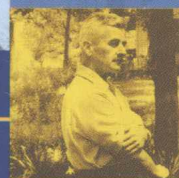


Understanding
British and American Fiction

英美小说欣赏导论



师彦灵 ©编著



北京大学出版社
PEKING UNIVERSITY PRESS

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前言

英美小说是英美文学的重要组成部分。自 18 世纪以丹尼尔·笛福的《鲁滨逊漂流记》(1719)为代表的现代意义上的英语小说产生以来,英语小说在关注问题的视角、表现方式、叙事技巧等方面一直发生着变化。与此同时,人们对小说的认识也在不断发生变化,同一部小说,不同时期的人们对它的认识和评价有时是完全不同的,因为社会不断发展,文化环境不断变化,文学批评方法不断丰富。《英美小说欣赏导论》以英美小说文本为基础,比较系统地论述了英美小说的基本理论和批评方法,以培养和提升读者对英语小说原著自身特质的认识水平,提高运用不同批评理论、方法欣赏英语小说的思维和感悟能力,使英文小说阅读过程既是语言接受能力的提升过程,也是读者获得心灵愉悦的过程,更是心灵得到启迪、思维得到拓展、世界观得到充实和完善的过程,从而使英文原著小说的阅读既愉快又富有成效。

《英美小说欣赏导论》分两部分,共 14 章,选取小说文本 14 篇,其中短篇 11 篇、中篇 1 篇(节选自《黑暗的中心》)、长篇 2 部(节选自《哈克贝利·芬历险记》和《大卫·科波菲尔》)。之所以这样选择,主要考虑到短篇小说篇幅短小,故事完整,读者容易把握;节选的中篇和长篇可帮助读者认识其形式、结构、表达方式等与短篇小说的异同,对英语小说的形式、结构和表达方式有一个相对完整的认识。

第一部分“小说要素”包括七章,即情节、背景、人物、视角、主题、风格、象征,其中每章包括五个部分,即:小说要素、作者小传、小说文本(Text)、小说赏析(Understanding the Text)和扩展阅读(Further Reading)。“小说要素”主要以经典文本为例,论述各小说要素的定义、特征和功能;“作者小传”简要介绍所选小说的作者;“小说文本”以脚注的方式对所选文本相关背景知识、人名、地名、语言难点予以注解;“小说赏析”对该章所涉及的小说要素进行分析和阐释,如第七章之“小说要素——象征”中,只对所选文本《白象似的群山》中的象征手法及其相关问题进行分析和解读;“扩展阅读”为读者提供进一步学习、研究所需的书目和论文。

第二部分“批评理论和方法”包括七章:历史传记批评、形式主义批评、心理分析批评、神话批评、性别研究、读者反映批评、文化研究,其中每章包括五个部分,即:批评理论和方法、作者小传、小说文本(Text)、小说赏析(Understanding the Text)和扩展阅读(Further Reading)。“批评理论和方法”论述不同批评理论和方法的概念、特征、主要论点、代表人物及其主要观点等;“作者小传”简要介绍所选小说的作者;“小说文本”以脚注的方式对所选文本相关的背景知识、人名、地名和语言难点予以注解;“小说赏析”运用该章所涉及的批评理论和方法对所选文本进行具体分析和阐释;“扩展阅读(Further Reading)”为读者提供进一步学习和研究相关批评理论和作品所需的书目和论文。

《英美小说欣赏导论》重点突出以下几个方面:

第一,在“小说要素”和“批评方法”阐述方面,不求全面,但求论点明确、简明扼要。

第二,在小说文本的选择方面,强调所选作家身份、题材、写作风格的多样性,所选作品的代表性、经典性、趣味性。所选美国小说包括:“美国文学之父”华盛顿·欧文的浪漫主义短篇经典《瑞普·凡·温克尔》;被称为“第一位真正的美国作家”的美国现实主义作家马克·吐温的《哈克贝利·芬历险记》;以描写 19 世纪末美国中西部开拓者顽强创业精神而著称,并对同性恋予以特别关注的薇拉·



