

*Inspiring Essays*

# 励志小品



成功路上的加油站



编译 刘生 肖建壮



英语美文  
欣赏系列

● 英汉对照 ●

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## 前 言

随着中国加入 WTO、申奥、申博的成功,英语学习日益受到人们的高度重视。然而,当今时代,人们的生活节奏大大加快,有心学习英语,又不可能投入太多的时间和精力;有心学习英语,又倦于传统的学习方式,希望愉快阅读,轻松掌握。故此,我们编译了这套《英语美文欣赏系列》,旨在为具有中学英语水平的广大学生和在职人员,提供一条学习英语的便捷可行的崭新途径。

英语学习,阅读能力的培养至为重要。因为,阅读是获取信息的主要手段,是听、说、写水平提高的基础。一般而言,阅读能力的培养大约有两种图式:一是自下而上的知识性阅读;二是自上而下的交际性阅读。然而,长期以来,我们的英语教学采取的是前者,即,按照“词—句—篇”的顺序,侧重于识别和辨认词句和语法等表层结构,但对于语篇的理解却显得支离破碎,影响了言语交际能力的获得。这里,我们一反以往的做法,充分发挥从语篇的整体出发的交际性阅读的优势,便于读者在茶余饭后、旅行途中、课余时间,或随意翻翻、或细细品



味,以达到解乏去闷、轻松记忆、在愉快的阅读中提高英语应用和交际的能力。

《英语美文欣赏系列》共分6本:《浪漫短诗》、《抒情散文》、《励志小品》、《人间喜剧》、《童话世界》、《哲理故事》。编选的材料散见于各大英语报章书刊,内容丰富,生动有趣,新颖别致,题材多样。各书编排均采用英汉对照的形式,以便读者对照学习和欣赏。该书既便于帮助读者咀嚼原汁原味的英语原文,又为只想通过汉语欣赏英语散文的读者提供了方便。

本书的翻译出版是集体合作的结果,参与本书翻译工作的有祝英王、辛红和肖萌,在此谨表最诚挚的感谢。

2 尽管本书参考了一些专家的相关成果,编选不当甚至失误之处在所难免,渴望得到读者、专家的指正。

青岛图书工作室



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# 1 Three Days to See

*Helen Keller*

All of us have read thrilling stories in which the hero had only a limited and specified time to live. Sometimes it was as long as a year; sometimes as short as twenty-four hours. But always we were interested in discovering just how the doomed man chose to spend his last days or his last hours. I speak, of course, of free men who have a choice, not condemned criminals whose sphere of activities is strictly delimited.

Such stories set us thinking, wondering what we should do under similar circumstances. What events, what experiences, what associations should we crowd into those last hours as mortal beings? What happiness should we find in reviewing the past, what regrets?

Sometimes I have thought it would be an excellent rule to live each day as if we should die tomorrow. Such an attitude would emphasize



sharply the values of life. We should live each day with a gentleness, a vigor, and a keenness of appreciation which are often lost when time stretches before us in the constant panorama of more days and months and years to come. There are those, of course, who would adopt the epicurean motto of "Eat, drink, and be merry," but most people would be chastened by the certainty of impending death.

Most of us take life for granted. We know that one day we must die, but usually we picture that day as far in the future. When we are in buoyant health, death is all but unimaginable. We seldom think of it. The days stretch out in an endless vista. So we go about our petty tasks, hardly aware of our listless attitude toward life.

The same lethargy, I am afraid, characterizes the use of all our faculties and senses. Only the deaf appreciate hearing, only the blind realize the manifold blessings that lie in sight. Particularly does this observation apply to those who have lost sight and hearing in adult life. But those who have never suffered impairment of sight or hearing seldom make the fullest use of these blessed faculties. Their eyes and ears take in all sights and sounds hazily, without



concentration, and with little appreciation. It is the same old story of not being grateful for what we have until we lose it, of not being conscious of health until we are ill.

I have often thought it would be a blessing if each human being were stricken blind and deaf for a few days at some time during his early adult life. Darkness would make him more appreciative of sight; silence would teach him the joys of sound.

Now and then I have tested my seeing friends to discover what they see. Recently I was visited by a very good friend who had just returned from a long walk in the woods, and I asked her what she had observed. "Nothing particular," she replied. I might have been incredulous had I not been accustomed to such responses, for long ago I became convinced that the seeing see little.

How was it possible, I asked myself, to walk for an hour through the woods and see nothing worthy of note? I who cannot see find hundreds of things to interest me through mere touch. I feel the delicate symmetry of a leaf. I pass my hands lovingly about the smooth skin of a silver birch or the rough shaggy bark of a



pine. In spring I touch the branches of trees hopefully in search of a bud, the first sign of awakening Nature after her winter's sleep. I feel the delightful, velvety texture of a flower and discover its remarkable convolutions, and something of the miracle of Nature is revealed to me. Occasionally, if I am very fortunate, I place my hand gently on a small tree and feel the happy quiver of a bird in full song. I am delighted to have the cool waters of a brook rush through my open fingers. To me a lush carpet of pine needles or spongy grass is more welcome than the most luxurious Persian rug. To me the pageant of seasons is a thrilling and unending drama, the action of which streams through my finger tips. At times my heart cries out with longing to see all these things. If I can get so much pleasure from mere touch, how much more beauty must be revealed by sight. Yet, those who have eyes apparently see little. The panorama of color and action which fills the world is taken for granted. It is human, perhaps, to appreciate little that which we have and to long for that which we have not, but it is a great pity that in the world of light the gift of sight is used only as a mere convenience rather than as a means



of adding fullness to life.

Oh, the things that I should see if I had the power of sight for three days!

