

TWENTIETH CENTURY AMERICAN BEST SELLERS



JEFFREY FARNOL

THE DEFINITE OBJECT

A ROMANCE OF NEW YORK

明确的目标

纽约爱情故事

[英] 杰弗里·法诺 著

世界图书出版公司

THE DEFINITE OBJECT
A ROMANCE OF NEW YORK

明确的目标
纽约爱情故事

Jeffrey Farnol

[英] 杰弗里·法诺 著

世界图书出版公司

上海·西安·北京·广州

图书在版编目(CIP)数据

明确的目标: 纽约爱情故事: 英文/(英)法诺著. —上海:
上海世界图书出版公司, 2010.10

ISBN 978-7-5100-2773-4

I. ①明… II. ①法… III. ①英语—语言读物 ②长篇小说—
英国—现代 IV. ①H319.4: I

中国版本图书馆CIP数据核字(2010)第179731号

明确的目标: 纽约爱情故事

[英] 杰弗里·法诺

上海世界图书出版公司 出版发行

上海市广中路88号

邮政编码 200083

北京华宝装订有限公司印刷

如发现印刷质量问题, 请与印刷厂联系

(质检科电话: 010-84897777)

各地新华书店经销

开本: 850×1168 1/32 印张: 11 字数: 296 000

2010年10月第1版 2010年10月第1次印刷

ISBN 978-7-5100-2773-4/H · 1053

定价: 18.80元

<http://www.wpcsh.com.cn>

<http://www.wpcsh.com>

序

从 1895 年美国《书商》杂志开启“按销量排序的图书目录”，美国的“畅销书”至今已有百年发展史，其间荣登年度榜的图书达上千册。阅读这些畅销书，可以学习各时代美国最畅销图书中的语言，了解当时的阅读旨趣，领略当时的社会习俗和风土人情，何乐而不为？

不过，阅读畅销书也需精选。畅销书只是显现读者的阅读旨趣，并不区分它的高下，读者真实的阅读旨趣是雅俗共存的：登上畅销书排行榜的并不总经得起时间的冲刷，许多名噪一时的畅销书早已销声匿迹，尘封在历史的沟壑中。

然而畅销书中自然也有大量经典得以长久流传。我们今天重读美国百年畅销图书，有着以往不曾有的优势。一是，时间的冲刷保证了今日重读之畅销书的经典。能留存至今的多是能够让人细细品读出些许感悟的，而不仅是出于猎奇心理、名人效应。二是，时空的距离感让我们能更好地反思畅销书中所折射出的社会现象。多了一分思考的冷峻，少了一分身处当局的迷惑，我们能以一个旁观者的角色更加清醒地审视。

鉴于以上宗旨，本系列所选的畅销书都历经淘洗，至今光彩斐然，极具代表性。成功类的书籍诸如《白手起家的商人给儿子的信》、《罗斯福总统给子女的信》和《如何度过一天的 24 小时》；文学类的书籍众多，包括赫赫有名的《马克·吐温自传》，开创了美国西部牛仔小说先河的《弗吉尼亚人》，反映纽约上层社会生活的《纯真年代》，表现女性自我探索的《满溢之杯》，讲述一战之后生死与重建的《贫穷的聪明人》，扣人心弦、探求正义的《公平与不公平》，文字优美、充满真挚情感的爱情小说《百分之一的机会》和表现纽约曼哈顿贫民区生活的《明确的目标：纽约爱情故事》等；此外还有文化类书籍——世界史研究界几乎无人不知的 H. G. 威尔斯的《历史的概要（世界史纲）》。每本读来都会有不一样的收获，可以满足读者对不同类型书籍的偏好。

阅读美国百年畅销图书，浸润美国最地道的语言，了解美国原汁原味的文化。

CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1	1
CHAPTER 2	8
CHAPTER 3	20
CHAPTER 4	32
CHAPTER 5	40
CHAPTER 6	44
CHAPTER 7	52
CHAPTER 8	56
CHAPTER 9	67
CHAPTER 10	77
CHAPTER 11	85
CHAPTER 12	102
CHAPTER 13	113
CHAPTER 14	119
CHAPTER 15	128
CHAPTER 16	144
CHAPTER 17	154
CHAPTER 18	157
CHAPTER 19	163
CHAPTER 20	168
CHAPTER 21	180
CHAPTER 22	186

