

英语注释读物

八十年代美国名家中短篇小说丛书(之四)

雷蒙德·卡弗 短篇小说集

中国对外翻译出版公司



Raymond Carver Short Stories

雷蒙德·卡弗 短篇小说集

[美] 雷蒙德·卡弗 著
碧桃 注释

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WHERE I'M CALLING FROM

By Raymond Carver

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出版前言

近些年来,我们经常接触到一些读者,有大学英语本科生、研究生,有翻译工作者,也有英语文学爱好者,他们不约而同地提到,想多看一些最新的英文原著,但遗憾的是这类书不多,能找到的也大多年代较早,要想看看近年出的文学原作可谓难上加难。为此我公司才决定出版这套丛书。

这套丛书包括六个短篇小说集和一个中篇,作者分别是:索尔·贝娄、约翰·奇弗、约翰·厄普代克、雷蒙德·卡弗、唐纳德·巴塞尔姆、安·贝蒂和威廉·肯尼迪。这些作家有的是久负盛名的文学大家,有的则是八十年代崛起的说部新秀;其中包括诺贝尔文学奖以及美国普利策奖和全国图书奖的得主。他们的这些集子大多曾是美国的畅销书,有的被权威性报刊评为八十年代的十部佳作之一。

我们这套丛书主要收入八十年代依然活跃文坛的名家的短篇小说集,在此之前的作家的同类作品不在此列。有些作家虽在美国文坛卓有声誉,但我们未能找到他们在八十年代出版的短篇集,只能付之阙如。

丛书中有六本是八十年代第一次出版,唯有《奇弗短篇小说集》例外。这本作家自选集于1978年第一次出版精装本,出版之后即成为美国罕见的短篇小说畅销书,并一举获得美国两项文学大奖——普利策奖和全国图书奖。此书至1988年已是第九次印刷。鉴于约翰·奇弗在美国文坛的地位以及在中国文学界的影响,本集又是他生前最后一部短篇集,我们仍将它收入丛书(依据美国兰登书屋下属的巴兰坦出版社1980年3月的版本)。此外还有一点需要说明,这套丛书中的集子原书部头太大,一时不能全出,目前先选了八十年代或靠近八十年代的作品。

我们在编辑这套丛书时,注意兼顾到作品的文学代表性,尽可能选择不同流派的、风格相异的作家和作品,以使读者不仅对每位作家的风格有深刻的印象,还可由此对当今美国文坛有比较广泛的了解。

本丛书的注释以大学英语本科高年级学生和具有同等水平的英语文学爱好者为对象,力求少而精,只就一些较难理解的方言俚语、独特的背景知识以及疑难句子作注。

我们这套丛书为读者提供了一个阅读最新英文佳作的机会,这是读者盼望已久且不可多得的机会,若读者能够珍惜它,在品味和欣赏文学原著的过程中提高英文阅读能力和文字水平,同时加深对美国的文学和社会现状的了解,我们将感到莫大的欣慰。

在这里,我们要感谢参加这套丛书注释工作的外交学院和厦门大学的教授、副教授们的鼎力相助。此外,由于我们水平有限,在丛书的选编方面难免有不足之处,还望读者多多指教。

卡弗和他的短篇小说

雷蒙德·卡弗(Raymond Carver, 1939—1988)是近年美国杰出的短篇小说家。六七十年代美国社会动荡、思潮澎湃之际,他从忧患困顿中脱颖而出,十年间发表了好几部集子(《请你安静些,好吗?》、《愤怒的季节》、《谈恋爱时说些什么?》、《大教堂》等),都属畅销,成为七十年代以来美国短篇小说复兴声中的一员主将,隐然为奇弗、加德纳、厄普代克现代派诸家的传人(虽然并不尽同),而为文学界所瞩目,乃上帝不仁,竟使如此深沉的思想、峻刻的笔法,悲天悯人的意境,再不继续给我们以启发、揭示以至于鞭挞了。五六十岁以后的作家原是洗尽铅华、臻于成熟的黄金季节啊!

