

英汉对照读物



外国笑话集

卢思源 编译

福建人民出版社

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序

在西方国家出版的某些英语书刊上，例如美国的 Reader's Digest (《读者文摘》)，我们会经常读到一些风趣的笑话和幽默的短篇故事。在这些笑话和故事中，不乏赏心悦目之作。它们构思新颖，意境奇妙，笔调清新，行文简洁，字里行间散发着浓郁的生活气息。

如同其他形式的文学创作一样，这些笑话和幽默故事的素材大多是直接从现实生活中撷取来的，它们从时代生活的各个侧面反映了当今西方国家中各种典型人物的生活方式、思想感情和风俗习惯。资本主义社会的许多虚伪风尚在这里也得到了淋漓尽致的描绘和讽刺。从表面看，笑话所述的事例只是生活长河中泛起的涟漪而已，实际上，它们却是无数作者在漫长的生活道路中所获得的不同感受。他们的这些点滴体会或一丝遐想为人们提供了一幅幅栩栩如生的生活图景和一张张风姿各异的画片，这些五色缤纷的画面寓意隽永、耐人寻味，有些甚至还能启迪人生。因此，我们说，笑话的作者并不是供人欣赏或嘲笑的小丑，而是高瞻远瞩、洞察人生的智者。他们以笑骂之笔锋来撰写文章，其动机并非出于幸灾乐祸，而是对他们生活的那个社会里的各种不良现象进行揭露或抨击。从这个意义上看，《外国笑话集》不应被看作“茶余饭后一支烟”式的消遣读物，而应视作一本从侧面了解美国社会现状和西方国家人民生活状况的参考书籍。

从语言的角度看，本书所选的各篇文字也都是道地的现

代英语（特别是英语口语）。今日英语的用词特点、变化情况和明日英语的发展趋势均可从中窥见一斑。这些简炼而规范的语言是值得英语学习者学习的。

卢思源

一九八一年十二月

Jones was one of those men who grumble at everything and everybody. He was once attacked by inflammatory rheumatism and was carefully nursed by his wife, who was devoted to him in spite of his fault-finding disposition. His suffering caused her to burst into tears sometimes as she sat by his bedside.

One day a friend came in and asked him how he was getting on. "Too bad, too bad," he exclaimed, "and it's my wife's fault."

"Impossible!" said the friend in surprise.

"Yes, the doctor told me that humidity was bad for me, and there that woman sits and cries just to make it moist in the room."

有些人总是对任何事和任何人都感到不称心，琼斯就是这样的人。有一次，他的风湿性关节炎发作，他的妻子体贴入微地照顾他，尽管他生性爱挑剔，妻子待他还是一片忠心。有时候，她坐在床边为她丈夫的疾苦而哭泣。

一天，有个朋友来访，问起他的病情。"太遗憾了，太遗憾了，"他大声叫道，"这都是我的老婆不好。"

"这不可能！"他的朋友惊奇地说。

"的确是这么一回事。医生说过，潮湿对我的健康有

害，可这女人就是坐在旁边哭，把房间里弄得湿气弥漫。”

* * * * *

Mr. Hardup was not at all a wealthy man, but he liked to impress his fellow workers in the firm.

That morning, just as he was leaving the house for his day's weary work, a brilliant idea struck him.

"By the way, my dear," he said, turning to his wife, "is there any of that squashy yellow stuff left we had last night?"

"Yes, duck. Why?"

"I want to put a little on my mustache to make my business associates think we can afford eggs."

哈特普先生并不是一个有钱人，可是他喜欢在公司的同事面前摆阔气。

一天早上，他刚要出门上班的时候，突然想起了一个好主意。

"亲爱的，我问你，"他转过身来对妻子说，"昨天晚上我们吃的那种软软的黄东西还有没有啊？"

"有的，我亲爱的，你问这个干什么？"

"我想在我的小胡子上涂一些，让我的那些同事认为我们是买得起鸡蛋的。"

注：Hardup这个词的意思是“缺钱”、“拮据”。作者在这里把它用作一个人的名字，以加强讽刺的效果。

* * * * *

Father: "What would you say to me, Betty, if I came to dinner with hands as dirty as yours?"