CHAPTER 23	192
CHAPTER 24	197
CHAPTER 25	209
CHAPTER 26	214
CHAPTER 27	220
CHAPTER 28	225
CHAPTER 29	230
CHAPTER 30	239
CHAPTER 31	247
CHAPTER 32	257
CHAPTER 33	264
CHAPTER 34	267
CHAPTER 35	277
CHAPTER 36	283
CHAPTER 37	290
CHAPTER 38	298
CHAPTER 39	303
CHAPTER 40	310
CHAPTER 41	316
CHAPTER 42	320
CHAPTER 43	323
CHAPTER 44	326
CHAPTER 45	330
CHAPTER 46	336

CHAPTER 1

*WHICH DESCRIBES, AMONG OTHER THINGS, A PAIR OF
WHISKERS*

IN the writing of books, as all the world knows, two things are above all other things essential – the one is to know exactly when and where to leave off, and the other to be equally certain when and where to begin.

Now this book, naturally enough, begins with Mr. Brimberly's whiskers; begins at that moment when he coughed and pulled down his waistcoat for the first time. And yet (since action is as necessary to the success of a book as to life itself) it should perhaps begin more properly at the psychological moment when Mr. Brimberly coughed and pulled down the garment aforesaid for the third time, since it is then that the real action of this story commences.

Be that as it may, it is beyond all question that nowhere in this wide world could there possibly be found just such another pair of whiskers as those which adorned the plump cheeks of Mr. Brimberly; without them he might have been only an ordinary man, but, possessing them, he was the very incarnation of all that a butler could possibly be.

And what whiskers these were! So soft, so fleecy, so purely white, that at times they almost seemed like the wings of cherubim, striving to soar away and bear Mr. Brimberly into a higher and purer sphere. Again, what Protean whiskers were these, whose fleecy pomposity could overawe the most superior young footmen and reduce page-boys, tradesmen, and the lower orders generally, to a state of perspiring humility; to his equals how calmly aloof, how blandly dignified; and to those a misguided fate had set above him, how demurely deferential, how obligingly obsequious! Indeed, Mr. Brimberly's whiskers were all things to all men, and therein lay their potency.

Mr. Brimberly then, pompous, affable, and most sedate, having motioned his visitor into his master's favourite chair, set down the tray of decanters and glasses upon the piano, coughed, and pulled down his waistcoat; and Mr. Brimberly did it all with that air of portentous dignity and leisurely solemnity which, together with his whiskers, made him the personality he was.

"And you're still valeting for Barberton, are you, Mr. Stevens?" he blandly enquired.

"I've been with his lordship six months, now," nodded Mr. Stevens.

"Ah!" said Mr. Brimberly, opening a certain carved cabinet and reaching thence a box of his master's choicest Havanas, "six months, indeed! And 'ow is Barberton? I hacted in the capacity of his confidential valet a good many years ago, as I told you, and we always got on very well together, very well, indeed. 'Ow is Barberton?"

"Oh, 'e 'd be right enough if it war n't for 'is gout which gets 'im in the big toe now and then, and 'is duns and creditors and sich-like low fellers, as gets 'im everywhere and constant! 'E'll never be quite 'imself until 'e marries money – and plenty of it!"

"A American hair-ess!" nodded Mr. Brimberly. "Pre-cisely! I very nearly married 'im to a rich widder ten years ago. 'E'd 'ave been settled for life if 'e 'd took my advice! But Barberton was always inclined to be a little 'eadstrong. The widder in question 'appened to be a trifle par-say, I'll admit, also it was 'inted that one of 'er – lower limbs was cork. But then, 'er money, sir – 'er jools!" Mr. Brimberly raised eyes and hands and shook his head until his whiskers quivered in a very ecstasy.

"But a wooden leg –" began Mr. Stevens dubiously.

"I said 'limb', sir!" said Mr. Brimberly, his whiskers distinctly agitated, "a cork limb, sir! And Lord bless me, a cork limb ain't to be sniffed at contemptuous when it brings haffluence with it, sir! At least, my sentiments leans that way."

