

凡尔纳科幻探险系列

Off on a Comet

英汉
对照
全译本

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太阳系历险记

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(二)

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which he had had an imperfect glimpse on the night of the 31st of December, might again reveal itself; at any rate, he hoped for an opportunity of observing the constellations in a clear firmament above.

The night was magnificent. Not a cloud dimmed the luster of the stars, which spangled the heavens in surpassing brilliancy, and several nebulae which hitherto no astronomer had been able to discern without the aid of a telescope were clearly visible to the naked eye.

By a natural impulse, Servadac's first thought was to observe the position of the pole-star. It was in sight, but so near to the horizon as to suggest the utter impossibility of its being any longer the central pivot of the sidereal system; it occupied a position through which it was out of the question that the axis of the earth indefinitely prolonged could ever pass. In his impression he was more thoroughly confirmed when, an hour later, he noticed that the star had approached still nearer the horizon, as though it had belonged to one of the zodiacal constellations.

The pole-star being manifestly thus displaced, it remained to be discovered whether any other of the celestial bodies had become a fixed center around which the constellations made their apparent daily revolutions. To the solution of this problem Servadac applied himself with the most thoughtful diligence. After patient observation, he satisfied himself that the required conditions were answered by a certain star that was stationary not far from the horizon. This was Vega, in the constellation Lyre, a star which, according to the precession of the equinoxes, will take the place of our pole-star 12, 000 years hence. The most daring imagination could not suppose that a period of 12, 000 years had been crowded into the space of a

天来所见到的一件件神秘现象的奥秘会不会一下子全部展示在他的眼前？

天空晴朗，万里无云。天幕上挂着的无数星辰，象一张巨大的图画清晰地映入他的眼帘。天文学家过去不用天文望远镜便无法看清的一些星辰，如今也露出了它们的真面目。

上尉首先想到的是看一看北极星是否还在那里，因为观察北极星，他还比较内行。北极星还挂在天幕上，但它的位置已向地平线方向降低了许多，看来已不是各个天体的运转中心了。换句话说，如果把地轴无限延长，那么这条延长线已不能穿过北极星通常在天空所占的固定位置。事实上，一小时后，北极星明显地向地平线移动了许多，它现在似乎是黄道星座的某个天体了。

现在需要知道的是哪一颗星替代了它，也就是说地轴的延长线在经过天空的位置上被哪一颗星占据着。塞尔丽达克全神贯注地观察了很久。这颗新的北极星像原来的北极星一样停在那里一动也不动，其它星则围着它日夜不停地运转。后来，塞尔瓦达克终于发现，在离北部天边不远的天空，有一颗星动也不动，众星似乎都在围绕它运转。这颗星是天琴星座的织女星。由于岁差的关系，它本应在 12000 年后到达北极星原来的位置。然而事实上自从那天晚上的

fortnight; and therefore the captain came, as to an easier conclusion, to the opinion that the earth's axis had been suddenly and immensely shifted; and from the fact that the axis, if produced, would pass through a point so little removed above the horizon, he deduced the inference that the Mediterranean must have been transported to the equator.

Lost in bewildering maze of thought, he gazed long and intently upon the heavens. His eyes wandered from where the tail of the Great Bear, now a zodiacal constellation, was scarcely visible above the waters, to where the stars of the southern hemisphere were just breaking on his view. A cry from Ben Zoof recalled him to himself.

"The moon!" shouted the orderly, as though overjoyed at once again beholding what the poet has called: "The kind companion of terrestrial night;" and he pointed to a disc that was rising at a spot precisely opposite the place where they would have expected to see the sun. "The moon!" again he cried.

But Captain Servadac could not altogether enter into his servant's enthusiasm. If this were actually the moon, her distance from the earth must have been increased by some millions of miles. He was rather disposed to suspect that it was not the earth's satellite at all, but some planet with its apparent magnitude greatly enlarged by its approximation to the earth. Taking up the powerful field-glass which he was accustomed to use in his surveying operations, he proceeded to investigate more carefully the luminous orb. But he failed to trace any of the lineaments, supposed to resemble a human face, that mark the lunar surface; he failed to decipher any indications of hill and plain; nor could he make out the aureole of light which emanates from what astronomers have designated Mount Tycho.

