的精神大餐是我们的一贯宗旨。尽管随着网络技术和数字出版的发展，读者获得这些作品的途径更加便捷，但是，一本本装帧精美、墨香四溢的图书仍是读书人的最爱。

“熟读唐诗三百首，不会作诗也会吟”，汉语学习如此，外语学习也是如此。要想彻底学好一种语言，必须有大量的阅读。这不仅可以熟能生巧地掌握其语言技能，也可以了解一种语言所承载的独特文化。《中译经典文库·世界文学名著（英语原著版）》便是这样一套必将使读者受益终生的读物。

PREFACE

The history of literature is the phylogeny of human beings, growing from childhood to adulthood; a spiritual history of the masters of literature, portraying human spirit with great touch; as well as a history of thought, reflecting human conscience and emotional introspection. Reading these immortal classics is like browsing through our history, while communicating across time and space with the thoughts and feelings of great writers. It bestows spiritual nutrition as well as aesthetic relish upon readers generation after generation.

China Translation & Publishing House (CTPH) has a publishing mission oriented toward reading and learning Chinese and foreign languages, as well as cultural exchange, and has been dedicated to providing spiritual feasts which not only optimize language aptitude but also nourish the heart and soul. Along with the development of internet and digital publication, readers have easier access to classic works. Nevertheless, well-designed printed books remain popular with most readers.

“After perusing three hundred Tang poems, a learner can at least utter some verses, even if they cannot proficiently write a poem.” That is true for learning Chinese, more so for learning a foreign language. To master a language, we must read comprehensively, not only for taking in lingual competence, but also for catching the unique cultural essence implied in the language. “World Literary Classics (English originals)” can surely serve as a series of readings with everlasting edifying significance.

作家与作品

福克纳出生于密西西比州新奥尔巴尼一个没落的庄园主家庭，5岁时随家人迁至牛津，一生的大部分时光都在这个小镇度过。他从小爱好阅读，但没有受过多少正规教育，只在密西西比大学待了一年多。青年时参加过皇家空军，但未正式参战，之后短暂游历过欧洲。1920年代末期开始以写作为业。1919年9月，福克纳在《密西西比人》发表了第一篇短篇小说《幸运着陆》和一些模仿性的诗作。1927年福克纳第二部长篇小说《蚊群》出版，在国内得到不少赞誉。1928年春，他开始写第三部关于康普生家族的小说《黄昏》，这就是后来的《喧哗与骚动》。哈考特·布雷斯公司的编辑哈里森·史密斯同意出版《坟墓里的旗帜》，但要求他删改两万多字以减轻实验色彩。他同意了，同时忙于按照自己的意愿修改已经完成的《喧哗与骚动》。1929年1月，献给舍伍德·安德森的小说《沙多里斯》（删改过的《坟墓里的旗帜》）出版了。2月时他去信给哈考特表示感谢，并告诉他们他已经在着手一部新的小说《圣殿》，但这部小说完成之后却被出版社拒绝了。同年10月7日，《喧哗与骚动》出版，受到评论界好评。1930年1月12日，福克纳完成了《我弥留之际》，之后他便筹划投稿给一些有知名度的杂志，这些筹划中的小说有30篇于将来的3年中发表。这时他的短篇小说稿酬已超过过去写四部长篇的酬劳。4月30日，短篇小说《献给爱米丽的一朵玫瑰花》发表于《论坛》杂志，同年发表的短篇小说还有《荣誉》《节俭》和《殉葬》。10月6日，《我弥留之际》在纽约由凯普与史密斯公司出版。12月，同一公司出版了修订版的《圣殿》。1932年，福克纳与好莱坞著名电影公司米高梅签