凯瑟的《保罗案》;以美国南方家族小说闻名的威廉·福克纳的《献给艾米莉的玫瑰》;受罗马天主教文化思想影响颇深的弗兰纳里·奥康纳的《好人难寻》;生长于克里奥尔文化中的凯特·肖邦的《一小时的故事》;以“冰山”写作风格著称的欧内斯特·海明威的《白象似的群山》;以幽默见长的林·拉德纳的《理发》;被誉为“纽约郊区的契诃夫”的约翰·契弗的《团聚》等。所选英国小说包括:现实主义作家查尔斯·狄更斯的《大卫·科波菲尔》;现代主义作家凯瑟林·曼斯菲尔德的《莠萝泡菜》;擅长意识流叙事的弗吉尼亚·伍尔夫的《墙上的斑点》;擅长揭示人类性心理现象的D. H. 劳伦斯的《木马赢家》;以及出生于波兰、以航海小说闻名的约瑟夫·康拉德的《黑暗的中心》等。通过不同文化身份的作家的不同风格、题材的经典作品来阐述小说相关要素以及各种批评理论和方法,读者可在有限的时空中感受英美小说之博大深广、丰富多彩。

第三,“小说赏析”部分不是对小说文本的全面分析,而是对所选小说文本中的某一小说要素进行具体分析,解读某一批评方法在文本中的具体运用,给读者提供一个比较完整的解读样式,帮助读者建立对小说要素和批评方法的感性认识,从而在分析和阐释其他文本时能够熟练运用。

第四,所选文本为英文原著,脚注为汉语,对小说文本中的背景知识、历史人物、地名、语言难点进行解释和说明,以帮助读者扫清语言、文化背景知识方面的障碍,能够流畅地阅读。语言力求简明易懂,力避专业术语的生硬堆砌。

本书的各章相对独立,但又彼此联系。读者在使用本书时既可按照本书的编排次序进行系统阅读和学习,也可灵活、选择性地使用部分内容。因此,它既可为英语文学研究者、爱好者的小说理论指导性读物,亦可为英语专业本科生、研究生“英美小说理论和欣赏”课程教材,或大学英语“英语文学选修课”、“通识选修课”教材。作为教材使用时,教师应针对不同的学生群体,侧重点要有所不同。

英语专业高年级的学生经过二至三年的专业学习,对英语语言的理解和英文原著的感悟能力相对较高,以本书作为“英美小说理论和欣赏”课程教材,主要是让他们了解小说欣赏所需的理论和方法,并运用相对比较专业的视角和方法对英文小说进行分析和理解,为将来从事英美文学研究打好基础,做好准备。教师可以根据本书的编排次序进行讲授,在引导学生细读文本的基础上,帮助学生逐步熟悉和掌握各种文学批评理论,形成自己的认识和见解,能够独立撰写论文。

英语专业文学硕士研究生在经过大学四年的专业学习之后,多读过一些经典英语小说,对英语小说的基本要素和各种批评方法有了一些基本认识。由于英语专业文学硕士研究生的培养目标是培养具有英语文学研究专业技能的研究人员或教师,文学批评理论和文学批评实践是教师授课时的两个主要关注面。本书尽管在深度和广度上不足以完全实现以上目标,但它的系统性和完整性则是不可忽视的,有助于英语专业文学硕士研究生尽快地全面掌握英语小说基本要素和批评方法。教师可以此书为基本教材,在讲授过程中对现有文本分析和批评方法进行补充、深入和拓展,这样,补充拓展的新内容更容易为学生理解和接受。

“英美小说欣赏”作为大学英语或通识选修课,其目的是培养非英语专业学生对英语语言和文学的初步认识和欣赏能力,激发他们的英语阅读兴趣,深化他们对世界文学的认识,从而以不同的视角看待生活、看待世界。因此,快乐阅读是必须的,教师在使用本书时,一定要注意不可使这门课成为学生的负担,教师应建议学生在阅读小说文本时不要过多地查生词,而是在阅读过程中体会英语小说的语言、结构和风格魅力,形成初步的阅读感受和认识,与同学们一起分享、感受小说阅读的快乐,在不知不觉中提高语言感知和小说欣赏能力。

本书编写过程中,参考了以下资料:X. J. Kennedy 的 *Literature: An Introduction to Fiction, Poetry, and Drama*, Michael Meyer 的 *The Bedford Introduction to Literature: Reading, Thinking*,

Writing (8th Edition), R.S. Gwynn 的 *Literature: A Pocket Anthology*, Robert Scholes 和 Rosemary Sullivan 合编的 *Elements of Fiction: An Anthology*, 以及 Nina Baym 等编著的 *The Norton Anthology of American Literature* (3rd Edition)。在此,向相关的作者、编者及出版社表示衷心的感谢!