Small daughter: "I think I should be too polite to say anything about it."

父亲: "蓓蒂, 假如在吃饭的时候, 我的一双手象你的手那么脏, 你会对我说什么呢?"

小女儿: "我想, 为了礼貌起见, 我什么都不说。"

* * * * *

Little girl: "Grandpa, would you like me to give you a new pipe for your birthday?"

Grandpa: "That's very nice of you, Betty, but I have a pipe."

Little girl: "I don't think you have, Grandpa. I've just broken it."

小女孩: "爷爷, 我想送一只烟斗给你, 作为你生日的礼物, 不知道你喜欢吗?"

爷爷: "你真好, 蓓蒂, 可是我已经有一只了。"

小女孩: "爷爷, 我想你没有了, 因为我刚才把它弄断了。"

* * * * *

A Straightforward Reply

Patient: "Doctor, are you sure this is pneumonia? Sometimes doctors treat for pneumonia, and patients die of something else."

Doctor: (with dignity) "When I treat for pneumonia, patients die of pneumonia."

坦率的回答

病人: "大夫, 你能否肯定我生的是肺炎? 有时候, 大夫当肺炎治, 结果病人却死于其他的病。"

大夫: (一本正经地) "当我治疗肺炎的时候, 病人总是死于肺炎。"

* * * * *

In a certain village there was a doctor noted for his reckless motor driving. One day when he answered the telephone a woman's voice asked him if he were going out driving that afternoon.

"No, I hardly think I will have time this afternoon," replied the doctor. "But why do you ask?"

"Well," replied his anonymous questioner, "I want to send my little daughter down the street for some thread, if you are not."

某村有个大夫，素以驾驶摩托车横冲直撞而知名。有一天，他接到一个妇女打来的电话，问他那天下午是否驾车外出。

“今天下午我很忙，不出去。”医生答道。“可是你为啥要问我这个？”

“嘿，”那个没说出姓名的女人答道，“如果你不出去的话，我想叫小女儿上街买些针线。”

* * * * *

Accompanying my new quartz watch was a card that read: "Because of the advanced integrated-circuit technology incorporated in this watch, the back has been sealed and should only be removed by a jeweler, who will have the appropriate tools."

Accordingly, when the battery ran down, I took the watch to a prestigious jeweler. An assistant disappeared with it behind a screen, from where I heard the jeweler say, "May I borrow your pen-knife?"

我的新石英表上附有一张卡片，上面写道：“本表采用先进的集成电路技术，表壳是密封的，必须请备有适当工具的宝石匠才能把它打开。”

为此，当电池里的电用完时，我把手表送到一个著名的宝石匠那里。一个店员把我的表拿到围屏后，我听到那个宝石匠在屏风后说：“把你的削笔刀借给我用一下好吗？”

* * * *

"The people upstairs are very annoying," complained the tenant. "Last night they stamped and banged on the floor until midnight!"

"Did they wake you?" asked the landlord.

"No," explained the tenant. "Luckily, I was up playing my tuba."

"楼上的那些人非常吵闹，"房客抱怨地说，"昨天晚上他们在地板上乱蹦乱跳，一直闹到半夜！"

"他们把你吵醒的吧？"房东问道。

"不是的，"房客解释道。"幸好我当时不在睡觉，我在吹奏大号。"

* * * *

"Good gracious, you've got the biggest cavity I've ever seen!" the dentist exclaimed as he examined a new patient. "The biggest cavity I've ever seen!"

The patient snapped, "You don't have to repeat it."

"I didn't," replied the dentist. "That was an echo."

