英语趣味小品菁华

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译注者前言

恩格斯说:"幽默是具有智慧、教养和道德上优越感的表现。"列宁也曾说:"幽默是一种优美的、健康的品质。"你的幽默表现出你性格的开朗、情趣的高尚、待人的真诚和心地的善良。
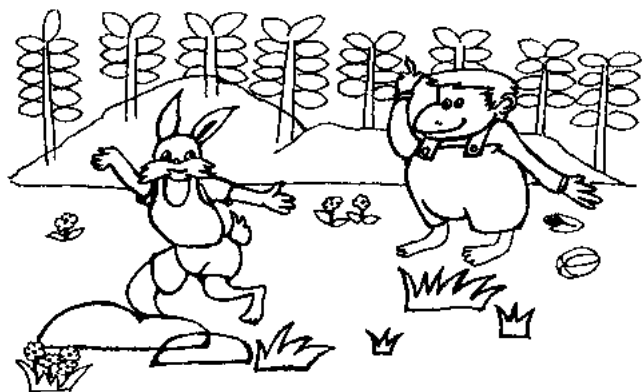
我们向广大读者奉献的这一套《英语趣味小品菁华》(首批 1~5 册),其中精选出来的英语幽默小故事大都文字精炼、风格流畅、简明易懂、雅俗共赏。它们的内容不但幽默风趣,而且寓意深刻,读来文采斐然,令人忍俊不禁。它寓学于乐,让读者在学习英语的同时,还在心领神会的笑声中获得道德情操上的教益和生活工作中的启迪。

本套书照顾到英语初学者的词汇量不够大,语法学习得也不够深这一特点,每个故事都由原文、译文和注释等三个部分组成,以便读者阅读时对照参考。

译注者
1996 年 10 月

1

Once there was a monkey who lived on Mount Omel.

One day he came down the mountain and stopped by a garden. He was overjoyed to find it thickly planted with corn. He broke off a corn ear, put it on his shoulder and went away pleased.

Next he came to a peach orchard and found big red peaches hanging invitingly from the branches. He

thought peaches were better than corn, so he threw away
the corn ear and started picking peaches.

When he had all the peaches he wanted, he went on
his way and came to a melon plot, all over which grew big
round melons[①]. Seeing this, the monkey threw away the
peaches, picked out a big melon, and broke it off from its
vine. By then it was pretty late, and the monkey decided
to go home. He turned round and trotted happily
homeward with the melon on his back.

On his way, the monkey ran into a rabbit[②], a very
lovely one, jumping and frolicking in front of him[③].
Instantly he threw away the melon and gave chase to the
rabbit, which, however, scampered into the forest and
disappeared. So the monkey went home, empty-handed.

[参考译文]
　　从前，在峨嵋山上有一只猴子。
　　一天，他下山来到一座花园边。他非常高兴地看到园子里
密密地种着许多玉米。他掰下一棵玉米棒，扛在肩上高高兴兴
地走了。
　　后来，他来到了一个桃园，看到树枝上挂着一个个鲜红的
令人馋涎欲滴的大桃子。他想，桃子总要比玉米棒好一些，就
丢掉玉米棒摘起桃子来。
　　摘够了桃子后，他又继续往前走，来到了一块西瓜地。地

里长满又大又圆的西瓜。看到这番景象，猴子又丢掉了桃子，挑了一个大西瓜，把它从藤上摘了下来。那时，天色已经很晚了，猴子决定回家去。他转过头来，肩上扛着大西瓜，快快活活地回家去。

　　路上，猴子碰到了一只兔子，这只兔子非常可爱，他在猴子前面跳着，嬉闹着，猴子马上丢掉西瓜同兔子玩耍起来。可是，兔子却突然蹦跳着跑进森林不见了。这样，猴子就只能空着手回家了。

[注释]

① all over which grew big round melons 是一个非限制性定语从句。非限制性定语从句前用逗号与主句隔开，在修饰其先行词时，关联词只能用 which 而不能用 that。

② run into：偶然遇见，与…相撞

　　例：I ran into an old classmates this morning.