本书的编写还参考了一些网络资源,由于过于琐碎,除直接引用文献之外,不一一注明,在此向所有相关人士表示真诚的谢意!

北京大学出版社的李颖女士、黄瑞明女士为本书的顺利出版付出了辛勤的劳动,在此深表谢意!

由于编著者水平有限,书中难免有错误和不足之处,敬请广大读者批评指正。

师彦灵

兰州大学

Contents

Introduction	1
Part One Elements of Fiction	3
Chapter One Plot	4
Paul's Case	6
Chapter Two Setting	25
A Rose for Emily	27
Chapter Three Character	38
A Good Man Is Hard to Find	40
Chapter Four Point of View	56
Reunion	58
Chapter Five Theme	64
A Dill Pickle	66
Chapter Six Style and Tone	75
The Rocking-Horse Winner	78
Chapter Seven Symbolism	93
Hills like White Elephants	95
Part Two Critical Approaches	102
Chapter Eight Historical and Biographical Approaches	104
Adventures of Huckleberry Finn	106
Chapter Nine The Formalist Approach	130
The Mark on the Wall	133
Chapter Ten The Psychoanalytic Approach	142
David Copperfield	145
Chapter Eleven The Mythological Approach	171
The Story of an Hour	174
Chapter Twelve Gender Studies	179
Rip Van Winkle	183
Chapter Thirteen Reader-response Criticism	200
Haircut	202
Chapter Fourteen Cultural Studies	214
Heart of Darkness	218
Works Cited	267



目 录

引言	1
第一部分 小说的要素	3
第一章 情节	4
保罗案	6
第二章 背景	25
献给艾米丽的玫瑰	27
第三章 人物	36
好人难寻	38
第四章 视角	56
团聚	58
第五章 主题	64
莼萝泡菜	66
第六章 风格	75
木马赢家	78
第七章 象征	93
白象似的群山	95
第二部分 批评方法	102
第八章 历史传记批评	104
哈克贝利·芬历险记	106
第九章 形式主义批评	130
墙上的斑点	133
第十章 心理分析批评	142
大卫·科伯菲尔	145
第十一章 神话批评	171
一小时的故事	174
第十二章 性别研究	179
瑞普·凡·温克尔	183
第十三章 读者反映批评	200
理发	202
第十四章 文化研究	214
黑暗的中心	218
引用文献	267

Introduction

“Fiction,” derived from the Latin *factio*, *tingo*, *factum* which means “to create,” is a general term for stories of imagined or invented events. It usually refers to narratives that are written in prose such as short stories, novellas, and novels.

Fiction interests us because of its “imitation” of life. Fiction is at once like and unlike life. This is what we mean when we call it an “imitation.” We recognize aspects of ourselves and our situations in the more ordered perspectives of fiction. While we are reading fiction, it seems that it is speaking to us directly. We can be moved to laugh, cry, tremble, dream, ponder, shriek, or rage by simply turning a page. Thus, fiction helps us interpret our own experiences, understand life, and nourish our emotional lives.

In addition to appealing to our emotions and helping us understand life, fiction broadens our perspectives on the world. Our knowledge of the Western cultures that make up part of our world is superficial as well as limited. British and American fiction allows us to move beyond the boundaries of our own lives and culture while it introduces us to people different from ourselves, places remote from our neighborhoods, times other than our own, and beliefs, values, and customs that in some ways resemble our own but in others seem foreign and strange. Thus, we are more aware of prejudices, uncertainties, value judgments, and emotions of the people in the Western cultures.