## 1 假如给我三天光明

海伦·凯勒

海伦·凯勒(1880年—1968年),美国盲聋哑女作家。她出生在美国阿拉巴马州,出生时是个健康的孩子,在19个月大时,海伦得了严重的脑膜炎,逃脱了死神之手的海伦从此被幽闭在盲聋哑的世界里。在海伦7岁时,她的父母为她请到了改变海伦命运的家庭教师安妮·萨利文小姐。在安妮严格耐心的教育下,海伦进步很快,学会了写字、读书、说话,海伦还学会了用盲文阅读法文、德文、希腊文和拉丁文的著作。海伦20岁时进入哈佛大学的女子学院德克利夫学院学习,后来毕业于该学院。海伦用生命的全部力量四处奔走,创建了一家慈善机构,为残疾人造福。海伦用行动证明了人类战胜生命的勇气,而且还将自己所经历的痛苦和幸福写出来,留给世人。海伦一生共写了14部著作。《我的一生》(The Story of My Life, 1902)是她的处女作,比较著名的还有《走出黑暗》(Out of the Dark, 1913)、《老师》(Teacher, 1955)。本文最初于1933年发表在美国《大西洋月刊》(Atlantic Monthly; January)上。



# 我

我们都曾读过这样一些动人的故事，故事里的主人公将不久于人世，长则一年，短则 24 小时。但我们总是很想知道这个不久于人世的人是怎样决定度过他最后的时光的。当然，我所指的是有权作出选择的自由人，不是那些活动范围受到严格限制的死囚。

这一类故事会使我们思考，在类似的处境下，我们自己该做些什么；在临终前的那几个小时里我们会回想起哪些事件、哪些经历，产生哪些联想；回想往事会有多少欣慰和遗憾。

6 有时我想，把每天都看作生命中的最后一天来度过不失为一个很好的生活法则。这样的人生态度会使人极为重视人生的价值。我们应以和善的态度、充沛的精力和热忱的欣赏来度过每一天，而这些往往是在来日方长时被我们忽视的东西。当然，有一些人信奉享乐主义的座右铭——吃喝享乐，但大多数人摆脱不掉死亡即将来临时的恐惧。

我们大多数人认为生命理所当然，我们知道迟早有一天我们会死去，但我们却常常以为那一天离我们非常遥远。我们身强体壮时，死亡根本无法想像。我们很少考虑它，日子一天天过去，无穷无尽。所以我们



忙于琐事，意识不到我们对于生活无精打采的懒散态度。

我想我们在运用我们的五官时恐怕也是同样不懂珍惜。只有聋子才珍惜听力，只有盲人才能认识到能见光明的无比幸运。对于那些成年致盲或失聪的人来说尤其如此。但是那些听力或视力从未遭受损伤的人却很少充分利用这些幸运的能力，他们对所见所闻不关注、不欣赏。这与常说的只有失去才觉得珍贵，只有生病以后才知健康可贵的道理是一样的。

我常想如果每一个人在他刚成年的某些时候，有几天成了聋子或瞎子也不失为一种幸事。黑暗会使他更珍惜光明；沉寂将教他享受声音的欢快。

我有时会考验我的非盲的朋友们，想了解他们看到了什么。最近，一位非常要好的朋友来看我，她刚刚在树林中走了很长时间，我问她看见了什么。“没什么特别的。”她回答说。如不是我早已习惯了这样的回答，我也许不会轻易相信，因为很久以前我就相信有眼人所见甚少。

我心想，在林中走了一小时，怎么可能什么值得注意的东西都看不到呢？我，一个盲人仅仅通过触摸就发现了数以百计的有趣的东西。我感到了树叶精妙的对称美，通



过手的抚摸，我感知到了白桦树树皮的光滑，或是松树厚树皮的粗糙。春天里，我满怀希望抚摸树枝，寻找新芽，那是大自然冬眠醒来后的第一个象征。我摸到了，天鹅绒般柔软可爱的花朵层层叠叠地绽开着，大自然的神奇展现在我面前。如果幸运的话，当我把手轻放在小树上，偶尔会感到歌唱的小鸟欢快的颤动。我会愉快地让清凉的溪水流过我的手指间。我觉得，满地厚厚的松针或松软的草地比最奢华的波斯地毯更惹人喜爱。我觉得，四季变换的景色恰如一场动人心魄且不会完结的戏剧，剧中的人物动作从我的指尖流过。我的心不时在呐喊，带着对光明的渴望。仅仅通过触摸我就能得到如此的快乐，光明定能带给我更多美的享受。可惜的是，那些看得见的人们却分明看到的很少，对世界缤纷的色彩和万物的活动都视而不见。也许不珍惜拥有的，却渴望没有得到的是人的特点，但在光明的世界里只把天赋的视觉当成一种方便的工具，而不是用它来丰富生活，多么令人遗憾。

噢，假如给我三天光明，我将能看到多少事物啊！





## 2 Take This Fish and Look at It

*Samuel H. Scudder*

**I**t was more than fifteen years ago that I entered the laboratory of Professor Agassiz, and told him I had enrolled my name in the Scientific School as a student of Natural History. He asked me a few questions about my object in coming, my previous experience, the way in which I afterwards proposed to use the knowledge I might acquire, and finally, whether I wished to study any special branch. To the latter I replied that, while I wished to be well grounded in all departments of zoology, I planned to devote myself specially to insects.

"When do you wish to begin?" he asked.

"Now," I replied.

This seemed to please him, and with an energetic "Very well." he reached from a shelf a huge jar of specimens in yellow alcohol. "Take this fish," he said, "and look at it; by and by I will ask what you have seen."