



名人书信

英汉对照

LETTERS
OF CELEBRITIES

杨丹 文慧静 编译



东华大学出版社

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前言

法国的启蒙运动的思想家伏尔泰曾经说过：“书信是生命的慰藉。”在信息经济飞速发展的今天，书信的时代对于我们来说变得越来越遥远。因此书信，尤其是名人的书信对我们来说就更加弥足珍贵。名人的书信是宝贵的历史财富，它为我们提供了真实的历史记录，为那些研究名人的传记作家提供了第一手的宝贵资料，也让我们看到了名人平凡的一面。

本书选编了三十篇左右的名人书信，既有叱咤风云的英雄拿破仑给妻子约瑟芬的书信，又有为正义而奋斗的法国作家左拉向共和国总统发出的公开信，更有马丁·路德·金为了让全体美国人共同反对种族歧视在伯明翰监狱中向阿拉巴马州牧师发出的呼吁信。编者希望这些充满着真挚情感、蕴含着真知灼见的书信可以把我们的读者带回到他们的那个时代，和他们共同体会那份情感撞击的火花。

本书篇章按照发表先后顺序进行排列。在编译过程中，编者力求能够忠实地反映英文原文的意思，当然因为本人的水平有限，不妥之处在所难免，敬请读者批评指正。

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Advice to a Young Man

给青年的建议^①

June 25, 1745

1745年6月25日

My dear Friend,

我亲爱的朋友：

I know of no Medicine fit to diminish the violent natural Inclinations you mention; and if I did, I think I should not communicate it to you.

我不知道有什么良方可以缓和你所提到的那种强烈的本能欲望，如果有这样的方子，我也不应该告诉你。

Marriage is the proper Remedy. It is the most natural State of Man, and therefore the State in which you are most likely to find solid Happiness. Your Reasons against entering into it at present, appear to me not well

① 富兰克林，美国哲学家和政治家。在这封致青年的信中，他给了一个不知名的青年以最诚挚的建议。

founded. The circumstantial Advantages you have in View by postponing it, are not only uncertain, but they are small in comparison with that of the Thing itself, the being married and settled.

婚姻是最好的方子,它是人类最自然的状态,你可以从中获取真正的幸福。就我看来,你不愿意现在就结婚的理由并不充分。你想到的那些推迟婚姻的理由不仅站不住脚,而且同婚姻本身相比也是不足挂齿的。

It is the Man and Woman united that make the complete human Being. Separate, she wants his Force of Body and Strength of Reason; he, her Softness, Sensibility and acute Discernment. Together they are more likely to succeed in the World. A single Man has not nearly the Value he would have in that State of Union. He is an incomplete Animal. He resembles the odd Half of a Pair of Scissors.

只有男人和女人结合在一起才是完整的人,一旦分开,女人就缺少他强壮的体魄和理性的光辉,男人则缺少她温柔和敏锐的洞察力。合在一起,他们则更有可能在世上取得成功。一个单身汉几乎不可能取得那种融合在一起的价值。单身汉就像半把剪刀一样,是一头残缺的动物。

If you get a prudent healthy Wife, your Industry in your Profession, with her good Economy, will be a Fortune sufficient.

如果你娶了一个节俭而又健康的妻子,那么你在事业上的勤奋加上她的节俭将是一笔殷实的财富。

But if you will not take this Counsel, and persist in thinking Commerce with the Sex inevitable, then I repeat my former Advice, that in all your Amours you should prefer old Women to young ones. You call this a Paradox, and demand my Reasons. They are these:

但是如果你不愿意接受我的建议,执意想要尝试性的话,那么我将重复我先前的提议,我建议你选择那些年纪大一些的女人,而不是年轻的女性。你或许认为这种提议似是而非,会要求我阐明原因。那么理由如下:

1. Because as they have more Knowledge of the World and their Minds are better stored with Observations, their Conversation is more improving and more lastingly agreeable.

一、因为她们具备更多的社会经验,她们的思想更有洞察力,她们的谈话对你更有助益,也更长久地让

你感到愉悦。

2. Because when Women cease to be handsome, they study to be good. To maintain their Influence over Men, they supply the Diminution of Beauty by an Augmentation of Utility. They learn to do 1,000 Services small and great, and are the most tender and useful of all Friends when you are sick. Thus they continue amiable. And hence there is hardly such a thing to be found as an old Woman who is not a good Woman.

二、当女人不再美丽的时候,她就会把心思转向求知。为了保持对男人的吸引力,她们会通过增加自己的学识来弥补容颜的衰退。她们学会做各种各样的事情,在你生病的时候,是最温柔和最好的朋友。这样一来,她们依旧是让人亲近的,所以不存在这样的情况:年老的女人不再是一个好女人。

3. Because there is no hazard of Children, which irregularly produced may be attended with much Inconvenience.

三、不会有孩子的拖累,无法预料的孩子的出生总是会带来诸多的不便。



4. Because through more Experience, they are more prudent and discreet in conducting an Intrigue to prevent Suspicion. The Commerce with them is therefore safer with regard to your Reputation. And with regard to theirs, if the Affair should happen to be known, considerate People might be rather inclined to excuse an old Woman who would kindly take care of a young Man, form his Manners by her good Counsels, and prevent his ruining his Health and Fortune among mercenary Prostitutes.