The study of fiction is also practical. British and American fiction is mostly created by people with first-rate intelligence and rich life experiences, who prefer to experiment the proper literary techniques rather than translate automatically their understanding, sense, and deep thinking of the world, the life, and even the supernatural into their works. While we try to go beneath the surface to reveal the underlying structures and meanings, we are engaged in the kinds of problem solving important in a variety of fields, from philosophy to science and technology, and enlightened by their insights into the world and human mysteries. Reading British and American fiction encourages a suppleness of mind that is helpful in any discipline or work.

To discover the insights that fiction reveals requires careful reading and sensitivity. One of the purposes of this book, which is based on two premises: that reading literature is pleasurable and that reading and understanding a work sensitively by thinking, talking, or writing about it increases the pleasure of the experience of it, is to cultivate the analytic skills and abilities necessary for reading well.

Understanding the elements of fiction, such as setting, point of view, symbol, theme, tone, irony, and so on, is a prerequisite to an informed appreciation of literature. Although different writers produce their works in quite different ways, these basic elements of fiction can be found in almost every literary work of fiction. It is these elements that work together to create a particular kind of effect, emotion, or insight which distinguishes this work from any other. Therefore, understanding how these elements work



together to produce an overall effect enhances and sharpens our perceptions.

The critical approaches are indispensable to our satisfying reading of fiction. Each of these approaches raises its own questions and issues while seeking particular kinds of evidence to support itself. An awareness of the assumptions and methods that each approach informs us can help us make a better sense of a literary work of fiction, and therefore enhance our critical thinking.

The subsequent chapters will cover the elements of fiction and the major critical-interpretive approaches to fiction. The elements of fiction introduced here include plot, setting, character, point of view, theme, style and tone, and symbolism; and the critical approaches interpreted here contain the autobiographical and historical approaches, which have long been practiced, the Formalist Approach, the Psychoanalytic Approach, the Mythological Approach, and Gender Studies, Reader-Response Criticism and Cultural Studies which recently catch the readers' attention. These elements and critical approaches, along with comments on selected works, will help us achieve an easier, richer, and more satisfying reading of the literary work of fiction.

This book may be read from cover to cover as a continuous unit, of course, but it has been organized for both flexibility and adaptability. However you read it, everything that follows in this book is intended to help readers toward an enriched and pleasurable experience of fiction.

Part One

Elements of Fiction

A fiction writer uses character, setting, plot, point of view, theme, tone, and various kinds of symbolism to create artistic effect in fiction. These aspects of fiction are generally known as the elements of fiction. Once a reader is aware that all stories have elements of character, setting, plot, theme, point of view, tone, and symbolism, he can be encouraged to ask himself to identify the characteristics of each for a story. An understanding of these elements will enhance the reader's appreciation and perceptions of any piece of fiction. The more familiar he becomes with the different kinds of elements the better he will become at understanding and analyzing stories. For example, a reader who has knowledge of elements of fiction is more inclined to identify the symbolisms in Kate Chopin's "The Story of an Hour"—"patches of blue sky", "chair", "spring", "open window", and "heart trouble" — and their contributions to the theme of this story—the yearning for freedom of women in the late 1800s who were oppressed and repressed like Mrs. Mallard.

While the list of the elements encourages the reader to divide a story into parts, in the story itself these elements work together to create a whole. A reader can perceive the story's unique effect in his first reading of a piece of fiction because he reads for the first time without applying these divisions. However, the reader must analyze each of these elements of a piece of fiction if he wants to have an insight of how the unique effect is produced. "A Rose for Emily" is considered to be a readable, fascinating and insightful story. Its unique effect is produced by William Faulkner's successfully employing the setting, plot, narrator, and symbolism. The setting creates the mysterious atmosphere while it makes the story believable by locating the story in Jefferson, a small town of the south of America in the post—Civil War years in which Miss Emily and the townspeople take actions; the plot which is not narrated in the linear fashion builds suspense for the reader as the plot unfolds bit by bit; the fascinating narrator, "we," who speaks sometimes for the men of Jefferson, sometimes for the women, and often for both, and spans three generations of Jeffersonians, including the generation of Miss Emily's father, Miss Emily's generation, and the "newer generation," made up of the children of Miss Emily's contemporaries, makes the reader easy to see how the first two generations' treatment of Miss Emily may have led to her downfall; and the watch Miss Emily carries in a pocket within her clothing symbolizes Emily's attempts to control the passage of the years and the consequences of such an ultimately futile effort. All these elements blend to create a story which all the time involves the reader in detecting the mystery of both the story and Miss Emily like a detective and having an insight of what the author intends us to know: privileges, constraining rather than liberating our true selves, can sometimes be a prison.