大变动以来，迄今才过去 14 天，所以只能认为地轴的倾斜度已经突然改变。“看来，”塞尔瓦达克想，“不但地轴的倾斜度已经改变，而且，由于地轴的延长线现在是指向离地平线不远的地方，地中海可能已经移到赤道附近了。”

他不由地陷入了沉思，但仍注视着天幕，视线逐渐由大熊星座——大熊星座如今已到黄道区域，只有其尾部出现在水天一色的地平线上——转到了南部天空新出现的一些星座。这些星座，他生平还是第一次看到。本佐夫的叫喊声使塞尔瓦达克从沉思中惊醒过来。

“你看，月亮！”本佐夫突然发出了惊叫声：“是的，月亮！”本佐夫为自己又能看到诗歌中所赞誉的这个“黑夜的伴侣”而沉浸在欢乐中。而且，他边说边用手指着天幕上挂着一个银盘。其位置同太阳此时本应占据的位置正好相反。

究竟是月亮还是其它较小的、因为距离缩短而突然变大的星球？塞尔瓦达克无法回答。他拿起平时搞大地测量时习惯用的较大的望远镜，向这个星球望去。“如果真是月亮，”上尉说道，“那么它同我们的距离已经变得非常遥远，不是几千里，而是几百万里了。”经过仔细观察，他认定这不可能是月亮，其暗淡的光线没有一点皎洁、柔媚的样子。星球表面不仅看不到平原和大海的影子，而且也看不到雄伟的高山所显露的明暗相间的线条。“不，这不可能是月亮！”

"It is not the moon," he said slowly.

"Not the moon?" cried Ben Zoof. "Why not?"

"It is not the moon," again affirmed the captain.

"Why not?" repeated Ben Zoof, unwilling to renounce his first impression.

"Because there is a small satellite in attendance." And the captain drew his servant's attention to a bright speck, apparently about the size of one of Jupiter's satellites seen through a moderate telescope, that was clearly visible just within the focus of his glass.

Here, then, was a fresh mystery. The orbit of this planet was assuredly interior to the orbit of the earth, because it accompanied the sun in its apparent motion; yet it was neither Mercury nor Venus, because neither one nor the other of these has any satellite at all.

The captain stamped and stamped again with mingled vexation, agitation, and bewilderment. "Confound it!" he cried, "if this is neither Venus nor Mercury, it must be the moon; but if it is the moon, whence, in the name of all the gods, has she picked up another moon for herself?"

The captain was in dire perplexity.

他慢声说。

“为什么不是？”本佐夫问。

“这不是月亮，”上尉又坚定地说了一遍。

“为什么？”本佐夫又重复问了一声，不愿否定他的最初印象。

“因为这个星球还有一个围绕它旋转的很小的卫星。”确实，一个明亮的光点，如同围绕木星运转的几颗卫星一样，在望远镜下显得十分清晰。

这又是一个新的神秘现象。这颗星的运转轨道在地球轨道的内侧，围绕太阳运转。但也不可能是金星和水星，因为这两颗星都没有卫星。

“不是月亮，又会是什么呢？”塞尔瓦达克不耐烦地叫道，“上帝！既然不是金星和水星，就只能是月亮了，但月亮竟从哪儿弄来一颗卫星呢？”

上尉陷入可怕的困惑混乱中。

Chapter 8

Venus in Perilous Proximity

The light of the returning sun soon extinguished the glory of the stars, and rendered it necessary for the captain to postpone his observations. He had sought in vain for further trace of the huge disc that had so excited his wonder on the 1st, and it seemed most probable that, in its irregular orbit, it had been carried beyond the range of vision.

The weather was still superb. The wind, after veering to the west, had sunk to a perfect calm. Pursuing its inverted course, the sun rose and set with undeviating regularity; and the days and nights were still divided into periods of precisely six hours each—a sure proof that the sun remained close to the new equator which manifestly passed through Gourbi Island.

Meanwhile the temperature was steadily increasing. The captain kept his thermometer close at hand where he could repeatedly consult it, and on the 15th he found that it registered 50 degrees centigrade in the shade.

No attempt had been made to rebuild the gourbi, but the captain and Ben Zoof managed to make up quarters sufficiently comfortable in the principal apartment of the adjoining structure, where the stone walls, that at first afforded a refuge from the torrents of rain, now formed an equally acceptable shelter from the burning sun. The heat was becoming insufferable, surpassing the heat of Senegal and other equatorial regions; not a cloud ever tempered the intensity of the solar rays; and unless some modification ensued, it seemed inevitable that all vegetation should become scorched and burnt off from the face of the island.

第八章 与金星相撞？

太阳出来了。闪烁的群星在明亮的阳光下相继消失。塞尔瓦达克对星空的观察只好推迟，今夜天空如果没有云彩，到时候还可继续进行。至于那个所谓“月亮”，其光线已被一片乌云遮住，塞尔瓦达克寻找了很久，也未找到。看来，它已远去，或是游向它方，非目力所能及了。

晴空如洗。天空刮过一阵西风后，现已完全平息。太阳依然准确无误地从西方升起，东方落下。白天和黑夜也依然是6小时，分毫不差。由此可见，太阳并没有离开新形成的赤道地区，而塞尔瓦达克和本佐夫所在的这个古尔比岛也就在赤道上。