"Oh – ditto, certainly, sir! I'd take haffluence to my 'eart if she came

with both le – both of 'em cork, if it meant hafluence like this!" Mr. Stevens let his pale, prominent eyes wander slowly around the luxuriant splendour of the room. "My eye!" he exclaimed, "it's easy to see as your governor don't have to bother about marrying money, cork limbs or otherwise! Very rich, ain't 'e, Mr. Brimberly?"

Mr. Brimberly set down the decanter he chanced to be holding, and having caressed each fluffy whisker, smiled.

"I think, sir," said he gently, "y-es, I think we may answer 'yes' to your latter question. I think we may tell you and admit 'ole-'earted and frank, sir, that the Ravenslee fortune is fab'lous, sir, stoopendious and himmense!"

"Oh, Lord!" exclaimed Mr. Stevens, and his pale eyes, much wider, now wandered up from the Persian rug beneath his boots to the elaborately carved ceiling above his head. "My aunt!" he murmured.

"Oh, I think we're fairly comfortable 'ere, sir," nodded Mr. Brimberly complacently, "yes, fairly comfortable, I think."

"Comfortable!" ejaculated the awe-struck Mr. Stevens, "I should say so! My word!"

"Yes," pursued Mr. Brimberly, "comfortable, and I ventur' to think, tasteful, sir, for I'll admit young Ravenslee – though a millionaire and young – 'as taste. Observe this costly bricky-brack! Oh, yes, young Har is a man of taste indoobitably, I think you must admit."

"Very much so indeed, sir!" answered Mr. Stevens with his pallid glance on the array of bottles. "'Three Star,' I think, Mr. Brimberly?"

"Sir," sighed Mr. Brimberly in gentle reproach, "you 'ere be'old Cognac brandy as couldn't be acquired for twenty-five dollars the bottle! Then 'ere we 'ave jubilee port, a rare old sherry, and whisky. Now what shall we make it? You, being like myself, a Englishman in this 'ere land of eagles, spread and otherwise, suppose we make it a B and a Hess?"

"By all means!" nodded Mr. Stevens.

"I was meditating," said Mr. Brimberly, busied with the bottles and

glasses, "I was cogitating calling hup Mr. Jenkins, the Stanways' butler across the way. The Stanways is common people, parvynoo, Mr. Stevens, parvynoo, but Mr. Jenkins is very superior and plays the banjer very affecting. Our 'ousekeeper and the maids is gone to bed, and I've give our footmen leave of habsence – I thought we might 'ave a nice, quiet musical hour or so. You perform on the piano-forty, I believe, sir?"

"Only very occasional!" Mr. Stevens admitted. "But," and here his pale eyes glanced toward the door, "do I understand as he is out for the night?"

"Sir," said Mr. Brimberly ponderously, "what 'e' might you be pleased to mean?"

"I was merely allooding to – to your governor, sir."

Mr. Brimberly glanced at his guest, set down the glass he was in the act of filling and – pulled down his waistcoat for the second time.

"Sir," said he, and his cherubic whiskers seemed positively to quiver, "I presoom – I say, I presoom you are referring to – Young Har?"

"I meant Mr. Ravenslee."

"Then may I beg that you'll allood to him 'enceforth as Young Har? This is Young Har's own room, sir. This is Young Har's own picters, sir. When Young Har is absent, I generally sit 'ere with me cigar and observe said picters. I'm fond of hart, sir; I find hart soothing and restful. The picters surrounding of you are all painted by Young Har's very own 'and – subjeks various. Number one – a windmill very much out o' repair, but that's hart, sir. Number two – a lady dressed in what I might term dish-a-bell, sir, and there isn't much of it, but that's hart again. Number three – a sunset. Number four – moonlight; 'e didn't get the moon in the picter but the light's there and that's the great thing – effect, sir, effect! Of course, being only studies, they don't look finished – which is the most hartisticest part about 'em! But, lord! Young Har never finishes anything – too tired! 'Ang me, sir, if I don't think 'e were born tired! But then, 'oo ever knew a haristocrat as wasn't?"

"But," demurred Mr. Stevens, staring down into his empty glass, "I

thought 'e was a American, your – Young Har?”