"天啊，象你这么大的空洞我是第一次看到！"牙医在检查初诊病人的牙齿时大声叫道。"这么大的空洞我是第一次看到！"

病人怒气冲冲地说道：“你没有必要说两遍嘛。”

“我是没有说两遍，那是空洞的回声啊。”牙医答。

* * * * *

The Browns were ecstatic when a longed-for child was born to them. They agonized over a name for their son, and after rejecting all the common ones, settled on Fantastic.

Fantastic Brown had a wonderful childhood, except for the kidding he took over his name. He hated it. He grew up, married, had children and continued to hate his name. He enjoyed a successful professional life and, in his old age, finally became critically ill. On his deathbed he begged his wife, "Please, please, leave Fantastic off my tombstone. Just put Brown."

He died, and as he had asked, his wife left Fantastic off the stone. But Brown seemed too plain, and she wanted something about how wonderful a husband he had been, so under Brown she had these words engraved: "During his marriage, he never looked at another woman."

And now, everyone who passes the tombstone murmurs, "Fantastic!"

布朗夫妇晚年得子，欣喜若狂。为了替儿子取名，他们费尽了心思。一般普通的名字他们都不中意，最后定名为

“希奇”。

希奇·布朗的童年过得非常好，唯一令他不满意的是，别人嘲笑他的名字。他也对这个名字很反感。后来长大成人，结了婚，有了孩子，可是对自己的名字依旧嫌恶，他在事业上颇有成就，晚年得了重病。临终前，他向妻子恳求道：“请你千万别把‘希奇’这个字写在我的墓碑上，只写‘布朗’就行了。”

他死后，妻子按照他的要求，没有把“希奇”这个字写在他的墓碑上。可是“布朗”这个字太简单了，她想加上一言半语，表明他生前是个好丈夫，因此，在“布朗”的下面，她叫人刻了这么几个字：“他结婚后从来不向其他的女人看一眼。”

现在，人们经过他的墓碑前都悄声说道：“希奇！”

注：Fantastic是个形容词，意思是“希奇”、“古怪”。

* * * * *

One husband placed this signed ad in the newspaper: "I will not be responsible for any debts contracted for by anyone but myself." The next day his wife's ad appeared directly below his: "Oh yes, you will, John."

某个丈夫在报纸上登了一则带签名的广告：“除了我自己签署的借债契约之外，其他人签署的契据我概不负责。”第二天，他的妻子就在他的广告下刊登了这么一条：“噢，约翰，你是要负责的。”

* * * *

During a heat wave, a tenant phoned his landlord to complain of the excessive heat in his apartment. The landlord was apologetic, but said, "There isn't a thing I can do about it."

"Oh, but there is," replied the tenant. "Why aren't you running ice water through the pipes?"

"Ice water through the pipes?" echoed the landlord. "Are you crazy? You know I can't do that."

"What do you mean, you can't do that? You managed it very nicely all last winter."

在热浪逼人的暑天里，房客给房东打了个电话，埋怨他在房子里热得受不了。房东向他表示歉意说：“这我可没有办法。”

“噢，办法是有的，”房客答。“为什么你不在水管里放冰水？”

“水管里放冰水？”房东回答。“难道你疯了？你知道我是办不到的。”

“办不到！你这是什么意思啊？去年整个冬天你不就是这样做得吗！”

* * * *

Each summer, we have a handicrafts exposition on the ten-acre green in the center of our town. Huge

crowds from the surrounding area flock to this three-day affair.

One year, I was inching my way through the crowded tents and had just stopped to watch an artist at work, as had the woman directly in front of me. She spotted a friend and called out, "What are you doing here alone?" The friend replied, "I came alone on purpose so I can stop and watch whatever interests me, without bothering about anyone else." The first woman said, "That's exactly why I came alone." "Great!" exclaimed the second, "why don't we go around together?"

