



英美

名家名篇选读

短篇小说

汪洪章 宋 梅 选注



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前言

本书收录英美名家短篇小说 20 篇,全部为英美大学各类文学选集所常收的名篇。这些小说的原文曾作为教学素材在复旦大学英文系英美短篇小说课上使用过。现对原文略加注释,补写作家介绍和故事梗概,并对作品的思想艺术特色作了简要点评,以方便读者阅读和欣赏。

作家介绍部分配以作家小照一帧,并以 400 字左右的篇幅概述作家生平及其创作的一般情况。故事梗概部分基本以小说原有叙述时间的顺序略述小说的情节发展线索。点评部分有时虽也兼及评论界的不同观点,但主要发表选注者本人对小说主题思想以及艺术风格的整体认识和把握,挂一漏万,在所难免。读者在阅读欣赏时,不一定非得接受选注者比较个人化的理解和阐释,完全可以从自己的阅读角度去揣度、体悟故事的审美特性和思想气质。注释部分力求简明,中等英语学习工具书中可以查到的字词一般不注。历史典故、人名地名、方言俚语以及对理解作品比较重要的其他背景知识,注释得则较为详尽一些。比较难以理解的句子则放回到原文语境中加以串讲,或对整句加以翻译。

从原来为应教学之需而略加编排的教学素材,到如今能以书籍的形式正式出版,这得感谢上海科学技术出版社国际部的编辑同志,是他们的不断督促和精心编校才使本书得以以现在这个样子问世。此外,复旦大学英文系 2007 和 2008 级选修我的英美短篇小说课的大部分同学,都曾在课堂讨论中贡献过他们对所选篇目的有趣理解,本书中间接地体现着他们的部分才情,谨以此书献给他们。

汪洪章

2009 年 6 月于复旦大学英文系



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约翰·高尔斯华绥 John Galsworthy (1867-1933)



英国部分

约翰·高尔斯华绥 John Galsworthy

萨基 Saki

威廉·萨姆塞特·毛姆 W. Somerset Maugham

弗吉尼亚·伍尔夫 Virginia Woolf

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凯瑟琳·曼斯菲尔 Katherine Mansfield

詹姆斯·希尔顿 James Hilton

格雷厄姆·格林 Graham Greene



1. 约翰·高尔斯华绥

(John Galsworthy, 1867~1933)

作者简介

约翰·高尔斯华绥，英国作家，出身伦敦富裕家庭，父亲为伦敦著名律师，本人也毕业于牛津大学法律系，毕业后也曾试图从事律师业务，但用心不专。曾用两年时间，广泛游历世界各地，到过远东地区。也正是在远东，他结识了当时还是海员的康拉德，两人遂成莫逆之交。高氏鼓励康拉德投身文学创作，而自己当时压根儿没打算成为作家。后来，为博取自己深爱的一位姑娘的芳心，高氏两年中写出九篇故事，这使高氏文笔得到了极大的锻炼。1904年发表《岛国的法利赛人》(*The Island of Pharisees*)，自认为是其重要作品之一。作为小说家，高氏的主要贡献是《福尔赛世家》(*The Forsyte Saga*)三部曲。其中的第一部《有产业的人》(*The Man of Property*, 1906)尤为重要，作品严厉地批评了中上层资产阶级的唯利是图和精神堕落；其他两部分分别为《骑虎》(*In Chancery*, 1920)和《出租》(*To Let*, 1921)。继《福尔赛世家》之后，高氏创作了《现代喜剧》(*The Modern Comedy*)三部曲：《白猿》(*The White Monkey*, 1924)、《银匙》(*The Silver Spoon*, 1926)和《天鹅之歌》(*Swan Song*, 1926)。此外，作为20世纪英国重要的现实主义作家，高氏还写有大量短篇小说和戏剧作品。其戏剧创作深受易卜生影响，大多为社会问题剧，如《银匣》(*The Silver Box*, 1906)以及写劳资矛盾的《斗争》(*Strife*, 1909)。而《正义》(*Justice*, 1910)一剧因曾导致英国监狱制度改革而更为有名。1932年，高尔斯华绥因其卓越的小说叙事艺术而获诺贝尔文学奖。