Chapter One

Plot

Plot holds the first important position in a work of fiction. We are attracted into the writer's fictional world by the plot. Like many terms used in literary discussion, **plot** is loaded with several meanings. Sometimes it refers simply to the events in a story. In this book, plot means the author's artistic or dramatic arrangement of events in a story. The same material can be arranged in different order.

A writer might decide to tell of the events in the **chronological order**, beginning with what happens first, then second, and so on, until the last event is related. A writer also might begin his story at the end, and then tell what led up to it. William Faulkner's "A Rose for Emily" begins with the funeral of the title character and then goes back in time to narrate events that happened in the past. In this way it gives the reader a surprise which would not have been produced if it is arranged in the chronological order.

Sometimes a writer chooses to begin a story in the **middle** of things (the Latin term for this common plot device is *in medias res*), first presenting some exciting or important moment, then filling in what happened earlier. John Updike's "A & P" begins with the narrator, a teenager working at a checkout counter in a supermarket, by telling us: "In walks these three girls in nothing but bathing suits." Then right away we are brought into the middle of a situation that will ultimately create the conflict in the story.

Another device writers often use is the **flashback**. It tells us about events that happened before the opening scene of a work. **Foreshadowing** is also a device useful for writers to provide hints of events to come in. Its effective use prevents a story from looking contrived. This way some descriptive, explanatory or transitional phrases can compress an action which could have taken many years into a second or leap over uneventful periods. The opening sentence of the second paragraph of John Cheever's "Reunion" ("We went out of the station and up a side street to a restaurant.") compresses into a second or two an action that in reality would have lasted at least several minutes.

When we read a story, our emotional involvement in the plot is increased or relaxed with the **dramatic structure** of a story. The first part of the dramatic structure is the **exposition** that sets the scene, introduces the main characters, relates what happened before the story opens, and provides any other background information that we need in order to understand and care about the events to follow. It usually describes the stable situation of a story. In "Reunion" Charles tells us that his parents got divorced when he was three years old and he has not seen his father since then. And his letter to his father makes his "reunion" with his father come true.

The appearance of "trouble" constitutes the second part of a plot, the **complication**, which shakes up the stable situation and begins the rising action of the story. Complication in a story may be either external or internal, or a combination of the two. In "Reunion" the complication is a combination of the

father's confrontations with waiters (the external complication) and Charlie's growing sense of pity and revulsion (the internal complication). And it is heightened by the conflict between Charlie and his father who obviously have different personalities: he escapes his father at the end.

The body of a story, called the **rising action**, contains action and dialogue which build to moments of crisis. The central moment of crisis is the **climax**, or moment of greatest tension. At this moment, the tension is momentarily resolved and the outcome is to be decided.

The final part of a plot is **denouement** or **resolution**, which quickly follows the climax and returns the characters to another stable situation. A story may end with a closed denouement or an open denouement. A closed denouement states everything explicitly and explains all unanswered questions the reader might have; an open denouement leaves us with a few questions at the end, which invites us to speculate.

Although a highly dramatic story may tend to assume such a clearly recognizable structure, many contemporary writers avoid it, considering it too contrived and arbitrary. And the presence of these elements does not necessarily indicate inferior literature.

Whatever the plot arrangement, you should be aware of how the writer's conscious ordering of events affects your responses to the action.

Willa Cather (1873—1947)



Willa Cather was born in rural Virginia but moved to the Nebraska farmlands in childhood. There she grew up among the immigrants from Europe, who were establishing their homesteads on the Great Plains. After her graduation from the University of Nebraska she lived in Pittsburgh for some years as a drama critic and a brief period as a high school English teacher, and then moved to New York, because her first collection of short stories *Troll Garden* (1905) brought her to the attention of S.S. McClure, owner of *McClure's Magazine*, whose managing editor she ultimately became. Her novels about Nebraska

inspired by Sara Orne Jewett, *O Pioneers!* (1913) and *My Antonia* (1917), were very successful and she devoted the rest of her life to writing fiction. In her later years Cather wrote *One of Ours* (1922), for which she won the Pulitzer Prize, her modernist book *A Lost Lady* (1923), and some of her greatest novels during this period, such as *The Professor's House* (1925), *My Mortal Enemy* (1926), and *Death Comes for the Archbishop* (1927). These novels of hers focused on the destruction of provincial life and the death of the pioneering tradition, and had the darker tones.