气温仍在不断升高。上尉塞尔瓦达克每天都要走到挂在房间里的气温表前看好几次。1月15日，他发现气温表在背阴的地方标出的温度是50℃。

倒塌的茅屋尚未修复，塞尔瓦达克和本佐夫把石屋中的一间大房间打扫了一下，在那里安顿了下来。他们在这间石屋里不但躲避了狂风暴雨，而且也躲避了烈日的暴晒。天气越来越热。天空总是万里无云，没有一丝云彩遮挡灼热的阳光。那火一般的热浪连塞内加尔等非洲赤道地区也从未遇到过。长此以往，岛上的植物全都面临着枯死的危险。

In spite, however, of the profuse perspirations from which he suffered, Ben Zoof, constant to his principles, expressed no surprise at the unwonted heat. No remonstrances from his master could induce him to abandon his watch from the cliff. To withstand the vertical beams of that noontide sun would seem to require askin of brass and a brain of adamant; but yet, hour after hour, he would remain conscientiously scanning the surface of the Mediterranean, which, calm and deserted, lay outstretched before him. On one occasion, Servadac, in reference to his orderly's indomitable perseverance, happened to remark that he thought he must have been born in the heart of equatorial Africa; to which Ben Zoof replied, with the utmost dignity, that he was born at Montmartre, which was all the same. The worthy fellow was unwilling to own that, even in the matter of heat, the tropics could in any way surpass his own much-loved home.

This unprecedented temperature very soon began to take effect upon the products of the soil. The sap rose rapidly in the trees, so that in the course of a few days buds, leaves, flowers, and fruit had come to full maturity. It was the same with the cereals; wheat and maize sprouted and ripened as if by magic, and for a while a rank and luxuriant pasturage clothed the meadows. Summer and autumn seemed blended into one. If Captain Servadac had been more deeply versed in astronomy, he would perhaps have been able to bring to bear his knowledge that if the axis of the earth, as everything seemed to indicate, now formed a right angle with the plane of the ecliptic, her various seasons, like those of the planet Jupiter, would become limited to certain zones, in which they would remain invariable. But even if he had understood the rationale of the change, the convulsion that had brought it about would have

本佐夫始终坚守自己的诺言，绝不向炎热的天气屈服。他终日汗如雨下，却不顾上尉的劝阻，顶着烈日站在山岩上守望海中的动静。地中海风平浪静，没有船只，但他仍死守在那里。他的身体真是铁打的，任凭骄阳似火，岿然不动地立在山岩上。一天，上尉塞尔瓦达克端详着他的面庞，向他打趣道：“你怎么一点也不怕热？看来你是在非洲出生的。”“不，上尉，我是蒙马特人，这两个地方反正差不多。”既然为人憨厚的本佐夫说他的故乡同热带地区一样炎热，再同他争论，也就没有意思了。

这种奇热的天气当然会对古尔比岛上的植物产生影响，后果很快就显现出来了。几天之间，果树上的叶芽便绽开了，接着便是开花、结果。庄稼也是一样。麦穗和谷穗生长飞快，肉眼几乎都可以看得出来，草原上更是长满了绿油油的牧草、所以很快便到了收割牧草。庄稼和水果的季节。夏天和秋天已完全融合在一起。谁说上尉塞尔瓦达克对于天文学一窍不通呢？他认为造成上述情况的原因是：“地轴的倾斜度已经改变。如同一切所显示的那样，地轴如今同黄道形成了一个直角，所以地球上的情况便和木星上一模一样了，再也没有季节之分，终年是千篇一律的气候，夏秋冬的差别已不复存在。可是他始终不能明白：“造成这种种变化

been as much a mystery as ever.

The precocity of vegetation caused some embarrassment. The time for the corn and fruit harvest had fallen simultaneously with that of the haymaking; and as the extreme heat precluded any prolonged exertions, it was evident "the population" of the island would find it difficult to provide the necessary amount of labor. Not that the prospect gave them much concern: the provisions of the gourbi were still far from exhausted, and now that the roughness of the weather had so happily subsided, they had every encouragement to hope that a ship of some sort would soon appear. Not only was that part of the Mediterranean systematically frequented by the government steamers that watched the coast, but vessels of all nations were constantly cruising off the shore.

In spite, however, of all their sanguine speculations, no ship appeared. Ben Zoof admitted the necessity of extemporizing a kind of parasol for himself, otherwise he must literally have been roasted to death upon the exposed summit of the cliff.

Meanwhile, Servadac was doing his utmost it must be acknowledged, with indifferent success—to recall the lessons of his school-days. He would plunge into the wildest speculations in his endeavors to unravel the difficulties of the new situation, and struggled into a kind of conviction that if there had been a change of manner in the earth's rotation on her axis, there would be a corresponding change in her revolution round the sun, which would involve the consequence of the length of the year being either diminished or increased.

Independently of the increased and increasing heat, there was another very conclusive demonstration that the earth had thus suddenly approximated towards the sun. The diameter of