《品质》故事梗概

盖斯勒在伦敦西区的一条小街上开了一家鞋店。“我”很小的时候就认识他，因为他为“我”的父亲做靴子。

鞋店是盖斯勒和他的哥哥合开的，店前只有盖斯勒兄弟的德文名字。橱窗里摆着几双靴子，而且老是那些一成不变的靴子。盖斯勒只按顾客的要求做鞋子，从不劝他们买成品。

十四岁那年，“我”到盖斯勒店里让他为“我”做一双俄罗斯软皮靴子。他黄黄的脸上布满皱纹，头发和胡须略带红色，声音有点粗哑，灰蓝的双眼透出尊严。人们不可能经常光顾他的鞋店，因为他做的靴子太耐穿了，可称作靴子中的精华。

与走进大多数店铺不一样，你进入他的鞋店就像步入一座教堂。你可以坐在店里唯一的一张木椅上等待着，享受着皮革的香味。

有一件事令“我”终生难忘。一天，“我”告诉他说，他为“我”做的一双靴子走起路来吱嘎吱嘎作响。听到这话，他没作回答，好像希望“我”把话收回似的。他后来让“我”把靴子送回店里，并说如果修不好，就从“我”的账单里扣除这双鞋的费用。

还有一次，“我”无意中到了他的店铺，脚上穿着一双一家大公司生产的鞋子。他那敏锐的目光盯着“我”的脚，最后说那鞋子不是他做的。接着他抱怨说，大公司根本没有自尊，它们生产的东西简直就是垃圾，它们通过广告拉生意，致使他们这些小鞋匠的活越来越少。这时“我”才发现他那满是皱纹的脸饱受了多少沧桑，他原本红红的胡须也日见其白。那天“我”订做了好多双鞋子。

后来他的哥哥去世了，他仍然做鞋子。“我”也出国了。但回伦敦后去的第一家店就是盖斯勒的鞋店。“我”向他订了各种各样的鞋子。看到他那副老弱的样子，心里真不是滋味，恨不得马上离开。

那些鞋子迟迟不来，“我”想不会来了。但在季度结账日到来时，鞋子竟然送来了。“我”奔下楼，开了支票，立即把钱款寄走了。



一个星期后，“我”路过鞋店，想进去告诉老朋友那些鞋是多么合脚，但店前已看不到他的名字。“我”不安地走进去，一位年轻的英国人告诉“我”：盖斯勒先生去世了。医生说他是饿死的。年轻人还说因为很少有人找盖斯勒做鞋，因此，一旦有了订单，他就会拼命工作，连吃饭的时间都不给自己留。在伦敦没有人做的鞋子比他做得更好。

专家点评

高尔斯华绥《品质》这一短篇主要从第一人称“我”的视角，描写了盖斯勒兄弟在英国的生活。作品以形象生动的人物语言，传达出了盖斯勒兄弟诚实的为人品质，尤其是盖斯勒弟弟那浓重的德国口音，写得很是传神。当然，人物性格更多地还是通过“我”在鞋铺的实际经历，让盖斯勒兄弟制造的鞋的品质来说话，来凸显他们的为人、经商的品质。在商业化大潮之下，欺诈性广告满天飞，但兄弟俩不为所动，仍能始终不渝地恪守本行的传统商业道德，即使在英国皇室让其生产专供品的情况下，仍然不事张扬、兢兢业业、老少无欺地为每位顾客做好每一双鞋。德国兄弟最后相继死去，甚至是因为生意清淡、入不敷出而饿死。这固然是个悲剧。但读者从中不难发现，盖斯勒兄弟不事变通，跟不上时代发展的潮流，也是造成其悲剧的一大原因。我们当然没有理由要这对憨厚的德国兄弟也去随大流，靠坑蒙拐骗发家，但以他们高超的制鞋手艺，适当做点广告，量力而行地去扩大再生产，结果肯定会相反，不至于沦落到饿死的地步。在这后一意义上，作品尽管以盖斯勒兄弟的鞋的品质衬托其为人品质，但其中所可能具有的反讽意义，也是比较明显的。“义不食周粟”固然可敬，但未免过于迂腐而不识时务。

Quality

I KNEW him from the days of my extreme youth, because he made my father's boots; inhabiting with his elder brother two little shops let into one¹, in a small bystreet²— now no more, but then most fashionably placed in the West End³.