"Paul's Case," one of the stories that helped Cather get the position with *McClure's Magazine*, was first published in *McClure's Magazine* in 1905. It marks the beginning of Cather's artistic maturity.



Paul's Case¹

I

It was Paul's afternoon to appear before the faculty of the Pittsburgh High School to account for his various misdemeanors². He had been suspended a week ago, and his father had called at the principal's office and confessed his perplexity about his son. Paul entered the faculty room suave and smiling. His clothes were a trifle outgrown and the tan velvet on the collar of his open overcoat was frayed and worn; but, for all that, there was something of the dandy about him, and he wore an opal pin in his neatly knotted black four-in-hand³, and a red carnation in his buttonhole. This latter adornment the faculty somehow felt was not properly significant of the contrite spirit befitting a boy under the ban of suspension⁴.

Paul was tall for his age and very thin, with high, cramped shoulders and a narrow chest. His eyes were remarkable for a certain hysterical brilliancy, and he continually used them in a conscious, theatrical sort of way, peculiarly offensive in a boy. The pupils were abnormally large, as though he were addicted to belladonna⁵, but there was a glassy glitter about them which that drug does not produce.

When questioned by the Principal⁶ as to why he was there, Paul stated, politely enough, that he wanted to come back to school. This was a lie, but Paul was quite accustomed to lying; found it, indeed, indispensable for overcoming friction. His teachers were asked to state their respective charges against him, which they did with such a rancor and aggrievedness⁷ as evinced that this was not a usual case. Disorder and impertinence⁸ were among the offences named, yet each of his instructors felt that it was scarcely possible to put into words the real cause of the trouble, which lay in a sort of hysterically defiant manner of the boy's; in the contempt which they all knew he felt for them, and which he seemingly made not the least effort to conceal⁹. Once, when he had been making a synopsis of a paragraph at the blackboard, his English teacher had stepped to his side and attempted to guide his hand. Paul had started back with a shudder, and thrust his hands violently behind him. The astonished woman could scarcely have been more hurt and embarrassed had he struck at her¹⁰. The insult was so

1. 该小说的副标题为: A Study in Temperament.

2. account for his various misdemeanors: 对他之前的种种恶行作个解释

3. four-in-hand: 打活结的领带

4. not properly significant of the contrite spirit befitting a boy under the ban of suspension: 没能恰当地表达出一名因受到停学处分的学生生理应表现出的忏悔心态

5. belladonna: (植) 颠茄, 莨菪(一种有毒植物), 颠茄制剂

6. Principal: 校长

7. they did with such a rancor and aggrievedness: 老师们在讲述他所作所为的时候都表现出对他的极大的怨恨和不满

8. impertinence: 无礼

9. he seemingly made not the least effort to conceal: 他似乎丝毫不想掩饰

10. struck at her: 向她打去

involuntary and definitely personal as to be unforgettable. In one way and another he had made all his teachers, men and women alike, conscious of the same feeling of physical aversion¹. In one class he habitually sat with his hand shading his eyes; in another he always looked out of the window during the recitation; in another he made a running² commentary on the lecture, with humorous intention.

His teachers felt this afternoon that his whole attitude was symbolized by his shrug and his flippantly red carnation flower, and they fell upon him without mercy³, his English teacher leading the pack⁴. He stood through it smiling, his pale lips parted over his white teeth. (His lips were continually twitching, and he had a habit of raising his eyebrows that was contemptuous and irritating to the last degree.) Older boys than Paul had broken down and shed tears under that baptism of fire⁵, but his set smile did not once desert him, and his only sign of discomfort was the nervous trembling of the fingers that toyed with the buttons of his overcoat, and an occasional jerking of the other hand that held his hat. Paul was always smiling, always glancing about him, seeming to feel that people might be watching him and trying to detect something. This conscious expression, since it was as far as possible from boyish mirthfulness, was usually attributed to insolence or "smartness."⁶

As the inquisition proceeded, one of his instructors repeated an impertinent remark of the boy's, and the Principal asked him whether he thought that a courteous speech to have made a woman. Paul shrugged his shoulders slightly and his eyebrows twitched.