卡弗的作品(他也是知名诗人,但这里只论其短篇小说)写的几乎全是社会中下阶层,失业无告、婚变心碎、贫病自弃之人,在家庭邻里的小圈子里饱尝酸辛、落寞、紧张、惶恐的最后岁月(并非对老年人才这样)。若用一个传统的中国说法,正是“贫贱人家百事哀”的写照。但后现代派的作家是不爱或不屑挑破了说的;这样,识者也许会感受更深。卡弗的短篇看似无奇,实为奇极归平,更为入骨,如秋山落叶、古道夕阳之使人沉思。而卡弗则又是此中简而又简的高手,人称“峻削派”或“极简派”。论者有惊此类文字似古希腊神话中白银时代的再现。

为什么六七十年代的美国卡弗型短篇小说能风行一时呢?看来是在第三浪潮、时空缩小、信息广传、人命危浅之日,小说无论从内容、周期、报酬、读者来说都以短为胜,势在必行。卡弗说:若写长篇,则势须生活在一个饶有趣趣的世界里,作家理解它,相信它本质上是正确的,值得来描绘的;他不希望他笔下的世界化为烟尘。而眼前的世界却似乎时刻在变,准则也是如此。而一部书动辄经年,胼胝文人,

有所不能为。

卡弗一派人笔下的社会 and 人物只重一般的外表、环境(都不细描)、动作、语言(极简、极俗、极活),连心理变化都不透露,只给素材、线条,其他由读者自己去补充、体会、判断、猜测(不免有错,不可知也是一种选择啊!)。你懂不懂,了解得对不对,与我无涉。当然,以中国读者而言自不免有冷寞感。“花钱买一个不懂!”这一派的评论家则谓:“以小说的体温论,它确实是冷冰冰的。原因无它,只因我们这个时代是冷冰冰的。此话可说一语破的,深得后现代派的三昧。

“简约派”是后现代主义文学中的一支重要流派。其作家如卡弗在先贤如海明威的成就基础上,融汇西方抽象派绘画技巧,力求以最简单明快的表现形式重现生活与社会风貌。在“简约派”作品中,一切出之平淡,不忌凡俗而避免通常视为必有之议的情节、冲突、刻画,亦无意识流、内心独白、大段议论的手法,而语言只尊俚俗。他们通常以寻常人的普通生活为创作对象,用人情味的身边琐事来揭示当代西方社会中的苦恼、困惑、失落感、非道德、无作为的窘境。这一流派已为美国读者所接受,认为是一种“最适合距离缩短了的时代”的小说形式。

这类小说,卡弗是写得十分到家的,所以我辈不甚了然于美国社会和心理的外国的“恂恂如也”的读书人也就有不少难于吃透之处。这也不必怪自己语法没有学好,因为道不同也,而求索的功力往往又在文字之外。但我读卡氏的作品并不觉得他是生来的反骨,一概冷眼评世待物,而似与中国文化中悲天悯人思想相通,是客观,彻底,因而本质上也是达观的、理性的、道德的,这与他的老师加德纳在“道德的小说”中的见解近似。

卡弗的创作思想和创作道路跟他的经历很有关系。他出身美国西北角俄勒冈州的小城,父亲是锯木工,母亲是女招待,家境清寒,生活寡欢,勉强读完了大学,自己也赖做杂工为生。中岁嗜酒近酗,终至家庭破裂,自己以肺癌死,令人酸鼻。他认为写小说可用个人历史,但须益以大量想象,人物则应分取于多头;这与我们一般的看法并无扞格,但现代派文人的文风、语言颇异于我国学校中孜孜以求的传统、

正规英语。这也难怪，因为我们的学生并不以当代美国的时尚文学为主要研读目标。要胜任愉快读卡氏作品初非易事，正如西洋人看我国文革小说，所以不能不以浅尝为足。即使要做到这个，也要多捉摸推敲才行。当然，一切留心美国问题者都应该接触这类小说，因为无论其体制、题材、笔法、语文（大部分是口语成分，语法句法是落叶狼藉）无不深刻反映了当代美国社会的现象和思想，其中也有人类共同的东西，如爱、欲、怨、钱、病、贫之属。

卡弗说，他生平服膺的作家有海明威、康拉德、奇弗、乔伊斯、厄普代克以及托尔斯泰（但不及其《战争与和平》）、契诃夫（但不及其剧作）。又从书中时见他对中国菜和易经气功的兴趣，并录。

碧 桃

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THE CALM

I was getting a haircut. I was in the chair and three men were sitting along the wall across from me. Two of the men waiting I'd never seen before. But one of them I recognized, though I couldn't exactly place him. I kept looking at him as the barber worked on my hair. The man was moving a toothpick around in his mouth, a heavysset man, short wavy hair. And then I saw him in a cap and uniform, little eyes watchful in the lobby of a bank. 5

Of the other two, one was considerably the older, with a full head of curly gray hair. He was smoking. The third, though not so old, was nearly bald on top, but the hair at the sides hung over his ears. He had on logging boots, pants shiny with machine oil. 10

The barber put a hand on top of my head to turn me for a better look. Then he said to the guard, "Did you get your deer, Charles?" 15

I liked this barber. We weren't acquainted well enough to call each other by name. But when I came in for a haircut, he knew me. He knew I used to fish. So we'd talk fishing. I don't think he hunted. But he could talk on any subject. In this regard, he was a good barber. 20

"Bill, it's a funny story. The damnedest thing," the guard said. He took out the toothpick and laid it in the ashtray. He

shook his head. "I did and I didn't. So yes and no to your question."

