

WORLD FAMOUS FICTIONS

白菜與帝王
CABBAGES AND KINGS

O. HENRY 著

伍光建選譯

商務印書館發行

白 菜 與 帝 王
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CHAPTER XII

SHOES

"Same old thing!" he complained. "Fool people writing for information about the country. They want to know all about raising fruit, and how to make a fortune without work. Half of 'em don't even send stamps for a reply. They think a consul hasn't anything to do but write letters. Slit those envelopes for me, old man, and see what they want. I'm feeling too rocky¹ to move."

Keogh, acclimated² beyond all possibility of ill-humour, drew his chair to the table with smiling compliance on his rose-pink countenance, and began to slit open the letters. Four of them were from citizens in various parts of the United States who seemed to regard the consul at Coralio as a cyclopædia of information. They asked long lists of questions, numerically arranged, about the climate, products, possibilities, laws, business chances, and statistics of the country in which the consul had the honour of representing his own government.

"Write 'em, please, Billy," said that inert official, "just a line, referring them to the latest consular report. Tell 'em the State Department will be delighted to furnish the literary gems. Sign my name. Don't let your pen scratch, Billy; it'll keep me awake."

"Don't snore," said Keogh, amiably, "and I'll do your work for you. You need a corps of assistants, anyhow.

¹ rocky, 不好過. ² acclimated, 服水土, 習慣.

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第十二回 鞋子

【有一天美國領事約翰·愛特和特(John Atwood)同他的幫手比里·開伊奧(Billy Keogh)正在吃飯，僕人送幾封郵件進來。領事懶得動，叫開伊奧拆看。譯者註。】

領事口出怨言，說道：『可是舊話來了。傻人寫信問這裏的情形。他們要曉得怎樣種果樹，怎樣不必動手做事就可以發財。有一半寫信來問的人，連回信的郵票也不附信交來。他們以爲領事沒得別的事體做，只是寫信。老頭子，你替我拆封，看看他們要什麼。我覺得太不好過，懶得動。』

開伊奧是習慣供人驅策的，是絕不會不高興的，他的玫瑰色的臉帶着奉命唯謹的微笑，把他的椅子拖近桌子，就起首拆封，有四封是從美國各部分的市民寫來的，他們好像當柯拉利奧(Coralio)的美國領事是一部通天曉。他們問一長串的話，按着號數排列下來，問的是氣候，土產，有什麼生意可做，法律，有什麼機會，與領事所報告於美國政府的該國的統計。

這個懶得動的官員說道，『比里，請你復他們一行，就請他們參觀最後的領事報告。教訴他們，外交部還樂意供給好文章。簽我的字。比里，你寫字不要把紙刮得沙拉沙拉的響；這會驚醒我。』

開伊奧很和氣的說道，『你卻不要打呼，我就替你把事辦好。無論怎樣你要一師團的幫手。我不懂得你怎樣送

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Don't see how you ever get out a report. Wake up a minute!—here's one more letter—it's from your own town, too—Dalesburg."

"That so?" murmured Johnny showing a mild and obligatory interest. "What's it about?"

"Postmaster writes," explained Keogh. "Says a citizen of the town wants some facts and advice from you. Says the citizen has an idea in his head of coming down where you are and opening a shoe store. Wants to know if you think the business would pay. Says he's heard of the boom along this coast, and wants to get in on the ground floor."

In spite of the heat and his bad temper, Johnny's hammock swayed with his laughter. Keogh laughed too; and the pet monkey on the top shelf of the bookcase chattered in shrill sympathy with the ironical reception of the letter from Dalesburg.

"Great bunions!"¹ exclaimed the consul. "Shoe store! What'll they ask about next, I wonder? Overcoat factory, I reckon. Say, Billy—of our 3,000 citizens, how many do you suppose ever had up a pair of shoes?"

Keogh reflected judicially.

"Let's see—there's you and me and—"

"Not me," said Johnny, promptly and incorrectly, holding up a foot encased in a disreputable deerskin *zapato*. "I haven't been a victim to shoes in months."

"But you've got 'em, though," went on Keogh. "And there's Goodwin and Blanchard and Geddie and old Lutz and Doc Gregg and that Italian that's agent for the banana company, and there's old Delgado—no; he wears sandals.

¹ bunions, 脚指發腫.