"I don't know," he replied. "I didn't mean to be polite or impolite, either. I guess it's a sort of way I have of saying things regardless."

The Principal, who was a sympathetic man, asked him whether he didn't think that a way it would be well to get rid of. Paul grinned and said he guessed so. When he was told that he could go, he bowed gracefully and went out. His bow was but a repetition of the scandalous red carnation⁷.

His teachers were in despair, and his drawing master voiced the feeling of them all when he declared there was something about the boy which none of them understood. He added: "I don't really believe that smile of his comes altogether from insolence; there's something sort of haunted about it. The boy is not strong, for one thing. I happen to know that he was born in Colorado⁸, only a few months before his mother died out there of a long illness. There is something wrong about the fellow."

The drawing master had come to realize that, in looking at Paul, one saw only his white teeth and the forced animation of his eyes. One warm afternoon the boy had gone to sleep at his drawing-board, and his master had noted with amazement what a white, blue-veined face it was; drawn and wrinkled like an old man's⁹ about the eyes, the lips twitching even in his sleep, and stiff with a nervous tension that drew them back from his teeth.

1. aversion:反感

2. running:连续不断的,不停的

3. fell upon him without mercy:他们毫不留情地向他发起了攻击

4. the pack:文章中指所有在场的老师

5. baptism of fire:炮火的洗礼,士兵初临战场的考验。文章中指老师的严厉批评和指责。

6. attributed to insolence or "smartness":归因于傲慢或“机敏”

7. a repetition of the scandalous red carnation:与之前纽扣孔佩带的红色康乃馨持有相同的效果

8. Colorado:科罗拉多州,位于美国西部

9. drawn and wrinkled like an old man's:像一位历经沧桑的老人一样形容憔悴,眼角已出现皱纹



His teachers left the building dissatisfied and unhappy; humiliated to have felt so vindictive toward a mere boy, to have uttered this feeling in cutting terms¹, and to have set each other on, as it were, in the gruesome game of intemperate reproach². Some of them remembered having seen a miserable street cat set at bay³ by a ring of tormentors.

As for Paul, he ran down the hill whistling the Soldiers' Chorus⁴ from *Faust*⁵, looking wildly behind him, now and then, to see whether some of his teachers were not there to writhe under his light-heartedness. As it was now late in the afternoon, and Paul was on duty that evening as usher in Carnegie Hall, he decided that he would not go home to supper. When he reached the concert hall the doors were not yet open and, as it was chilly outside, he decided to go up into the picture gallery—always deserted at this hour—where there were some of Raffaelli's gay studies⁶ of Paris streets and an airy blue Venetian scene⁷ or two that always exhilarated him. He was delighted to find no one in the gallery but the old guard, who sat in one corner, a newspaper on his knee, a black patch over one eye and the other closed. Paul possessed himself of the place⁸ and walked confidently up and down, whistling under his breath. After a while he sat down before a blue Rico and lost himself. When he bethought him to look at his watch, it was after seven o'clock, and he rose with a start and ran downstairs, making a face at Augustus⁹, peering out from the cast-room, and an evil gesture at the Venus of Milo¹⁰ as he passed her on the stairway.

When Paul reached the ushers' dressing-room at about half-past seven that evening, half a dozen boys were there already, and Paul began, excitedly, to tumble into his uniform¹¹. It was one of the few that at all approached fitting, and he thought it very becoming—though he knew that the tight, straight coat accentuated his narrow chest, about which he was exceedingly sensitive. He was always considerably excited while he dressed, twanging all over to the tuning of the strings and the preliminary flourishes of the horns in the music-room; but tonight he seemed quite beside himself¹², and he teased and plagued the boys until, telling him that he was crazy, they put him down on the floor and sat on him.