I didn't like the man's voice. For a guard, the voice didn't fit. It wasn't the voice you'd expect.

5 The two other men looked up. The older man was turning the pages of a magazine, smoking, and the other fellow was holding a newspaper. They put down what they were looking at and turned to listen to the guard.

"Go on, Charles," the barber said. "Let's hear it."

10 The barber turned my head again, and went back to work with his clippers.

15 "We were up on Fikle Ridge. My old man and me and the kid. We were hunting those draws. My old man was stationed at the head of one, and me and the kid were at the head of another. The kid had a hangover, goddamn his hide. The kid, he was green around the gills and drank water all day, mine
20 and his both. It was in the afternoon and we'd been out since daybreak. But we had our hopes. We figured the hunters down below would move a deer in our direction. So we were sitting behind a log and watching the draw when we heard this shooting down in the valley."

25 "There's orchards down there," said the fellow with the newspaper. He was fidgeting a lot and kept crossing a leg, swinging his boot for a time, and then crossing his legs the other way. "Those deer hang out around those orchards."

30 "That's right," said the guard. "They'll go in there at night, the bastards, and eat those little green apples. Well, we heard this shooting and we're just sitting there on our hands when this big old buck comes up out of the underbrush not a hundred feet away. The kid sees him the same time I do,

of course, and he throws down and starts banging. The knot-head. That old buck wasn't in any danger. Not from the kid, as it turns out. But he can't tell where the shots are coming from. He doesn't know which way to jump. Then I get off a shot. But in all the commotion, I just stun him." 5

"Stunned him?" the barber said.

"You know, stun him," the guard said. "It was a gut shot. It just like stuns him. So he drops his head and begins this trembling. He trembles all over. The kid's still shooting. Me, I felt like I was back in Korea. So I shot again but missed. Then old Mr. Buck moves back into the brush. But now, by God, he doesn't have any oomph left in him. The kid has emptied his goddamn gun all to no purpose. But I hit solid. I'd rammed one right in his guts. That's what I meant by stunned him." 10 15

"Then what?" said the fellow with the newspaper, who had rolled it and was tapping it against his knee. "Then what? You must have trailed him. They find a hard place to die every time."

"But you trailed him?" the older man asked, though it wasn't really a question. 20

"I did. Me and the kid, we trailed him. But the kid wasn't good for much. He gets sick on the trail, slows us down. That chucklehead." The guard had to laugh now, thinking about that situation. "Drinking beer and chasing all night, then saying he can hunt deer. He knows better now, by God. But, sure, we trailed him. A good trail, too. Blood on the ground and blood on the leaves. Blood everywhere. Never seen a buck with so much blood. I don't know how the sucker kept going." 25 30

"Sometimes they'll go forever," the fellow with the newspaper said. "They find them a hard place to die every time."

"I chewed the kid out for missing his shot, and when he smarted off at me, I cuffed him a good one. Right here." The guard pointed to the side of his head and grinned. "I boxed his goddamn ears for him, that goddamn kid. He's not too
5 old. He needed it. So the point is, it got too dark to trail, what with the kid laying back to vomit and all."

"Well, the coyotes will have that deer by now," the fellow with the newspaper said. "Them and the crows and the buzzards."

10 He unrolled the newspaper, smoothed it all the way out, and put it off to one side. He crossed a leg again. He looked around at the rest of us and shook his head.

The older man had turned in his chair and was looking out the window. He lit a cigarette.

15 "I figure so," the guard said. "Pity too. He was a big old son of a bitch. So in answer to your question, Bill, I both got my deer and I didn't. But we had venison on the table anyway. Because it turns out the old man has got himself a little spike in the meantime. Already has him back to camp,
20 hanging up and gutted slick as a whistle, liver, heart, and kidneys wrapped in waxed paper and already setting in the cooler. A spike. Just a little bastard. But the old man, he was tickled."

The guard looked around the shop as if remembering.
25 Then he picked up his toothpick and stuck it back in his mouth.

The older man put his cigarette out and turned to the guard. He drew a breath and said, "You ought to be out there right now looking for that deer instead of in here getting a
30 haircut."