约，开始撰写电影剧本，写了《奴隶船》《巨手一挥》《分裂舰队》《舞厅》《摩和克沿岸的鼓声》等剧本，然而他对这一行并不胜任。1938年，他在《哈波斯》月刊上发表了短篇小说《烧马棚》，并获欧·亨利奖。这是他第一次获得文学奖项。1939年1月，他成为全国文学艺术研究院院士，还登上了《时代周刊》封面。1941年，福克纳发表著名短篇小说《熊》，这篇小说对美国文坛产生了深远的影响，被誉为“解读福克纳全部小说乃至美国南方文学的钥匙”。1949年，福克纳在与加缪、帕斯捷尔纳克、约翰·斯坦贝克、海明威的角逐中胜出，获得诺贝尔文学奖。1957年2月，福克纳成为了弗吉尼亚大学的驻校作家，5月出版了新的长篇小说《小镇》。1962年7月6日凌晨，福克纳因心脏病突发逝世。1963年，他的最后一部小说《掠夺者》获得了普利策奖，这是普利策奖第二次颁给不在世的作家。

《我弥留之际》以一个女人艾迪·本德伦为轴心。艾迪是农妇出身的小学教员，经过几十年生活的煎熬，终将撒手归西，小说便以此开篇。艾迪是本德伦家5个孩子的母亲，她要求丈夫安斯在她死后将她的尸体运到杰弗生与娘家人葬在一起。但是，仿佛老天有意捉弄，艾迪死时恰逢大雨倾盆，次子达尔与另一个儿子朱维尔（艾迪与一牧师的私生子）驾驶着全家唯一的运输工具——一辆破旧的马车离家挣钱在外。3天后，被大雨耽搁后终于归来的马车载着艾迪的尸体踏上了通往40英里外杰弗生的路，旅途中历经艰险。

《我弥留之际》是威廉·福克纳最优秀的作品之一，福克纳曾把它称为自己最好的小说。自出版以来，评论家们一直从不同的角度来解读该小说。这部作品被许多评论家认为是代表福克纳最高创作成就的作品之一，也是福克纳高超意识流技巧的体现，还是一部实验性的作品，为他带来了国际声誉。作品的真正价值在于重估人对苦难的承受力。福克纳借助他独特的叙事方法，将那些看起来完全是记忆的碎片重新整合，看似被拆开的世界得以重新建构。

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DARL



Jewel and I come up from the field, following the path in single file. Although I am fifteen feet ahead of him, anyone watching us from the cottonhouse can see Jewel's frayed and broken straw hat a full head above my own.

The path runs straight as a plumb-line, worn smooth by feet and baked brick-hard by July, between the green rows of laidby cotton, to the cottonhouse in the center of the field, where it turns and circles the cottonhouse at four soft right angles and goes on across the field again, worn so by feet in fading precision.

The cottonhouse is of rough logs, from between which the chinking has long fallen. Square, with a broken roof set at a single pitch, it leans in empty and shimmering dilapidation in the sunlight, a single broad window in two opposite walls giving onto the approaches of the path. When we reach it I turn and follow the path which circles the house. Jewel, fifteen feet behind me, looking straight ahead, steps in a single stride through the window. Still staring straight ahead, his pale eyes like wood set into his wooden face, he crosses the floor in four strides with the rigid gravity of a cigar store Indian dressed in patched overalls and endued with life from the hips down, and steps in a single stride through the opposite window and into the path again just as I come around the corner. In single file and five feet apart and Jewel now in front, we go on up the path toward the foot of the bluff.

Tull's wagon stands beside the spring, hitched to the rail, the reins wrapped about the seat stanchion. In the wagon bed are two chairs. Jewel stops at the spring and takes the gourd from the willow branch and drinks. I pass him and mount the path, beginning to hear Cash's saw.

When I reach the top he has quit sawing. Standing in a litter of chips, he is fitting two of the boards together. Between the shadow spaces they are yellow as gold, like soft gold, bearing on their flanks in smooth undulations

the marks of the adze blade: a good carpenter, Cash is. He holds the two planks on the trestle, fitted along the edges in a quarter of the finished box. He kneels and squints along the edge of them, then he lowers them and takes up the adze. A good carpenter. Addie Bundren could not want a better one, a better box to lie in. It will give her confidence and comfort. I go on to the house, followed by the

Chuck. Chuck. Chuck.

of the adze.