每年夏天，在我们城镇中心十英亩宽广的草地上总要举办手工业展览会。四乡的居民总是成群结队地赶来参观这个为期三天的展览会。

有一年，我在拥挤的帐棚里一步步向前挤，我象走在我前面的那个妇女一样，停下脚步观看一个手工艺人在干活，突然间，她瞅见一个朋友，于是高声问道：“你一个人在这儿干什么？”她的朋友答：“我是特意一个人来的，这样我可以随时停下来观看我喜欢看的东西，而不必理会别人。”“好极了！”那个妇女叫道，“现在我们为什么不一块儿去逛逛呢？”

* * * * *

A six-year-old boy, asked how he liked his first day at school, replied: "All right—except there was some lady there that talked all the time."

有个六岁的男孩听到别人问他第一天上学后有什么感想时，回答说：“还不错——可是有一点我是不喜欢的，那儿有个女人老是讲个不停。”

* * * * *

My neighbor's four-year-old granddaughter was watching her in anticipation one afternoon as she was finishing up frosting a cake. The child's face fell, however, when she found her grandmother was not going to decorate or write on the cake. The grandmother explained that the cake was for a neighbor who had a death in the family, and it was not the correct thing to do to write on a cake for such an occasion. The little girl thought a moment, then solemnly offered this compromise: "Couldn't you even write on it 'Too Bad'?"

我的邻居有个四岁的孙女。有一天下午，她做好一块蛋糕，并把白糖撒在蛋糕上，她的小孙女在一旁用期待的眼光观看着。当她发现祖母并没有在蛋糕上加点装饰物或写字时，脸上露出扫兴的神色。祖母解释说，这块蛋糕是为一个邻居做的，他家里有人死了，在这种场合是不可以在蛋糕上写字的。小女孩想了一会，然后一本正经地提出了这么一个折衷方案：“你能否在蛋糕上面写‘太遗憾了’？”

* * * * *

A young boy and his doting grandmother were walking along the shore in Miami Beach when a huge wave appeared out of nowhere, sweeping the child out to sea. The horrified woman fell to her knees, raised her eyes to the heaven and begged the Lord to return her beloved grandson. And, lo, another wave reared up and deposited the stunned child on the sand before her. The grandmother looked the boy over carefully. He was fine. But still she stared up angrily toward the heavens. "When we came," she snapped indignantly, "he had a hat!"

有个男孩和他的年老昏愤的祖母在迈阿密海滩散步，突然间不知从什么地方涌来了巨浪，把小孩卷到海洋里去了。惊恐的祖母跪倒在地上，抬起头来望着苍天，祈求上帝把她心爱的孙子送回来。瞧，又一个海浪接踵而来，把受惊的小孩送回她眼前的沙滩上。祖母仔细地端详了孩子，发现他安然无恙。她气忿地抬起头来，凝视着天空，怒喝道：“我们刚才来的时候，他头上还有一顶帽子哩！”

* * * * *

When my friend and I went for a swim at a beach near the mouth of the Zambezi River in Mozambique, I asked a young boy, who was fishing nearby, whether there were sharks in the water. "No," he answered.

My friend and I jumped into the water and

started swimming. After several minutes, I called out to the boy, "Are you sure there are no sharks here?"

"No sharks," he replied. "Sharks are afraid of crocodiles."

有一次，我的朋友和我到莫桑比克的三鼻子河河口附近的海滩游泳时，我问正在附近钓鱼的一个男孩水里是否有鲨鱼。“没有，”他答道。

我的朋友和我跳入水中开始游泳。过了几分钟，我又高声地问那个男孩：“这里真的没有鲨鱼吗？”

“没有鲨鱼，因为鲨鱼是怕鳄鱼的。”他答道。

* * * * *

Said the bellhop to a noisy drinking party of collegians in a hotel bedroom: "I've been sent to ask you to make less noise. The gentleman in the next room says he can't read."

"Tell him," was the reply of one of the revelers, "that he ought to be ashamed of himself. Why, I could read when I was five years old."

有个侍者对一群正在旅馆房间里喝酒吵闹的大学生说道：“有人要我跟你们说不要那么吵闹。隔壁房间的一位先生说他不能看书了。”

“你去告诉他，他应该感到害羞，”有个纵酒狂欢的人答道。“嗯，我五岁的时候就会看书了。”