

THE CANARY PRINCE

• 英 汉 对 照 •  
意 大 利 民 间 故 事

金丝鸟王子



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(英汉对照)

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## 内 容 提 要

本书由四十篇意大利民间故事组成，选自《意大利民间故事集》。该书是由当代意大利著名作家伊泰洛·卡尔维诺编选的。1980年，这部书的英译本在美国出版后，立即被《纽约时报》和《时代》周刊评选为最佳文学作品。本书所选的《金丝鸟王子》、《睡女王》、《跳进我的袋子里来》、《幸福人的衬衣》、《偷懒的学问》、《农民占卜家》、《谁生气谁就输》等都是名篇，故事生动，妙趣横生，而又富有哲理。本书是据美国的G·马丁的译本翻译的。英文译文明白流畅，朴实自然，琅琅上口，译者就此荣获美国哥伦比亚大学翻译中心授予的翻译奖。因此，阅读本书既可了解意大利社会和文化，还可以学习典范英语。美国著名作家约翰·加德纳在书评中说：“所有学校与公共图书馆，所有家长，所有爱读故事的人们，都应购一本。”

GF59/18

## 译者前言

一九八〇年十月，当代意大利著名作家伊泰洛·卡尔维诺编选的《意大利民间故事集》在美国翻译出版。在短短的两个月中，这部书引起了读者和评论界的广泛重视。《纽约时报》将此书评为一九八〇年在美国出版的六部最佳文学作品之一；《时代》周刊将此书评为一九八〇年十部最佳小说之一。评论界认为，这部民间故事集可与安徒生、格林兄弟的童话相媲美。《时代》周刊的评论说：“这部洋洋洒洒的巨著所受到的热情欢迎和高度评价，已使它在世界不朽名著之林中确立了自己的地位。卡尔维诺是一位杰出的故事家，当代意大利著名作家；二百篇故事的编纂使他已跻身于安徒生、格林兄弟的行列之中。”

二次大战以后，美国文学蓬勃发展，各种风格、流派的作品不断涌现，一部民间故事集能得到这样高的评价，这在近几十年来的美国文坛上还属首次。本书就是根据《意大利民间故事集》一九八〇年英译本选译的。

其实，这部书的意大利文版早在一九五六年就已问世，曾获得意大利著名文学奖之一“巴古塔”奖。到一九七七年为止，已先后出了十三版，总印刷量据说近两千万册。一九五九年和一九七五年，美国先后出版过两个选译本，并未引起评论界的注意。乔治·马丁教授于一九八〇年翻译出版的全译本之所以受到高度重视，除这部书本身所具有的文学价值

外，还与译文的忠实、优美有很大关系。这部书的译文明白、流畅、自然，读来琅琅上口，受到广泛好评，译者也因此获得美国哥伦比亚大学翻译中心所授予的翻译奖。

伊泰洛·卡尔维诺于一九二三年出生在古巴的圣地亚哥，两岁时回到意大利，后毕业于都灵大学文学系。第二次世界大战期间，卡尔维诺参加了反法西斯抵抗运动。他的第一部长篇小说《通向蜘蛛巢的小路》(1947)就是根据这一段经历写成的。不久，这部作品荣获文学奖金，他从此步入文坛。卡尔维诺当过新闻记者，后来从事文学编辑工作多年。他的主要作品有：《一个分成两半的子爵》(已有中译本)、《阿根廷蚂蚁》、《烟雾》、《不存在的骑士》、《看不见的城市》和《命运交叉的城堡》等。卡尔维诺长于用童话和幻想的方式来写小说，往往通过曲折离奇的情节来描述社会，探讨人生。他的作品独具一格，他目前已被国际上公认为当代意大利最有才华的作家。

由二百个故事组成的《意大利民间故事集》，歌颂劳动人民的勤劳、聪明才智；歌颂纯洁的爱情和勇敢精神；讽刺贪婪、懒惰、自私、妒嫉；揭示人能战胜自然、善良战胜邪恶的真理；反映人们的美好愿望。作者将理想与现实、实际生活与不可思议的变态事物揉合在一起，表达了寓意深刻的哲理。在艺术手法上，故事写得幽默而不粗俗，夸张奇异而又合乎情理；各类人物，鱼虫花草，精灵鬼怪，都写得栩栩如生，富有情趣。这正如卡尔维诺在本书的《序言》中所说：“意大利民间故事从根本上来说是绚丽多姿，情趣横溢，构思新颖的。”

本书共选四十篇故事，除对一些词组、习语作了注释外，书末还附有参考译文，可供英语初学者阅读。

刘宪之

1983年3月于上海

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## Jump into My Sack

Many, many years ago, in the barren mountains of Niolo, lived a father with twelve sons. A famine was raging, and the father said, "My sons, I have no more bread to give you. Go out into the world, where you will certainly fare better than here at home."