CORA



So I saved out the eggs and baked yesterday. The cakes turned out right well. We depend a lot on our chickens. They are good layers, what few we have left after the possums and such. Snakes too, in the summer. A snake will break up a hen-house quicker than anything. So after they were going to cost so much more than Mr Tull thought, and after I promised that the difference in the number of eggs would make it up, I had to be more careful than ever because it was on my final say-so we took them. We could have stocked cheaper chickens, but I gave my promise as Miss Lawington said when she advised me to get a good breed, because Mr Tull himself admits that a good breed of cows or hogs pays in the long run. So when we lost so many of them we couldn't afford to use the eggs ourselves, because I could not have had Mr Tull chide me when it was on my say-so we took them. So when Miss Lawington told me about the cakes I thought that I could bake them and earn enough at one time to increase the net value of the flock the equivalent of two head. And that by saving the eggs out one at a time, even the eggs wouldn't be costing anything. And that week they laid so well that I not only saved out enough eggs above what we had engaged to sell, to bake the cakes with, I had saved enough so that the flour and the sugar and the stove wood would not be costing anything. So I baked yesterday, more

careful than ever I baked in my life, and the cakes turned out right well. But when we got to town this morning Miss Lawington told me the lady had changed her mind and was not going to have the party after all.

"She ought to taken those cakes anyway," Kate says.

"Well," I say, "I reckon she never had no use for them now."

"She ought to taken them," Kate says. "But those rich town ladies can change their minds. Poor folks cant."

Riches is nothing in the face of the Lord, for He can see into the heart. "Maybe I can sell them at the bazaar Saturday," I say. They turned out real well.

"You cant get two dollars a piece for them," Kate says.

"Well, it isn't like they cost me anything," I say. I saved them out and swapped a dozen of them for the sugar and flour. It isn't like the cakes cost me anything, as Mr Tull himself realises that the eggs I saved were over and beyond what we had engaged to sell, so it was like we had found the eggs or they had been given to us.

"She ought to taken those cakes when she same as gave you her word," Kate says. The Lord can see into the heart. If it is His will that some folks has different ideas of honesty from other folks, it is not my place to question His decree.

"I reckon she never had any use for them," I say. They turned out real well, too.

The quilt is drawn up to her chin, hot as it is, with only her two hands and her face outside. She is propped on the pillow, with her head raised so she can see out the window, and we can hear him every time he takes up the adze or the saw. If we were deaf we could almost watch her face and hear him, see him. Her face is wasted away so that the bones draw just under the skin in white lines. Her eyes are like two candles when you watch them gutter down into the sockets of iron candle-sticks. But the eternal and the everlasting salvation and grace is not upon her.

"They turned out real nice," I say. "But not like the cakes Addie used to bake." You can see that girl's washing and ironing in the pillow-slip, if ironed it ever was. Maybe it will reveal her blindness to her, laying there at the mercy and the ministration of four men and a tom-boy girl. "There's not a woman in this section could ever bake with Addie Bundren," I say. "First thing we know she'll be up and baking again, and then we wont have any sale for ours at all." Under the quilt she makes no more of a hump than a rail

the jerk comes onto his arms he sees his whole body earthfree, horizontal, whipping snake-limber, until he finds the horse's nostrils and touches earth again. Then they are rigid, motionless, terrific, the horse back-thrust on stiffened, quivering legs, with lowered head; Jewel with dug heels, shutting off the horse's wind with one hand, with the other patting the horse's neck in short strokes myriad and caressing, cursing the horse with obscene ferocity.

They stand in rigid terrific hiatus, the horse trembling and groaning. Then Jewel is on the horse's back. He flows upward in a stooping swirl like the lash of a whip, his body in midair shaped to the horse. For another moment the horse stands spraddled, with lowered head, before it bursts into motion. They descend the hill in a series of spine-jolting jumps, Jewel high, leech-like on the withers, to the fence where the horse bunches to a scuttering halt again.

"Well," Jewel says, "you can quit now, if you got a-plenty."