That tenement had a certain quiet distinction;⁴ there was no sign upon its face that he made for any of the Royal Family — merely his own German name of Gessler Brothers, and in the window a few pairs of boots. I remember that it always troubled me to account for those unvarying boots in the window, for he made only what was ordered, reaching nothing down⁵, and it seemed so inconceivable⁶ that what he made could ever have failed to fit. Had he bought them to put there? That, too, seemed inconceivable. He would never have tolerated in the house, leather on which he had not worked himself. Besides, they were too beautiful — the pair of pumps⁷, so inexpressibly⁸ slim, the patent leathers⁹ with cloth tops, making water come into one's mouth, the tall brown riding boots with marvelous sooty glow¹⁰, as if, though new, they had been worn a hundred years. Those pairs could only have been made by one who saw before him the Soul of Boot — so truly were they prototypes incarnating the very spirit of all



footgear.¹¹ These thoughts, of course, came to me later, though even when I was promoted to him, at the age of perhaps fourteen, some inkling haunted me of the dignity of himself and brother.¹² For to make boots — such boots as he made — seemed to me then, and still seems to me, mysterious and wonderful.

I remember well my shy remark, one day, while stretching out to him my youthful foot:

“Isn’t it awfully hard to do, Mr. Gessler?”

And his answer, given with a sudden smile from out of the sardonic¹³ redness of his beard: “Id is an Ardt!”¹⁴

Himself, he was a little as if made from leather, with his yellow crinkly¹⁵ face, and crinkly reddish hair and beard, and neat folds slanting down his cheeks to the corners of his mouth, and his guttural¹⁶ and one-toned voice, for leather is a sardonic substance, and stiff and slow of purpose¹⁷. And that was the character of his face, save that his eyes, which were grey-blue, had in them the simple gravity¹⁸ of one secretly possessed by the Ideal. His elder brother was so very like him — though watery¹⁹, paler in every way, with a great industry²⁰ — that sometimes in early days I was not quite sure of him until the interview was over. Then I knew that it was he, if the words, “I will ask my brudder²¹,” had not been spoken; and that, if they had, it was his elder brother.

When one grew old and wild and ran up bills²², one somehow never ran them up with Gessler Brothers. It would not have seemed becoming to go in there and stretch out one’s foot to that blue ironspectacled glance, owing him for more than — say — two pairs, just the

comfortable reassurance that one was still his client. For it was not possible to go to him very often — his boots lasted terribly, having something beyond the temporary — some, as it were, essence of boot stitched into them²³.

One went in, not as into most shops, in the mood of: "Please serve me, and let me go!" but restfully, as one enters a church; and, sitting on the single wooden chair, waited — for there was never anybody there. Soon, over the top edge of that sort of well²⁴ — rather dark, and smelling soothingly of leather²⁵ — which formed the shop, there would be seen his face, or that of his elder brother, peering down. A guttural sound, and the tip-tap of bast slippers²⁶ beating the narrow wooden stairs, and he would stand before one without coat, a little bent, in leather apron, with sleeves turned back, blinking — as if awakened from some dream of boots, or like an owl surprised in daylight and annoyed at this interruption.

And I would say: "How do you do, Mr. Gessler? Could you make me a pair of Russia leather boots?"

Without a word he would leave me, retiring whence he came²⁷, or into the other portion of the shop, and I would continue to rest in the wooden chair, inhaling the incense of his trade.²⁸ Soon he would come back, holding in his thin, veined²⁹ hand a piece of gold-brown leather. With eyes fixed on it, he would remark: "What a beaudiful biece!"³⁰ When I, too, had admired it, he would speak again. "When do you wand dem?"³¹ And I would answer: "Oh! As soon as you conveniently can." And he would say: "Tomorrow fordnight?"³² Or if he were his elder brother: "I will



ask my brudder!”

Then I would murmur: “Thank you! Good morning, Mr. Gessler.” “Goot morning!”³³ he would reply, still looking at the leather in his hand. And as I moved to the door, I would hear the tip-tap of his bast slippers restoring him, up the stairs, to his dream of boots. But if it were some new kind of footgear that he had not yet made me, then indeed he would observe ceremony — divesting me of my boot³⁴ and holding it long in his hand, looking at it with eyes at once critical and loving, as if recalling the glow with which he had created it, and rebuking the way in which one had disorganized this masterpiece. Then, placing my foot on a piece of paper, he would two or three times tickle³⁵ the outer edges with a pencil and pass his nervous fingers over my toes, feeling himself into the heart of my requirements.

I cannot forget that day on which I had occasion to say to him: “Mr. Gessler, that last pair of town walking boots creaked³⁶, you know.”

He looked at me for a time without replying, as if expecting me to withdraw or qualify the statement, then said:

“Id shouldn’d ’ave creaked.”³⁷

“It did, I’m afraid.”