The eleven older boys were getting ready to leave, when the twelfth and youngest, who was lame, started weeping. "And what will a cripple like me do to earn his bread?"<sup>1</sup>

"My child," said his father, "don't cry. Go with your brothers, and what they earn will be yours as well."

So the twelve promised to stay together always and departed. They walked a whole day, then a second, and the little lame boy fell constantly behind. On the third day, the oldest brother said, "Our little brother Francis, who's always lagging, is nothing but a nuisance!<sup>2</sup> Let's walk off and leave him on the road. That will be best for him too, for some kindhearted soul will come along and take pity on him."<sup>3</sup>

So they stopped no more to wait for him to catch up, but walked on, asking alms of everyone they met, all the

way to Bonifacio.

In Bonifacio they saw a boat moored at the dock. "What if<sup>4</sup> we climbed in and sailed to Sardinia?" said the oldest boy. "Maybe there's less hunger there than in our land."

The brothers got into the boat and set sail. When they were halfway across the straits, a fierce storm arose and the boat was dashed to pieces on the reefs, and all eleven brothers drowned.

Meanwhile the little cripple Francis, exhausted and frantic when he missed his brothers, screamed and cried and then fell asleep by the roadside. The fairy guardian of that particular spot had seen and heard everything from a treetop. As soon as Francis was asleep, she came down the tree, picked certain special herbs, and prepared a plaster, which she smoothed on the lame leg; immediately the leg became sound. Then she disguised herself as<sup>5</sup> a poor little old woman and sat down on a bundle of firewood to wait for Francis to wake up.

Francis awakened, got up, prepared to limp off, and then realized he was no longer lame but could walk like everyone else. He saw the little old woman sitting there, and asked, "Madam, have you by chance<sup>6</sup> seen a doctor around here?"

"A doctor? What do you want with a doctor?"

"I want to thank him. A great doctor must certainly have come by while I was sleeping and cured my lame

leg.”

“I am the one who cured your lame leg,” replied the little old woman, “since I know all about herbs, including the one that heals lame legs.”

As pleased as Punch,<sup>7</sup> Francis threw his arms around the little old woman and kissed her on both cheeks. “How can I thank you, ma’am?<sup>8</sup> Here, let me carry your bundle of wood for you.”

He bent over<sup>9</sup> to pick up the bundle, but when he stood up, he faced not the old woman, but the most beautiful maiden imaginable, all radiant with diamonds and blond hair down to her waist, she wore a deep blue dress embroidered with gold, and two stars of precious stones sparkled on her ankle-boots. Dumbfounded, Francis fell at the fairy’s feet.

“Get up,” she said. “I am well aware that you are grateful, and I shall help you. Make two wishes, and I will grant them at once. I am the queen of the fairies of Lake Creno, mind you.”

The boy thought a bit, then replied, “I desire a sack that will suck in whatever I name.”

“And just such a sack shall you have.<sup>10</sup> Now make one more wish.”

“I desire a stick that will do whatever I command.”

“And just such a stick shall you have,” replied the fairy, and vanished. At Francis’s feet lay a sack and a stick.

Overjoyed, the boy decided to try them out.<sup>11</sup> Being hungry,<sup>12</sup> he cried, "A roasted partridge into my sack !" Zoom ! A partridge fully roasted flew into the sack. "Along with bread !" Zoom ! A loaf of bread came sailing into the sack. "Also a bottle of wine !" Zoom ! There was the bottle of wine. Francis ate a first-rate meal.

Then he set out again, limping no longer, and the next day he found himself in Mariana, where the most famous gamblers of Corsica and the Continent<sup>13</sup> were meeting. Francis didn't have a cent to his name,<sup>14</sup> so he ordered, "One hundred thousand crowns into my sack !" and the sack filled with crowns. The news spread like wildfire through Mariana that the fabulously wealthy prince of Santo Francesco had arrived.

At that particular time, mind you, the Devil was especially partial to<sup>15</sup> the city of Mariana. Disguised as a handsome young man, he beat everybody at cards, and when the players ran out of <sup>16</sup> money, he would purchase their souls. Hearing of this rich foreigner who went by the name of<sup>17</sup> prince of Santo Francesco, the Devil in disguise approached him without delay. "Noble prince, pardon my boldness in coming to you, but your fame as a gambler is so great that I couldn't resist<sup>18</sup> calling on you."

"You put me to shame,"<sup>19</sup> replied Francis. "To tell the truth, I don't know how to play any game at all,<sup>20</sup> nor have I ever had a deck of cards in my hand. However, I would be happy to play a hand<sup>21</sup> with you, just for the

sake of learning the game, and I'm sure that with you as a teacher I'll be an expert in no time."