“Why, 'e is and 'e ain't, sir. His father was only a American, I'll confess, but his mother was blue blood, every drop guaranteed, sir, and as truly English as – as I am!”

“And is he the Mr. Ravenslee as is the sportsman? Goes in for boxing, don't 'e? Very much fancied as a heavyweight, ain't 'e? My governor's seen him box and says 'e's a perfect snorter, by Jove!”

Mr. Brimberly sighed, and soothed a slightly agitated whisker.

“Why, yes,” he admitted, “I'm afraid 'e does box – but only as a ammitoor, Mr. Stevens, strickly as a ammitoor, understand!”

“And he's out making a night of it, is he?” enquired Mr. Stevens, leaning back luxuriously and stretching his legs. “Bit of a rip, ain't 'e?”

“A – wot, sir?” enquired Mr. Brimberly with raised brows.

“Well, very wild, ain't he – drinks, gambles, and hetceteras, don't he?”

“Why, as to that, sir,” answered Mr. Brimberly, dexterously performing on the syphon, “I should answer you, drink 'e may, gamble 'e do, hetceteras I won't answer for, 'im being the very hacme of respectability though 'e is a millionaire and young.”

“And when might you expect 'im back?”

“Why, there's no telling, Mr. Stevens.”

“Eh?” exclaimed Mr. Stevens, and sat up very suddenly.

“'Is movements, sir, is quite – ah – quite metehoric!”

“My eye!” exclaimed Mr. Stevens, gulping his brandy and soda rather hastily.

“Metehoric is the only word for it, sir!” pursued Mr. Brimberly with a slow nod. “'E may drop in on me at any moment, sir!”

“Why, then,” said his guest, rising, “p'r'aps I'd better be moving?”

“On the other 'and,” pursued Mr. Brimberly, smiling and caressing his left whisker, “'e may be on 'is way to Hafghanistan or Hasia Minor at this pre-cise moment – 'e is that metehoric, lord! These millionaires is much of a muchness, sir, 'ere to-day, gone to-morrer. Noo York this week, London

or Paris the next. Young Har is always upsetting my plans, 'e is, and that's a fact, sir! Me being a nat'rally quiet, reasonable, and law-abiding character, I objects to youthful millionaires on principle, Mr. Stevens, on principle!"

"Ditto!" nodded Mr. Stevens, his glance wandering uneasily to the door again, "ditto with all my 'eart, sir. If it's all the same to you, I think p'r'aps I'd better be hopping – you know –"

"Oh, don't you worry about Young Har; 'e won't bother us to-night; 'e's off Long Island way to try his newest 'igh-power racing car – 'e's driving in the Vanderbilt Cup Race next month. To-night 'e expects to do eighty miles or so, and 'opes to sleep at one of 'is clubs. I say 'e 'opes an' expects so to do!"

"Yes," nodded Mr. Stevens, "certainly, but what do you mean?"

"Sir," sighed Mr. Brimberly, "if you'd been forced by stern dooty to sit be'ind Young Har in a fast automobile as I 'ave, you'd know what I mean. Reckless? Speed? Well, there!" and Mr. Brimberly lifted hands and eyes and shook his head until his whiskers vjbrated with horror.

"Then you're pretty sure," said Mr. Stevens, settling luxurious boots upon a cushioned chair, "you're pretty sure he won't come bobbing up when least expected?"

"Pretty sure!" nodded Mr. Brimberly. "You see, this nooest car is the very latest thing in racing cars – cost a fortune, consequently it's bound to break down – these here expensive cars always do, believe me!"

"Why, then," said Mr. Stevens, helping himself to one of Mr. Brimberly's master's cigars, "I say let joy and 'armony be unconfined! How about Jenkins and 'is banjer?"

"I'll call 'im up immediate!" nodded Mr. Brimberly, rising. "Mr. Jenkins is a true hartist, equally facetious and soulful, sir!"

So saying, Mr. Brimberly arose and crossed toward the telephone. But scarcely had he taken three steps when he paused suddenly and stood rigid and motionless, his staring gaze fixed upon the nearest window; for from

the shadowy world beyond came a sound, faint as yet and far away, but a sound there was no mistaking – the dismal tooting of an automobile horn.