“You goddem wed before dey found demselves?”³⁸

“I don’t think so.”

At that he lowered his eyes, as if hunting for memory of those boots, and I felt sorry I had mentioned this grave thing.

“Zend dem back!” he said; “I will look at dem.”³⁹

A feeling of compassion⁴⁰ for my creaking boots

surged up in me, so well could I imagine the sorrowful long curiosity of regard which he would bend on them.

"Zome boods," he said slowly, "are bad from leardt⁴¹. If I can do noding wid dem, I dake dem off your bill."⁴²

Once (once only) I went absent-mindedly into his shop in a pair of boots bought in an emergency at some large firm's. He took my order without showing me any leather, and I could feel his eyes penetrating the inferior integument of my foot⁴³. At last he said:

"Dose are nod my boods."

The tone was not one of anger, nor of sorrow, not even of contempt, but there was in it something quiet that froze the blood. He put his hand down and pressed a finger on the place where the left boot, endeavoring to be fashionable⁴⁴, was not quite comfortable.

"Id 'urds you dere," he said. "Dose big virms 'ave no self-respect. Drash!"⁴⁵ And then, as if something had given way within him, he spoke long and bitterly. It was the only time I ever heard him discuss the conditions and hardships of his trade.

"Dey ged id all," he said, "dey ged id by adverdisement, nod by work. Dey dake id away from us, who lofe our boods. Id gomes to this — bresently I haf no work. Every year id gets less — you will see."⁴⁶ And looking at his lined face I saw things I had never noticed before, bitter things and bitter struggle — and what a lot of grey hairs there seemed suddenly in his red beard!

As best I could, I explained the circumstances of the purchase of those ill-omened⁴⁷ boots. But his face and voice made so deep an impression that during the next

few minutes I ordered many pairs. Nemesis fell!⁴⁸ They lasted more terribly than ever. And I was not able conscientiously to go to him for nearly two years.

When at last I went I was surprised to find that outside one of the two little windows of his shop another name was painted, also that of a bootmaker — making, of course, for the Royal Family. The old familiar boots, no longer in dignified isolation, were huddled in the single window⁴⁹. Inside, the now contracted well of the one little shop was more scented and darker than ever. And it was longer than usual, too, before a face peered down, and the tip-tap of the bast slippers began. At last he stood before me, and, gazing through those rusty iron spectacles, said:

“Mr. —, isn’d it?”

“Ah! Mr. Gessler,” I stammered, “but your boots are really *too* good, you know! See, these are quite decent still!” And I stretched out to him my foot. He looked at it.

“Yes,” he said, “people do nod wand good boods, id seems.”⁵⁰

To get away from his reproachful eyes and voice I hastily remarked: “What have you done to your shop?”

He answered quietly: “Id was too exbensif. Do you wand some boods?”⁵¹

I ordered three pairs, though I had only wanted two, and quickly left. I had, I do not know quite what feeling of being part, in his mind, of a conspiracy against him; or not perhaps so much against him as against his idea of boot. One does not, I suppose, care to feel like that; for it was again many months before my next visit to his shop, paid, I remember, with the

feeling: "Oh! well, I can't leave the old boy — so here goes! Perhaps it'll be his elder brother!"

For his elder brother, I knew, had not character enough to reproach me, even dumbly⁵².

And, to my relief, in the shop there did appear to be his elder brother, handling a piece of leather.

"Well, Mr. Gessler," I said, "how are you?"

He came close, and peered at me.

"I am breddy⁵³ well," he said slowly: "but my elder brudder is dead."

And I saw that it was indeed himself — but how aged and wan⁵⁴! And never before had I heard him mention his brother. Much shocked, I murmured: "Oh! I am sorry!"

"Yes," he answered, "he was a good man, he made a good bood; but he is dead." And he touched the top of his head, where the hair had suddenly gone as thin as it had been on that of his poor brother, to indicate, I suppose, the cause of death. "He could nod ged over losing de oder shop.⁵⁵ Do you wand any boods?" And he held up the leather in his hand: "Id's a beaudiful biece."

I ordered several pairs. It was very long before they came — but they were better than ever. One simply could not wear them out. And soon after that I went abroad.

It was over a year before I was again in London. And the first shop I went to was my old friend's. I had left a man of sixty, I came back to one of seventy-five, pinched and worn and tremulous⁵⁶, who genuinely, this time, did not at first know me.

"Oh! Mr. Gessler," I said, sick at heart; "how splendid your boots are! See, I've been wearing this pair