Somewhat calmed by his suppression, Paul dashed out to the front of the house to seat the early comers. He was a model usher; gracious and smiling, he ran up and down the aisles; nothing was too much trouble for him; he carried messages and brought programmes as though it were his greatest pleasure in life, and all the people in his section thought him a charming boy, feeling that he remembered and admired them. As the house filled, he grew more and more vivacious and animated,

1. cutting terms: 尖酸刻薄的言语

2. intemperate reproach: 肆无忌惮的责备

3. set at bay: 被逼到绝路

4. Soldiers' Chorus: 《士兵大合唱》。《浮士德》中的主题曲。

5. Faust: 文章中指《浮士德交响曲》, 是受歌德的诗剧《浮士德》启发而作。作者李斯特 (Franz Liszt, 1811—1886) 为匈牙利钢琴家、指挥家、作曲家

6. Raffaelli's gay studies: 拉法埃利关于同性恋的研究

7. an airy blue Venetian scene: 一个既轻松而又让人忧郁的威尼斯场景

8. possessed himself of the place: 把自己当作这个地方的主人

9. Augustus: 奥古斯都, 罗马帝国的开国君主, 统治罗马长达 43 年

10. Venus of Milo: 断臂维纳斯, 一尊希腊神话中代表爱与美的女神维纳斯的大理石雕塑

11. to tumble into his uniform: 匆忙穿好制服

12. he seemed quite beside himself: 他似乎完全不在状态

and the color came to his cheeks and lips. It was very much as though this were a great reception and Paul were the host. Just as the musicians came out to take their places, his English teacher arrived with checks for the seats which a prominent manufacturer had taken for the season. She betrayed some embarrassment when she handed Paul the tickets, and a *hauteur*¹ which subsequently made her feel very foolish. Paul was startled for a moment, and had the feeling of wanting to put her out²; what business had she here among all these fine people and gay colors? He looked her over and decided that she was not appropriately dressed and must be a fool to sit downstairs in such togs. The tickets had probably been sent her out of kindness, he reflected as he put down a seat for her, and she had about as much right to sit there as he had.

When the symphony began, Paul sank into one of the rear seats with a long sigh of relief, and lost himself as he had done before the Rico. It was not that symphonies, as such, meant anything in particular to Paul, but the first sigh of the instruments seemed to free some hilarious and potent spirit within him; something that struggled there like the Genius in the bottle found by the Arab fisherman. He felt a sudden zest of life; the lights danced before his eyes and the concert hall blazed into unimaginable splendor. When the soprano soloist came on, Paul forgot even the nastiness of his teacher's being there and gave himself up to the peculiar stimulus such personages always had for him. The soloist chanced to be a German woman, by no means in her first youth, and the mother of many children; but she wore an elaborate gown and a tiara, and above all, she had that indefinable air of achievement, that world-shine upon her, which, in Paul's eyes, made her a veritable queen of Romance.

After a concert was over Paul was always irritable and wretched until he got to sleep, and tonight he was even more than usually restless. He had the feeling of not being able to let down, of its being impossible to give up this delicious excitement which was the only thing that could be called living at all. During the last number he withdrew and, after hastily changing his clothes in the dressing-room, slipped out to the side door where the soprano's carriage stood. Here he began pacing rapidly up and down the walk, waiting to see her come out.

Over yonder the Schenley, in its vacant stretch, loomed big and square through the fine rain, the windows of its twelve stories glowing like those of a lighted cardboard house under a Christmas tree. All the actors and singers of the better class stayed there when they were in the city, and a number of the big manufacturers of the place lived there in the winter. Paul had often hung about the hotel, watching the people go in and out, longing to enter and leave school-masters and dull care behind him forever.

At last the singer came out, accompanied by the conductor, who helped her into her carriage and closed the door with a cordial *auf wiedersehen*³, which set Paul to wondering whether she were not an old sweetheart of his. Paul followed the carriage over to the hotel, walking so rapidly as not to be far from the entrance when the singer alighted and disappeared behind the swinging glass doors that were opened by a negro in a tall hat and a long coat. In the moment that the door was ajar, it seemed to Paul that he too entered. He seemed to feel himself go after her up the steps, into the warm, lighted building,

1. *hauteur*: (法语)傲慢,自大

2. put her out: 让她退场

3. *auf wiedersehen*: (德语)再见