"You can't talk like that," the guard said. "You old fart. I've seen you someplace."

"I've seen you too," the old fellow said.

"Boys, that's enough. This is my barbershop," the barber said.

"I ought to box *your* ears," the old fellow said.

"You ought to try it," the guard said. 5

"Charles," the barber said.

The barber put his comb and scissors on the counter and his hands on my shoulders, as if he thought I was thinking to spring from the chair into the middle of it. "Albert, I've been cutting Charles's head of hair, and his boy's too, for years now. I wish you wouldn't pursue this." 10

The barber looked from one man to the other and kept his hands on my shoulders.

"Take it outside," the fellow with the newspaper said, flushed and hoping for something. 15

"That'll be enough," the barber said. "Charles, I don't want to hear anything more on the subject. Albert, you're next in line. Now." The barber turned to the fellow with the newspaper. "I don't know you from Adam, mister, but I'd appreciate it if you wouldn't put your oar in." 20

The guard got up. He said, "I think I'll come back for my cut later. Right now the company leaves something to be desired." 25

The guard went out and pulled the door closed, hard.

The old fellow sat smoking his cigarette. He looked out the window. He examined something on the back of his hand. He got up and put on his hat. 30

"I'm sorry, Bill," the old fellow said. "I can go a few more days."

"That's all right, Albert," the barber said.

When the old fellow went out, the barber stepped over to the window to watch him go.

“Albert’s about dead from emphysema,” the barber said from the window. “We used to fish together. He taught me
5 salmon inside out. The women. They used to crawl all over that old boy. He’s picked up a temper, though. But in all honesty, there was provocation.”

The man with the newspaper couldn’t sit still. He was on his feet and moving around, stopping to examine everything,
10 the hat rack, the photos of Bill and his friends, the calendar from the hardware showing scenes for each month of the year. He flipped every page. He even went so far as to stand and scrutinize Bill’s barbering license, which was up on the wall in a frame. Then he turned and said, “I’m going too,”
15 and out he went just like he said.

“Well, do you want me to finish barbering this hair or not?” the barber said to me as if I was the cause of everything.

20

The barber turned me in the chair to face the mirror. He put a hand to either side of my head. He positioned me a last time, and then he brought his head down next to mine.

We looked into the mirror together, his hands still framing
25 my head.

I was looking at myself, and he was looking at me too. But if the barber saw something, he didn’t offer comment.

He ran his fingers through my hair. He did it slowly, as if thinking about something else. He ran his fingers through
30 my hair. He did it tenderly, as a lover would.

That was in Crescent City, California, up near the Oregon border. I left soon after. But today I was thinking of that place, of Crescent City, and of how I was trying out a new

life there with my wife, and how, in the barber's chair that morning, I had made up my mind to go. I was thinking today about the calm I felt when I closed my eyes and let the barber's fingers move through my hair, the sweetness of those fingers, the hair already starting to grow.

【注释】

页	行	
1	2	sitting along the wall across from me: 沿着墙根坐在我对面。(按美习, 顾客常以背向大镜, 面对后墙, 所以直接看到墙根的人。)
	7	And then I saw him in a cap and uniform: 然后我想起那天看到他一身制服制帽的打扮。
	14-15	to turn me for a better look: (理发师)把我的头转动一下, 这样得看。
2	16	draws: 猎物, 此处指鹿。
	18	The kid had a hangover, goddamn his hide: 孩子那天头疼犯病, 真糟糕。
	31	on our hands: 坐守; 严阵以待。
3	1-2	The knothed: 木头疙瘩。
	2	The old buck: 老雄鹿。
	5	stun him: 把他打闷了。
	7	a gut shot: 一枪打中肚子。
	12	doesn't have any oomph left: 筋疲力尽, 奄奄一息。
	24	chucklehead: 笨蛋。
	29	sucker: 倒霉鬼。
4	1	chewed the kid out: 把孩子臭骂了一顿。
	2	smarted off: 不服气顶嘴。
	22	spike: 小鹿。
	31	old fart: 混蛋。
5	19	I don't know you from Adam: 咱们可从来没见过面。

- 5 20 put your oar in: 插手。
- 25—26 Right now the company leaves something to be desired:
店里这会儿的人头不对劲。
- 31—32 go a few more days: 还能再挨几天。
- 6 3 about dead from emphysema: 害肺气肿快死了。
- 4—5 taught me salmon inside out: 把怎么钓鲑鱼的门道统统
教给了我。
- 6—7 He's picked up a temper, though. But in all honesty,
there was provocation: 不过他后来脾气大了。但说实在
的, 有时也是逼出来的。