Inside the barn Jewel slides running to the ground before the horse stops. The horse enters the stall, Jewel following. Without looking back the horse kicks at him, slamming a single hoof into the wall with a pistol-like report. Jewel kicks him in the stomach; the horse arches his neck back, crop-toothed; Jewel strikes him across the face with his fist and slides on to the trough and mounts upon it. Clinging to the hay-rack he lowers his head and peers out across the stall tops and through the doorway. The path is empty; from here he cannot even hear Cash sawing. He reaches up and drags down hay in hurried armsful and crams it into the rack.

"Eat," he says. "Get the goddamn stuff out of sight while you got a chance, you pussel-gutted bastard. You sweet son of a bitch," he says.

JEWEL



It's because he stays out there, right under the window, hammering and sawing on that goddamn box. Where she's got to see him. Where every breath she draws is full of his knocking and sawing where she can see him

waiting until I could hear them all asleep, so I could get up and go back to the bucket. It would be black, the shelf black, the still surface of the water a round orifice in nothingness, where before I stirred it awake with the dipper I could see maybe a star or two in the bucket, and maybe in the dipper a star or two before I drank. After that I was bigger, older. Then I would wait until they all went to sleep so I could lie with my shirt-tail up, hearing them asleep, feeling myself without touching myself, feeling the cool silence blowing upon my parts and wondering if Cash was yonder in the darkness doing it too, had been doing it perhaps for the last two years before I could have wanted to or could have.

Pa's feet are badly splayed, his toes cramped and bent and warped, with no toenail at all on his little toes, from working so hard in the wet in homemade shoes when he was a boy. Beside his chair his brogans sit. They look as though they had been hacked with a blunt axe out of pig-iron. Vernon has been to town. I have never seen him go to town in overalls. His wife, they say. She taught school too, once.

I fling the dipper dregs to the ground and wipe my mouth on my sleeve. It is going to rain before morning. Maybe before dark. "Down to the barn," I say. "Harnessing the team."

Down there fooling with that horse. He will go on through the barn, into the pasture. The horse will not be in sight: he is up there among the pine seedlings, in the cool. Jewel whistles, once and shrill. The horse snorts, then Jewel sees him, glinting for a gaudy instant among the blue shadows. Jewel whistles again; the horse comes dropping down the slope, stiff-legged, his ears cocking and flicking, his mismatched eyes rolling, and fetches up twenty feet away, broadside on, watching Jewel over his shoulder in an attitude kittenish and alert.

"Come here, sir," Jewel says. He moves. Moving that quick his coat, bunching, tongues swirling like so many flames. With tossing mane and tail and rolling eye the horse makes another short curvetting rush and stops again, feet bunched, watching Jewel. Jewel walks steadily toward him, his hands at his sides. Save for Jewel's legs they are like two figures carved for a tableau savage in the sun.

When Jewel can almost touch him, the horse stands on his hind legs and slashes down at Jewel. Then Jewel is enclosed by a glittering maze of hooves as by an illusion of wings; among them, beneath the upreared chest, he moves with the flashing limberness of a snake. For an instant before

would, and the only way you can tell she is breathing is by the sound of the mattress shucks. Even the hair at her cheek does not move, even with that girl standing right over her, fanning her with the fan. While we watch she swaps the fan to the other hand without stopping it.

"Is she sleeping?" Kate whispers.

"She's just watching Cash yonder," the girl says. We can hear the saw in the board. It sounds like snoring. Eula turns on the trunk and looks out the window. Her necklace looks real nice with her red hat. You wouldn't think it only cost twenty-five cents.

"She ought to taken those cakes," Kate says.

I could have used the money real well. But it's not like they cost me anything except the baking. I can tell him that anybody is likely to make a miscue, but it's not all of them that can get out of it without loss, I can tell him. It's not everybody can eat their mistakes, I can tell him.

Someone comes through the hall. It is Darl. He does not look in as he passes the door. Eula watches him as he goes on and passes from sight again toward the back. Her hand rises and touches her beads lightly, and then her hair. When she finds me watching her, her eyes go blank.