“‘Eavens an’ earth!” exclaimed Mr. Brimberly, and crossing to the window he peered out. Once again the horn was heard, but very much nearer now, and louder, whereupon Mr. Brimberly turned, almost hastily, and his visitor rose hurriedly.

“It’s very annoying, Mr. Stevens,” said he, “but can I trouble you to – to step – er – down – stairs – *with* the glasses? It’s ’ighly mortifying, but may I ask you to – er – step a little lively, Mr. Stevens?”

Without a word, Mr. Stevens caught up the tray from the piano and glided away on his toe-points; whereupon Mr. Brimberly (being alone) became astonishingly agile and nimble all at once, diving down to straighten a rug here and there, rearranging chairs and tables; he even opened the window and hurled two half-smoked cigars far out into the night; and his eye was as calm, his brow as placid, his cheek as rosy as ever, only his whiskers – those snowy, telltale whiskers, quivered spasmodically, very much as though endeavouring to do the manifestly impossible and flutter away with Mr. Brimberly altogether; yes, it was all in his whiskers.

Thus did Mr. Brimberly bustle softly to and fro until he paused, all at once, arrested by the sound of a slow, firm step near by. Then Mr. Brimberly coughed, smoothed his winglike whiskers, and – pulled down his waistcoat for the third time. And lo! even as he did so, the door opened, and the hero of this history stood upon the threshold.

CHAPTER 2

OF A MOURNFUL MILLIONAIRE WHO LACKED AN OBJECT

GEOFFREY Ravenslee was tall and pale and very languid, so languid indeed that the automobile coat he bore across his arm slipped to the floor ere Mr. Brimberly could take it, after which he shed his cap and goggles and dropped them, drew off his gauntlets and dropped them and, crossing to his favourite lounge chair, dropped himself into it, and lay there staring into the fire.

"Ah, Brimberly," he sighed gently, "making a night of it?"

"Why, sir," bowed his butler, "indeed, sir – to tell the truth, sir –"

"You needn't, Brimberly. Excellent cigars you smoke – judging from the smell. May I have one?"

"Sir," said Brimberly, his whiskers slightly agitated, "cigars, sir?"

"In the cabinet, I think," and Mr. Ravenslee motioned feebly with one white hand towards the tall, carved cabinet in an adjacent corner.

Mr. Brimberly coughed softly behind plump fingers.

"The – the key, sir?" he suggested.

"Oh, not at all necessary, Brimberly; the lock is faulty, you know."

"Sir?" said Brimberly, soothing a twitching whisker.

"If you are familiar with the life of the Fourteenth Louis, Brimberly, you will remember that the Grand Monarch hated to be kept waiting – so do I. A cigar – in the cabinet yonder."

With his whiskers in a high state of agitation, Mr. Brimberly laid by the garments he held clutched in one arm and coming to the cabinet, opened it, and taking thence a box of cigars, very much at random, came back, carrying it rather as though it were a box of highly dangerous explosives, and setting it at his master's elbow, struck a match.

As Mr. Brimberly watched his master select and light his cigar, it chanced that Young R. raised his eyes and looked at him, and to be sure those eyes were surprisingly piercing and quick for one so very languid. Indeed, Mr. Brimberly seemed to think so, for he coughed again, faint and discreetly, behind his hand, while his whiskers quivered slightly, though perceptibly.

"You're 'ome quite – quite unexpected, sir!"

"Brimberly, I'm afraid I am, but I hope I don't intrude?"

"Intrude, sir!" repeated Mr. Brimberly. "Oh, very facetious, sir, very facetious indeed!" and he laughed, deferentially and soft.

"I blew the horn, but I see he left his hat behind him!" sighed Young R., nodding languidly toward the headgear of Mr. Stevens, which had fallen beneath a chair and thus escaped notice.

"Why, I – indeed, sir," said Mr. Brimberly, stooping to make a fierce clutch at it, "I took the liberty of showing a friend of mine your – your picters, sir – no offence, I 'ope, sir?"

"Friend?" murmured his master.

"Name of Stevens, sir, valet to Lord Barberton – a most sooperior person indeed, sir!"

"Barberton? I don't agree with you, Brimberly."

"Stevens, sir!"