呈一個報告。你且醒一會子！——還有一封信啦——這是從你的本市鎮來的——從狄爾斯堡 (Dalesburg) 來的。』

約翰表示一種溫和的與勉強的注意，喃喃說道，『是麼？說些什麼？』開伊奧解說道，『郵務局長寫道，有本市鎮的一個市民，要你告訴他些事實與條陳。他說這個市民有意要到你這裏來，開一間鞋店。他要曉得你看這個買賣能否賺錢。他說他聽見這裏的一帶海岸的生意是很興旺的，他要在平地那一層走入來。』

天氣雖然是熱，約翰的脾氣雖然不好，他一聽了信裏的話，不能不大笑，笑到他所躺的吊床兩邊搖擺。開伊奧也大笑；在書架上那隻寶貝猴子也叫喊，與他們那樣挖苦的歡迎這封信表同情。

領事喊道，『他們好像得了腳趾腫的毛病！開鞋店麼！我要猜他們再問的是什麼？我猜是大衣製造廠。比里，我來問你，我們這裏有三千人，有幾個是穿鞋的呀？』

開伊奧很小心的想。

『我們看看——你是穿鞋的，我是穿鞋的——』

約翰舉起一隻穿了一隻很難看的鹿皮鞋，趕快說道，『我有好幾個月不做鞋子的犧牲啦。』他這句話說得不甚對。

開伊奧往下說道，『你卻有鞋。此處穿鞋的有古特文 (Goodwin) 與布蘭查 (Blanchard) 及蓋狄 (Geddie) 與老魯特茲 (Lutz) 與格力格 (Gregg) 醫生，還有當香蕉公司代理的義大利人，還有老第爾伽杜 (Delgado)——不是的，他是穿屐的。……(他一連又舉了好幾個穿鞋的人。譯者註。)

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"'Bout right," agreed the consul. "Not over twenty out of the three thousand ever felt leather on their walking arrangements. Oh, yes; Coralio is just the town for an enterprising shoe store—that doesn't want to part with its goods. Wonder if old Patterson is trying to jolly me! He always was full of things he called jokes. Write him a letter, Billy. I'll dictate it. We'll jolly him back a few."

Keogh dipped his pen, and wrote at Johnny's dictation. With many pauses, filled in with smoke and sundry travellings of the bottle and glasses, the following reply to the Dalesburg communication was perpetrated:

MR. OBADIAH PATTERSON,
Dalesburg, Ala.

Dear Sir: In reply to your favour of July 2d, I have the honour to inform you that, according to my opinion, there is no place on the habitable globe that presents to the eye stronger evidence of the need of a first-class shoe store than does the town of Coralio. There are 3,000 inhabitants in the place, and not a single shoe store! The situation speaks for itself. This coast is rapidly becoming the goal of enterprising business men, but the shoe business is one that has been sadly overlooked or neglected. In fact, there are a considerable number of our citizens actually without shoes at present.

Besides the want above mentioned, there is also a crying need for a brewery, a college of higher mathematics, a coal yard, and a clean and intellectual Punch and Judy show. I have the honour to be, sir,

Your Obt. Servant,
JOHN DE GRAFFENREID ATWOOD,
U. S. Consul at Coralio.

領事表同意，說道，『大約就是這些人。在三千人裏頭不過有二十人是穿皮鞋的。是呀；柯拉利奧確是一個可以試開鞋店的市鎮，——只要不盼望把貨賣出。我在這裏胡猜老巴脫爾生 (Patterson) 是不是試同我開頑笑。他滿肚子都是他所謂頑笑。比里，你寫回信給他。我來口授，你照寫。我們也同他開頑笑以報他。』

開伊奧把筆尖放在墨水裏，照着約翰所說的寫下來。約翰說了幾句，停下來，吸煙，走過去拿酒瓶，走過來拿酒盃，他停了又說，才把答復狄爾斯堡的來信答復了。回信說道：

巴脫爾生先生：

我今答復你七月二日來信，我要告訴你，據我的見解看來，以眼所能見的證據而論，地球上沒得一個地方會更比柯拉利奧要一間頭等鞋店。這裏有三千居民，卻並無一間鞋店。這樣的情景不說自明。這一帶的海岸很快的變作敢於冒險的商人的目的地，可惜鞋子生意無人看重，或無人注意。以事實論，我們這裏有大多數的人現在是不穿鞋的。

我們這裏不獨無鞋店，還無酒廠，無教高等算學的學校，無煤廠，無潔淨的與有知識的傀儡戲。

駐柯拉利奧美國領事約翰愛特和特啓。

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P.S.—Hello! Uncle Obadiah. How's the old burg racking along? What would the government do without you and me? Look out for a green-headed parrot and a bunch of bananas soon, from your old friend

JOHNNY.

"I throw in that postscript," explained the consul, "so Uncle Obadiah won't take offence at the official tone of the letter! Now, Billy, you get that correspondence fixed up, and send Pancho to the post-office with it. The *Ariadne* takes the mail out to-morrow if they make up that load of fruit to-day."