DARL



Pa and Vernon are sitting on the back porch. Pa is tilting snuff from the lid of his snuff-box into his lower lip, holding the lip outdrawn between thumb and finger. They look around as I cross the porch and dip the gourd into the water bucket and drink.

"Where's Jewel?" pa says. When I was a boy I first learned how much better water tastes when it has set a while in a cedar bucket. Warmish-cool, with a faint taste like the hot July wind in cedar trees smells. It has to set at least six hours, and be drunk from a gourd. Water should never be drunk from metal.

And at night it is better still. I used to lie on the pallet in the hall,

saying See. See what a good one I am making for you. I told him to go somewhere else. I said Good God do you want to see her in it. It's like when he was a little boy and she says if she had some fertilizer she would try to raise some flowers and he taken the bread pan and brought it back from the barn full of dung.

And now them others sitting there, like buzzards. Waiting, fanning themselves. Because I said If you wouldn't keep on sawing and nailing at it until a man cant sleep even and her hands laying on the quilt like two of them roots dug up and tried to wash and you couldn't get them clean. I can see the fan and Dewey Dell's arm. I said if you'd just let her alone. Sawing and knocking, and keeping the air always moving so fast on her face that when you're tired you cant breathe it, and that goddamn adze going One lick less. One lick less. One lick less until everybody that passes in the road will have to stop and see it and say what a fine carpenter he is. If it had just been me when Cash fell off of that church and if it had just been me when pa laid sick with that load of wood fell on him, it would not be happening with every bastard in the county coming in to stare at her because if there is a God what the hell is He for. It would just be me and her on a high hill and me rolling the rocks down the hill at their faces, picking them up and throwing them down the hill faces and teeth and all by God until she was quiet and not that goddamn adze going One lick less. One lick less and we could be quiet.

DARL



We watch him come around the corner and mount the steps. He does not look at us. "You ready?" he says.

"If you're hitched up," I say. I say "Wait." He stops, looking at pa. Vernon spits, without moving. He spits with decorous and deliberate precision into the pocked dust below the porch. Pa rubs his hands slowly on his knees. He is gazing out beyond the crest of the bluff, out across the land.

Jewel watches him a moment, then he goes on to the pail and drinks again.

"I mislike undecision as much as ere a man," pa says.

"It means three dollars," I say. The shirt across pa's hump is faded lighter than the rest of it. There is no sweat stain on his shirt. I have never seen a sweat stain on his shirt. He was sick once from working in the sun when he was twenty-two years old, and he tells people that if he ever sweats, he will die. I suppose he believes it.

"But if she dont last until you get back," he says. "She will be disappointed."

Vernon spits into the dust. But it will rain before morning.

"She's counted on it," pa says. "She'll want to start right away. I know her. I promised her I'd keep the team here and ready, and she's counting on it."

"We'll need that three dollars then, sure," I say. He gazes out over the land, rubbing his hands on his knees. Since he lost his teeth his mouth collapses in slow repetition when he dips. The stubble gives his lower face that appearance that old dogs have. "You'd better make up your mind soon, so we can get there and get a load on before dark," I say.

"Ma aint that sick," Jewel says. "Shut up, Darl."

"That's right," Vernon says. "She seems more like herself today than she has in a week. Time you and Jewel get back, she'll be setting up."

"You ought to know," Jewel says. "You been here often enough looking at her. You or your folks." Vernon looks at him. Jewel's eyes look like pale wood in his high-blooded face. He is a head taller than any of the rest of us, always was. I told them that's why ma always whipped him and petted him more. Because he was peakling around the house more. That's why she named him Jewel I told them.

"Shut up, Jewel," pa says, but as though he is not listening much. He gazes out across the land, rubbing his knees.

"You could borrow the loan of Vernon's team and we could catch up with you," I say. "If she didn't wait for us."

"Ah, shut your goddamn mouth," Jewel says.

"She'll want to go in ourn," pa says. He rubs his knees. "Dont ere a man mislike it more."

"It's laying there, watching Cash whittle on that damn " Jewel says. He says it harshly, savagely, but he does not say the word. Like a little boy in the dark to flail his courage and suddenly aghast into silence by his