"Ah! And you showed him my – pictures, did you?"

"Yes, sir, I did take that liberty – no offence, sir, I –"

"Hum! Did he like 'em?"

"Like them, sir! 'E were fair overpowered, sir! Brandy and soda, sir?"

"Thanks! Did he like that, too?"

"Why, sir – I – indeed –"

"Oh, never mind – to-night is an occasion, anyway – just a splash of soda! Yes, Brimberly, when the clocks strike midnight I shall be thirty-five years old –"

"Indeed, sir!" exclaimed Brimberly, clasping his plump hands softly and

bowing, "then allow me to wish you many, many 'appy returns, sir, with continued 'ealth, wealth, and all 'appiness, sir!"

"Happiness?" repeated Young R., and smiled quite bitterly, as only the truly young can smile. "Happiness!" said he again, "thank you, Brimberly – now take your friend his hat, and have the extreme goodness to make up the fire for me. I love a fire, as you know, but especially when I am mournful. And pray – hurry, Brimberly!"

Forthwith Mr. Brimberly bowed and bustled out, but very soon bustled in again; and now, as he stooped, menial-like, to ply the coal tongs, though his domelike brow preserved all its wonted serenity, no words could possibly express all the mute rebellion of those eloquent whiskers.

"Hanything more, sir?" he enquired, as he rose from his knees.

"Why, yes," said Young R., glancing up at him, and beneath the quizzical look in those sleepy grey eyes, Mr. Brimberly's whiskers wilted slightly. "You're getting a trifle too – er – portly to hop round on your knees, aren't you, Brimberly? Pray sit down and talk to me."

Mr. Brimberly bowed and took a chair, sitting very upright and attentive while his master frowned into the fire.

"Thirty-five is a ripe age, Brimberly!" said he at last; "a man should have made something of his life – at thirty-five!"

"Certingly, sir!"

"And I'm getting quite into the sere and yellow leaf, am I not, Brimberly?"

Mr. Brimberly raised a plump, protesting hand.

"'Ardly that, sir, 'ardly that!" said he, "we are hall of us getting on, of course –"

"Where to, Brimberly? On where, Brimberly – on what?"

"Why, sir, since you ask me, I should answer – begging your parding – 'eavens knows, sir!"

"Precisely! Anyway, I'm going there fast."

"Where, sir?"

“Heaven knows, Brimberly.”

“Ah – er – certingly, sir!”

“Now, Brimberly, as a hard-headed, matter-of-fact, common-sense being, what would you suggest for a poor devil who is sick and tired of everything and most of all – of himself?”

“Why, sir, I should prescribe for that man change of hair, sir – travel, sir. I should suggest to that man Hafghanistan or Hasia Minor, or both, sir. There’s your noo yacht a-laying in the river, sir –”

His master leant his square chin upon his square fist and still frowning at the fire, gently shook his head.

“My good Brimberly,” he sighed, “haven’t I travelled in most parts of the world?”

“Why, yes, sir, you’ve travelled, sir, very much so indeed, sir – you’ve shot lions and tigers and a helephant or so, and exchanged sentiments with raging ’eathen – as rage in nothing but a string o’ beads – but what about your noomerous possessions in Europe, sir?”

“Ah, yes,” nodded Young R., “I do possess some shanties and things over there, don’t I, Brimberly?”

“Shanties, sir!” Mr. Brimberly blinked, and his whiskers bristled in horrified reproof. “Shanties! – Oh, dear me, sir!” he murmured. “Shanties – your magnificent town mansion situate in Saint James’s Square, London, as your respected father hacquired from a royal dook, sir! Shanties! – your costly and helegant res-eye-dence in Park Lane, sir!”

“Hum!” said Young R. moodily.

“Then, in Scotland, sir, we ’ave your castle of Drumlochie, sir – rocks, turrets, battlements, ’ighly grim and romantic, sir!”

“Ha!” sighed his young master, frowning at his cigar.

“Next, sir, – in Italy we find your ancient Roman villa, sir – halabaster pillows and columns, sir – very historical though a trifle wore with wars and centuries of centoorians, sir, wherefore I would humbly suggest a coat or two of paint, sir, applied beneath your very own eye, sir –”