The Devil was so gratified by the visit that, upon taking leave and bowing goodbye, he negligently stretched out a leg and showed his cloven hoof.<sup>22</sup> "Oh, me!"<sup>23</sup> said Francis to himself. "So this is old Satan himself who has honored me with a visit. Very well, he will meet his match."<sup>24</sup> Once more alone, he commanded of the sack a fine dinner.

The next day Francis went to the casino. There was a great turmoil, with all the people crowded around one particular spot. Francis pushed through and saw, on the ground, the body of a young man with a bloodstained chest. "He was a gambler," someone explained, "who lost his entire fortune and thrust a dagger into his heart, not a minute ago."

All the gamblers were sad-faced. But one, noted Francis, stood in their midst laughing up his sleeve;<sup>25</sup> it was the Devil who had paid Francis a visit.

"Quick!" said the Devil, "let's take this unfortunate man out, and get on with the game!" And they all picked up their cards once more.

Francis, who didn't even know how to hold the cards in his hand, lost everything he had with him that day. By the second day he knew a little bit about the game, but lost still more than the day before. By the third day he was an expert, and lost so much that everyone was

sure he was ruined. But the loss did not trouble him in the least,<sup>26</sup> since there was his sack he could command and then find inside all the money he needed.

He lost so much that the Devil thought to himself, He might have been the richest man in existence to start with,<sup>27</sup> but he's surely about to end up now with nothing to his name. "Noble prince," he said, taking him aside, "I can't tell you how sorry I am over the misfortune that has befallen you. But I have good news for you: heed my words and you will recover half of what you lost !"

"How ?"

The Devil looked around, then whispered, "Sell me your soul !"

"Ah !" cried Francis. "So that's your advice to me, Satan ? Go on,<sup>28</sup> jump into my sack !"

The Devil smirked and aimed to flee, but there was no escape: he flew head-first<sup>29</sup> into the yawning sack, which Francis closed, then addressed the stick, "Now pound him for all you're worth !" <sup>30</sup>

Blows rained fast and furious. Inside, the Devil writhed, cried, cursed. "Let me out ! Let me out ! Stop, or you'll kill me !"

"Really ? You'll give up<sup>31</sup> the ghost ? Would that be a loss, do you think ?" And the stick went right on beating him.

After three hours of that shower, Francis spoke. "That will do,<sup>32</sup> at least for today."

"What will you take in return<sup>33</sup> for setting me free?" asked the Devil in a weak voice.

"Listen carefully: if you want your freedom back, you must bring back to life<sup>34</sup> at once every one of those poor souls who killed themselves in the casino because of you!"

"It's a bargain!"<sup>35</sup> replied the Devil.

"Come on out, then. But remember, I can catch you again any time I feel like it."

The Devil dared not go back on his word.<sup>36</sup> He disappeared underground and, in almost no time, up came a throng of young men pale of face and with feverish eyes. "My friends," said Francis, "you ruined yourselves gambling, and the only way out was to kill yourselves. I was able to have you brought back this time, but I might not be able to do so another time. Will you promise me to gamble no more?"

"Yes, yes, we promise!"

"Fine! Here are a thousand crowns for each of you. Go in peace, and earn your bread honestly."

Overjoyed, the revived youths departed, some returning to families in mourning, others striking out on their own<sup>37</sup>, their past misdeeds having been the death of their parents.

Francis, too, thought of his old father. He set out for his village but, along the way, met a boy wringing his hands<sup>38</sup> in despair.



“How now, young man? Do you make wry faces for sale?”<sup>39</sup> asked Francis, in high spirits. “How much are they by the dozen?”

“I don’t feel like laughing, sir,” replied the boy.

“What’s the matter?”

“My father’s a woodcutter and the sole support of our family. This morning he fell out of a chestnut tree and broke his arm. I ran into town for the doctor, but he knows we are poor and refused to come.”

“Is that all that’s worrying you? Set your mind at rest.<sup>40</sup> I’ll take care of things.”

“You’re a doctor?”

“No, but I’ll make that one come. What is his name?”

“Doctor Pancrazio.”

“Fine! Dr. Pancrazio, jump into my sack!”

Into the sack, headfirst, went a doctor with all his instruments.

“Stick, pound him for all you’re worth!” And the stick began its dance. “Help! Mercy!”

“Do you promise to cure the woodcutter free of charge?”<sup>41</sup>

“I promise whatever you ask.”

“Get out of the sack, then.” And the doctor ran to the woodcutter’s bedside.

Francis continued on his way and, in a few days, came to his village, where even greater hunger now