The night programme in Coralio never varied. The recreations of the people were soporific and flat. They wandered about, barefoot and aimless, speaking lowly and smoking cigar or cigarette. Looking down on the dimly lighted ways one seemed to see a threading maze of brunette ghosts tangled with a procession of insane fireflies. In some houses the thrumming of lugubrious guitars added to the depression of the *triste* night. Giant tree-frogs rattled in the foliage as loudly as the end man's "bones"¹ in a minstrel troupe. By nine o'clock the streets were almost deserted.

Nor at the consulate was there often a change of bill. Keogh would come there nightly, for Coralio's one cool place was the little seaward porch of that official residence.

The brandy would be kept moving; and before midnight sentiment would begin to stir in the heart of the self-exiled consul. Then he would relate to Keogh the story of his ended romance. Each night Keogh would listen patiently to the tale, and be ready with untiring sympathy.

¹ bones, 响板.

又啓。奧巴狄亞老伯，你好呀！老市鎮進行得怎麼樣啦？假使政府沒得你與我，怎樣會進行呀？你的老朋友約翰不久就郵寄一隻綠頭鸚鵡與一球香蕉給你。

領事解說道，『我加幾句又啓，以使奧巴狄亞老伯不怪我回信的官樣文章口氣！比里，你把信封好，打發班佐（Pancho）送去郵局。倘若人們今天把果子裝好，阿利阿尼船明天就裝郵件開行。』

在柯拉利奧地方晚上的消遣辦法是始終不改的。人們的消遣是會令人睡着的，又是淡而無味的。他們精着腳，毫無目的，隨便走走，低聲說話，或吸雪茄或吸紙烟。有人試從高處往下看，街燈點得不亮的市鎮，就好像看見一串令人迷惑的略帶棕色面皮的女鬼，同一列的瘋狂螢火蟲糾在一起。在幾所房舍裏頭有人彈悲哀的六絃琴，使這樣淒慘的晚上更加淒慘。很大的樹蛙在樹上叫喊，如同在一班遊行歌者的末後一個人的『嚮板』一樣嚮。到了九點鐘幾乎路絕行人啦。

在領事官署裏頭，也不常有什麼改變。開伊奧每天晚上總來的，因為這所官舍的向海一個小廊子，是柯拉利奧最涼的地方。

晚上是不停的喝白蘭地酒；等不到半夜，這個自甘貶逐出外的領事心裏的情緒起首發動啦。他就告訴開伊奧他的已經告終的戀愛故事。開伊奧每天晚上都很耐煩的聽他說這件故事，還要嫌煩瑣與他表同情。

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"But don't you think for a minute"—thus Johnny would always conclude his woeful narrative—"that I'm grieving about that girl, Billy. I've forgotten her. She never enters my mind. If she were to enter that door right now, my pulse wouldn't gain a beat. That's all over long ago."

"Don't I know it?" Keogh would answer. "Of course you've forgotten her. Proper thing to do. Wasn't quite O. K. of her to listen to the knocks that—er—Dink Pawson kept giving you."

"Pink Dawson!"—a world of contempt would be in Johnny's tones—"Poor white trash! That's what he was. Had five hundred acres of farming land, though; and that counted. Maybe I'll have a chance to get back at him some day. The Dawsons weren't anybody. Everybody in Alabama knows the Atwoods. Say, Billy—did you know my mother was a De Graffenreid?"

"Why, no," Keogh would say; "is that so?" He had heard it some three hundred times.

"Fact. The De Graffenreids of Hancock County. But I never think of that girl any more, do I, Billy?"

"Not for a minute, my boy," would be the last sounds heard by the conqueror of Cupid.

At this point Johnny would fall into a gentle slumber, and Keogh would saunter out to his own shack under the calabash tree at the edge of the plaza.

In a day or two the letter from the Dalesburg postmaster and its answer had been forgotten by the Coralio exiles. But on the 26th day of July the fruit of the reply appeared upon the tree of events.