　　　　今天早上我偶然碰到了一位老同学。

③ jumping and frolicking in front of him：现在分词短语作定语，说明 a rabbit。

2

Once upon a time a big, fat frog lived in a tiny shallow pond. He knew every plant and stone in it, and he could swim across it easily. He was the biggest creature in the pond, so he was very important. When he croaked[1], the water snails listened politely, and the water beetles always swam behind him. He was very happy there.

One day, while he was catching flies, a pretty dragon-fly passed by. "You're a very fine frog," she sang, "but why don't you live in a bigger pond? Come to my pond. You'll find a lot of frogs there. You'll meet some fine fish, and you'll see the dangerous ducks. And you must see our lovely water-lilies. Life in a large pond is wonderful!"

"Perhaps it is rather dull here," thought the foolish frog. So he hopped after the dragon-fly.

But he didn't like the big, deep pond. It was full of strange plants. The water snails were rude to him, and he was afraid of the ducks[2]. The fish didn't like him,

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and he was the smallest frog there. He was lonely and unhappy.

He sat on a water-lily leaf and croaked sadly to himself, "I don't like it here. I think I'll go home tomorrow."

But a hungry heron flew down and swallowed him up for supper.

[参考译文]

很久以前，一只又肥又大的青蛙住在一个又小又浅的池塘里。他熟悉池塘里的每一棵草，每一块石头，他能毫不费力地就游过这个池塘。在这个池塘里，数他是个大人物，所以他在那儿挺有地位。每当他呱呱叫的时候，水蜗牛毕恭毕敬地听着。水甲虫也总是一步一趋地紧跟着他。青蛙在这儿生活得非常愉快。

一天，在青蛙捕捉飞虫的时候，一只漂亮的蜻蜓飞过这里。

"你是一只非常漂亮的青蛙，"她唱道，"但是你为什么不住到一个更大的池塘里去呢？到我的池塘来吧，你在那儿会看到好多好多青蛙，会看见许多漂亮的鱼儿，你还会看到挺凶的鸭子，你真该去看看我们的可爱的荷花。生活在一个大池塘里可真是妙极啦！"

"可能这里真是有点儿乏味，"愚蠢的青蛙想。于是他就决定跟着蜻蜓去了。

然而，青蛙并不喜欢那个又大又深的池塘。它长满了希奇

古怪的水草。水蛇对青蛙很不客气。青蛙对鸭子也很害怕，鱼儿也不喜欢他。他是那里最小的生物，他感到非常的孤独和不愉快。

　　他蹲在一朵水百合上悲伤地叫着："我真的不喜欢这儿，我想明天就回家。"

　　但是，一只饥饿的苍鹰却飞下来把他吞下去做了晚餐。

[注释]

① croak [krəuk] *vi*. （蛙、鸦等）呱呱地叫

② afraid [əˈfreid] *a*. （常作表语）怕，害怕

　　be afraid of … 害怕…

　　例：He handled the glass with care, because he was afraid of breaking it. 他小心地拿着玻璃杯，怕把它打碎。

3

One day a fisherman called Ah Chong set out in his small boat. After reaching a good place he knew[①], he laid down his long line into the water. Before he had finished laying it, however, it became very heavy. It seemed too heavy to be a fish[②]. He began to draw in the line.

When the hooks began to come out of the water, he was quite surprised, for the hooks were holding the links

of a heavy gold chain. When he pulled them into the boat more and more links appeared. Soon his boat was full of the shining links of the gold chain.

"I shall be rich," he said. "With money I shall buy a new fishing boat with an engine. I shall buy a big house."

He drew in more chain but he couldn't see the end of it. There was more and more of the heavy gold chain in the boat which sank lower and lower in the water.

"I shall buy two big houses," he said. "I shall build a palace. I shall be rich as a king."

He was so greedy that he didn't notice what was happening to his boat. It was sinking lower and lower into the water. In the end Ah Chong was drowned. He lost the gold, his boat and his life.