四、因为在经历了许多之后,她们在同他人交往方面更为谨慎小心,以免引起怀疑。就名誉而言,同她们交往更为安全。就此而言,如果这样的事情被人知道,有同情心的人往往会原谅这样一个照顾年轻人的妇女。她的忠告可以塑造他的品行,防止他在唯利是图的妓女中间耗费自己的健康和财富。

5. Because in every Animal that walks upright, the Deficiency of the Fluids that fill the Muscles appears first in the highest Part: The Face first grows lank and wrinkled; then the Neck; then the Breast and Arms; the lower Parts continuing to the last as plump as ever: So that covering all above with a Basket, and regarding



only what is below the Girdle, it is impossible of two Women to know an old from a young one. And as in the dark all Cats are grey, the Pleasure of corporal Enjoyment with an old Woman is at least equal...

五、因为在所有直立行走的动物中,水分的缺乏总是最早出现在那些最高的部位。首先是脸部,变得干瘦,皱纹不断增加,然后是脖子,接着是胸部和手臂,身体最下面的部位是最后萎缩。因此,正如让你猜有盖头的篮子下面的东西一样,你不可能从两个妇女中看出谁更为年轻。也正如黑暗中所有的猫都是黑猫一样,同年长的妇女那里得到的肉体愉悦都是相似的……

6. Because the Sin is less. The debauching a Virgin may be her Ruin, and make her for Life unhappy.

六、同她们交注,你的罪恶感更少。同处女交注可能会造成她精神上的伤害,令她终身不快。

7. Because the Compunction is less. The having made a young Girl miserable may give you frequent bitter Reflections.

七、同她们交注,你很少会受到良心的谴责。同一个少女的交注会让她痛苦,让自己生活在痛苦的回

帆之中。

8. Lastly they are so grateful!!

八、最后,她们也会对此表示感激不尽!

Thus much for my Paradox. But still I advise you to marry directly.

以上就是我的自相矛盾的建议。不管怎样,我还是建议你直接结婚。

Your affectionate friend.

你诚挚的朋友,

Benjamin Franklin

本杰明·富兰克林

Charlotte Carpenter to Sir Walter Scott

夏洛特·卡彭特致
沃尔特·司各特爵士^①

If I could but really believe that my letter only gave you half the pleasure you express, I almost think, my dearest Scott that I should get very fond of writing, just to indulge you . . . that is saying a great deal. I hope you are sensible of the compliment I pay you, and don't expect I shall always be so pretty behaved. You may depend on me, my dearest friend, for fixing as early a day as I possibly can, and if it happens not to be so soon as you could wish, you must not be angry with me. It is very unlucky you are such a bad housekeeper, as I am no better. I shall try. I hope very soon to have the pleasure of seeing you, and of telling you how much I love you; but I wish the first fortnight was one. With all my love, and all sorts of pretty things. Adieu.

我最亲爱的司各特,要是我的信只给你带来了你表现出来的的一半的喜悦,我也会认为自己正是为了纵

① 沃尔特·司各特爵士,苏格兰小说家,诗人,历史小说之父。



容你而变得十分喜欢写信……这可是许大愿了。希望你
你对这种恭维要理智一些,不要指望我会永远这般顺
着你。最亲爱的朋友,你可以相信我,让我尽早确定佳
期。但如果万一不是如您所希望的那样早,可千万别
生我的气。很遗憾你如此不善于理家,可我也和你一
样,但我会竭尽全力。我希望能尽快见到你,并告诉你
我多么爱你,那是我最大的荣幸。但我也希望开始的
两周已经过去。全心全意地爱你,万事如意。再见!

P. S. . . . Etudiez votre Francais. Remember you
are to teach me Italian in return, but I shall be a stupid
scholar.

又及:继续学法语。记住你要教我意大利文作为
回报,不过我可是个笨学生。




Lawrence Sterne to Miss L.

劳伦斯·斯特恩致L小姐^①

Yes! I will steal from the world, and not a babbling tongue shall tell where I am. Echo shall not so much as whisper my hiding place. Suffer thy imagination to permit it as a little sunlight cottage, on the side of a romantic hill. Dost thou think I will leave love and friendship behind me? No! They shall be my companions in solitude, for they will sit down and rise up with me in the amiable form of my L... We will be as merry and as innocent as our first parents in Paradise, before the arch-fiend entered that indescribable scene.

不错,我即将悄然离开这世界,任何饶舌鬼也打听不出我的去处。即使回声也说不出我的藏身之处。你爱怎么想就怎么想吧;或许你会把它说成是一处山间的小屋,那儿充满了浪漫的欢乐和金色的阳光。你以为我会把爱情和友谊抛弃吗?不!它们是我孤独中的伴侣,因为无论是站着还是安坐,我都会感受到爱情和



^① 劳伦斯·斯特恩(1713—1768),英国作家,感伤主义文学代表。

友谊的温馨。在撒旦介入那美妙的乐园生活之前，我们会像我们的祖先一样快乐和天真、无邪。

The kindest affections will have room to shoot and expand in our retirement, and produce such fruit as madness and envy and ambition have always killed in the bud. Let the human tempest and hurricane rage at a distance, the desolation is beyond the horizon of peace. My L... has seen a polyanthus blow in December ... me friendly wall has sheltered it from the biting wind. No planetary influence shall reach us but that which presides and cherishes the sweetest flowers. God preserve us! How delightful this prospect in idea! We will build and we will plant, in our own way ... simplicity shall not be tortured by art. We will learn of nature how to live ... she shall be our alchemist, to mingle all the good of life in one salubrious draught. The gloomy family of care and distrust shall be banished from our dwelling, guarded by the kind and tutelary deity. We will sing our choral songs of gratitude and rejoice to the end of our pilgrimage.

我们最美好的爱情还会有不断加深和发展的余地，如此的爱，疯狂、嫉妒和非分之想都会扼杀在萌芽