The *Andador*, a fruit steamer that visited Coralio regularly, drew into the offing and anchored. The beach

『比里，但是你絕不可以爲我爲那個女子而心裏難過。我已經忘記了她啦。我的心裏絕不想她啦。假使她現在從那門口走進來，我的脈是絕不會多跳一跳的。這件事在許久以前就完了。』——約翰每天晚上都是用這兩句話結束他所說的戀愛故事。

開伊奧總答道，『難道我不曉得麼？你自然是忘記了她，這是應該的。她不該聽——丁克·播生 (Dink Pawson) 所常給你排斥話。』

約翰就極藐視的說道，『品克·多生 (Pink Dawson)！他是一個可憐的白色廢物！這就是他。他卻有五百畝（美國畝）的可以耕種的地；他就有了勢力啦。也許將來有一天我有機會以田地誇他。多生們不算什麼人物。在亞拉巴馬 (Alabama) 的人們，無不曉得愛特和特氏。比里，你曉得我的母親是狄·伽拉芬雷特 (de Graffenreid) 氏的一個後人麼？』

開伊奧就會答道，『我不曉得，果然是的麼？』其實他已經聽過有三百次了。

『其實是。是汗諾克 (Hancock) 府的狄·伽拉芬雷特。比里，但是我絕不再想那個女子了，是不是？』

這個很服愛神的人，最後所聽見的，就是開伊奧答道，『你一分鐘也不想她。』

到了這個時候，約翰就慢慢睡着了，開伊奧就慢慢走出去，走到他自己的在街邊葫蘆樹下的暫時搭蓋的小屋子。

這兩個遠離本國的人，過了一兩天，把狄爾斯堡郵務局長的來信與領事的回信全忘記了。但是到了七月二十六日答復的果子發現於事體的樹上。

那條按期到柯拉利奧的駁船輪船名安達多爾 (Andador) 的，走入遠遠的海面下了錨。碼頭上站了一排一

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was lined with spectators while the quarantine doctor and the custom-house crew rowed out to attend to their duties.

An hour later Billy Keogh lounged into the consulate, clean and cool in his linen clothes, and grinning like a pleased shark.

"Guess what?" he said to Johnny, lounging in his hammock.

"Too hot to guess," said Johnny, lazily.

"Your shoe-store man's come," said Keogh, rolling the sweet morsel on his tongue, "with a stock of goods big enough to supply the continent as far down as Terra del Fuego. They're carting his cases over to the custom-house now. Six barges full they brought ashore and have paddled back for the rest. Oh, ye saints in glory! won't there be regalements in the air when he gets onto the joke and has an interview with Mr. Consul? It'll be worth nine years in the tropics just to witness that one joyful moment."

Keogh loved to take his mirth easily. He selected a clean place on the matting and lay upon the floor. The walls shook with his enjoyment. Johnny turned half over and blinked.

"Don't tell me," he said, "that anybody was fool enough to take that letter seriously."

"Four-thousand-dollar stock of goods!" gasped Keogh, in ecstasy. "Talk about coals to Newcastle! Why didn't he take a ship-load of palm-leaf fans to Spitzbergen while he was about it? Saw the old codger on the beach. You ought to have been there when he put on his specs and squinted at the five hundred or so barefooted citizens standing around."

"Are you telling the truth, Billy?" asked the consul, weakly.

排看熱鬧的人，驗疫的醫生與稅關的水手都坐船出去辦事。

過了一點鐘開伊奧慢慢走入領事署，穿了一身細布衣服，既乾淨又涼快，如同一隻高興的沙魚，露着齒笑。

約翰在他的吊床裏，開伊奧對他說道，『你試猜是什麼？』

約翰懶懶的答道，『天氣太熱，我不耐煩猜。』

開伊奧一面在舌頭上滾他的糖，一面說道，『你的開鞋店的人來了，帶着極多貨物，足夠供給這裏到拖爾拉狄非伊古(Terra del Fuego)全個大陸之用。他們正在車他的箱子去驗關。他們已經把六條大駁船的貨放在岸上了，他們回去裝其餘的貨。哈，享光榮的聖賢呀！等到他當真開笑話及與領事見面的時候，空中不會有一派熱鬧聲音麼？在熱帶的人們只要享受這一會子的熱鬧，就值得在這裏住九年。』

開伊奧喜歡安享他的快樂。他揀地席上一塊乾淨地方，就躺在地下。他樂到了不得，樂到四面的牆都震動了。約翰轉過半個身子，瞬眼。

他說道，『你不要告訴我有這樣的傻子，認真的相信我信裏頭的話。』

開伊奧狂樂，張大口喘氣，說道，『裝了四千塊錢的貨來！說什麼運煤到紐卡斯爾(Newcastle 是出煤的地方。譯者註。)呀！他既是運鞋到這裏，爲什麼不運扇子往斯匹茲卜爾根(Spitzbergen 北冰洋極冷地方。譯者註。)賣呀？我看見那個老頭子在碼頭上。當他戴上眼鏡，斜看在四圍站着五百個赤脚的市民們的時候，你該在那裏看他的。』

領事用微弱聲音問道，『比里，你是說真實話麼？』

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"Am I? You ought to see the buncoed¹ gentleman's daughter he brought along. Looks! She makes the brick-bust señoritas here look like tarbabies."