[参考译文]

　　一天，一个名叫安冲的渔夫驾着他的小船出海去捕鱼。到了一个他熟悉的好位置后，他就把他的长长的丝钩放进了水里。然而，丝钩还没有放完，它就变得很沉很沉。似乎这太沉了，不像是一条鱼。安冲开始收钩。

　　当钩子露出水面时，他大吃了一惊，因为钩子上钩着几根沉沉的金链。他把金链拖进船里时，越来越多的金链环出现了。一下子，他的船里就装满了闪闪发光的金链环。

"我要发财了"，他说，"有了钱我要买一只带发动机的新渔船，还要买幢大房子。"

他拖上来了更多的金链，可还是看不到金链的尽头。船上的金链越来越多，这船就开始在水中慢慢地下沉了。

"我要买两幢大房子，"他说，"我还要造一所宫殿，我要像国王一样富有。"

他太贪婪了，以致于根本没有注意到他的船出现了什么情况。船在水中沉得越来越深，最后，安冲淹死了。他失去了金子、船和他的性命。

[注释]

① he knew 是一个定语从句，修饰 place，省略了连接词 that。

② too heavy to be a fish：太重了，不可能是一条鱼。

　　too…to…　太…以致不能…

4

Long, long ago, there was a city in Greece, called Thebes[1]. One day, a terrible monster appeared on one side of the roads outside the city. It was called the Sphinx[2], and though its head was like a woman's, it had the body of a lion, with the wings of an eagle. This Sphinx had a riddle, which it asked everybody who passed its way, and any one who could not answer the riddle would be eaten alive by it.

No one was able to answer the riddle. Day after day, the brave people of Thebes went out to meet the monster, but every one was killed. The road was full of the dead bodies of men, and the people were very much afraid and did not know what to do.

At last a stranger came to the city, and heard the story of the Sphinx, he was greatly interested. He was so sure he could guess the riddle that he at once set out to find the Sphinx[3].

So, boldly he went along the road[4] until he saw the Sphinx lying on the roadside. "Answer me this riddle if you wish to live," said the Sphinx, smiling at him, "What creature walks upon four in the morning, upon two at noon, and upon three in the evening?"

After a moment's thought, this brave young man answered that the creature was a man[5].

At this, the Sphinx's face was changed, for its riddle had been guessed. It was so angry with itself that it jumped over the rocks and killed itself.

The people of Thebes were so glad when they heard the news that they made the stranger their king.

[参考译文]

很久很久以前，希腊有一座名叫底比斯的城市。一天，一个可怕的怪物出现在城外的路旁。怪物名叫斯芬克斯，虽然它的头像一个女人，却长着狮身和鹰翼。这斯芬克斯有一个谜语，他拿这个谜语来考问路过的每一个人。如果谁不能回答出这个谜语，它就把谁活活吃掉。

没有谁能回答这个谜语。日子一天天过去，底比斯城的勇敢的人们出去见这个怪物，但一个个都被吃掉了。路上摆满了死人的尸体，人们非常恐惧，不知如何是好。

最后，一个异乡人来到这个城市，听说了斯芬克斯的故事。他对这件事很感兴趣，同时还坚信自己能够猜出这个谜语，于是便马上出城去找斯芬克斯。

就这样，他勇敢地沿着大路走去，直到看见了躺在路旁的斯芬克斯。

"如果你还想活，就回答我的谜语。"斯芬克斯笑着对他说，"什么动物早上四条腿行走，中午两条腿行走，而晚上三条腿行走?"

想了一会儿以后，这个勇敢的年轻人回答说，这种动物是人。

听到这句话，斯芬克斯的脸色变了。因为它的谜语已经被人猜中，他自感非常恼怒，就跳起来一头向岩石撞去，自杀身亡了。

底比斯城的人们听到这个消息非常高兴，他们要这个异乡人做了他们的首领。

① Thebes [θiːbz] n. 底比斯，希腊古城名。

② Sphinx [sfiŋks] n. 斯芬克斯，希腊神话中带翼狮身女面怪物。

③ 由 so…that…引起的是结果状语从句，so…that…: 如此…以致；如此…使得…

例：He was so excited that he could not speak. 他兴奋得连话也说不出来了。

④ 为了使描绘生动，可把副词放在句首（此处副词为 boldly），然后将主谓倒装。如果主语是人称代词（此处为 he），则主谓顺序不变。

例：On went Mary her old brown jacket. 玛丽一下又穿上了她的褐色的旧上衣。

⑤ 异乡人答案的意思是：人在婴儿期用四肢爬行；成人后用两脚直立行走；老年时站立不稳，要用拐杖来支撑双腿。