"Go on," said Johnny, "if you can stop that asinine giggling. I hate to see a grown man make a laughing hyena of himself."

"Name is Hemstetter," went on Keogh. "He's a—Hello! what's the matter now?"

Johnny's moccasined feet struck the floor with a thud as he wriggled out of his hammock.

"Get up, you idiot," he said, sternly, "or I'll brain you with this inkstand. That's Rosine and her father. Gad! what a drivelling idiot old Patterson is! Get up, here, Billy Keogh, and help me. What the devil are we going to do? Has all the world gone crazy?"

Keogh rose and dusted himself. He managed to regain a decorous demeanour.

"Situation has got to be met, Johnny," he said, with some success at seriousness. "I didn't think about its being your girl until you spoke. First thing to do is to get them comfortable quarters. You go down and face the music,² and I'll trot out to Goodwin's and see if Mrs. Goodwin won't take them in. They've got the decentest house in town."

"Bless you, Billy!" said the consul. "I knew you wouldn't desert me. The world's bound to come to an end, but maybe we can stave it off for a day or two."

Keogh hoisted his umbrella and set out for Goodwin's house. Johnny put on his coat and hat. He picked up the brandy bottle, but set it down again without drinking, and marched bravely down to the beach.

¹ buncoed, 上當, 受騙. ² face the music, 大胆對付爲難的事.

『我是不是說真話麼？你該看看這個上當的人所帶來的女兒。看呀！她使這裏的磚灰色的小姐們好像煤膠那樣黑的小嬰孩。』

約翰說道，『你若是不能停止那樣的驢子叫，你只管說。我討厭看見一個大人變作一個愛笑的野貓。』

開伊奧往下說道，『老頭子名哈木斯特(Hemstetter)，他是個——呀哈！你怎麼樣啦？』

當約翰從吊床滾出來的時候，他的穿了鹿皮鞋的腳碰在地板上，碰出聲響。

他很嚴厲的說道，『你這個獸子，你站起來吧，不然我就拿墨水架打破你的腦袋。這就是洛星(Rosine)小姐與她的父親。上帝呀！巴脫爾生不曉得是多麼一個呆笨的獸子！比里·開伊奧，你起來，幫助我。我們該作什麼呢！難道全個世界都瘋了麼？』

開伊奧站起來，彈彈自己。他努力恢復一種正經態度。

他說道，『約翰，我們得對付這樣的情形，』他居然能夠說兩句認真的話。『我一直等到你說出來，我才曉得她是你的意中人。我們第一件事是要安置他們在舒服地方。你走下去大膽對付他們，我一面走到古特文家裏，看看古特文太太肯不肯請他們在她家裏住。在本市鎮裏頭以他們的住宅爲最像樣。』

領事說道，『比里！上帝保佑你。我曉得你不會不幫我的。世界必定有個末日，但是我們也許可以攔阻住一兩天。』

開伊奧支住陽傘走去古特文家裏。約翰穿上褂子戴上大帽。他把地下的白蘭地酒瓶拾起來，卻並未喝一口就放下來，很大膽的往碼頭走。

In the shade of the custom-house walls he found Mr. Hemstetter and Rosine surrounded by a mass of gaping citizens. The customs officers were ducking and scraping,¹ while the captain of the *Andador* interpreted the business of the new arrivals. Rosine looked healthy and very much alive. She was gazing at the strange scenes around her with amused interest. There was a faint blush upon her round cheek as she greeted her old admirer. Mr. Hemstetter shook hands with Johnny in a very friendly way. He was an oldish, impractical man—one of that numerous class of erratic business men who are forever dissatisfied, and seeking a change.

"I am very glad to see you, John—may I call you John?" he said. "Let me thank you for your prompt answer to our postmaster's letter of inquiry. He volunteered to write to you on my behalf. I was looking about for something different in the way of a business in which the profits would be greater. I had noticed in the papers that this coast was receiving much attention from investors. I am extremely grateful for your advice to come. I sold out everything that I possess, and invested the proceeds in as fine a stock of shoes as could be bought in the North. You have a picturesque town here, John. I hope business will be as good as your letter justifies me in expecting."

Johnny's agony was abbreviated by the arrival of Keogh, who hurried up with the news that Mrs. Goodwin would be much pleased to place rooms at the disposal of Mr. Hemstetter and his daughter. So there Mr. Hemstetter and Rosine were at once conducted and left to recuperate

¹ ducking and scraping, 鞠躬點頭.