



BEAUTIFUL STORIES FROM SHAKESPEARE

MP3

品味莎士比亚

英文
名作选

2

E. Nesbit —— 著
李璞良 —— 译

世界图书出版公司

陕版出图字:25-2008-180 号

图书在版编目(CIP)数据

品味莎士比亚. 2: 汉英对照 / (美)奈斯比特(Nesbit, E.)著;李璞良译.
—西安:世界图书出版西安公司, 2009.7

ISBN 978-7-5100-0880-1

I. 品… II. ①奈…②李… III. ①英语-汉语-对照读物②戏剧文学-故事-作品集-英国-中世纪 IV.H319.4:I

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(2009)第 100968 号

本书原由寂天文化事业股份有限公司以书名《品味莎士比亚 2》出版

©2008 by Cosmos Culture Ltd.

经由原出版公司授权世界图书出版西安公司在中国大陆地区以中文文字出版发行

品味莎士比亚 2

著 者 E. Nesbit

译 者 李璞良

责任编辑 陈宇彤

出版发行 **世界图书出版西安公司**

地 址 西安市北大街 85 号

邮 编 710003

电 话 029-87214941 87233647(市场营销部)

029-87232980(总编室)

传 真 029-87279675

经 销 全国各地新华书店

印 刷 西安东江印务有限公司

开 本 880×1230 1/32

印 张 7

字 数 200 千字

版 次 2009 年 10 月第 1 版 2009 年 10 月第 1 次印刷

书 号 ISBN 978-7-5100-0880-1

定 价 32.00 元(配 1 张 MP3 光盘)

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Preface

The writings of Shakespeare have been justly termed “the richest, the purest, the fairest, that genius uninspired ever penned.” Shakespeare instructed by delighting. His plays alone (leaving mere science out of the question), contain more actual wisdom than the whole body of English learning.

He is the teacher of all good—pity, generosity, true courage, love. His bright wit is cut out “into little stars.” His solid masses of knowledge are meted out in morsels and proverbs, and thus distributed, there is scarcely a corner of the English-speaking world today which he does not illuminate, or a cottage which he does not enrich.

His bounty is like the sea, which, though often unacknowledged, is everywhere felt. As his friend, Ben Jonson, wrote of him, “He was not of an age but for all time.” He ever kept the highroad of human life whereon all travel. He did not pick out by-paths of feeling and sentiment.

In his creations we have no moral highwaymen, sentimental thieves, interesting villains, and amiable, elegant adventuresses—no delicate entanglements of situation, in which the grossest images are presented to the mind disguised under the superficial attraction of style and sentiment.

He flattered no bad passion, disguised no vice in the garb of virtue, trifled with no just and generous principle. While causing us to laugh at folly, and shudder at crime, he still preserves our love for our fellow-beings, and our reverence for ourselves.

Shakespeare was familiar with all beautiful forms and images, with all that is sweet or majestic in the simple aspects of nature, of that indestructible love of flowers and fragrance, and dews, and clear waters—and soft airs and sounds, and bright skies and woodland solitudes, and moon-light bowers, which are the material elements of poetry,—and with that fine sense of their indefinable relation to mental emotion, which is its essence and vivifying soul—and which, in the midst of his most busy and tragical scenes, falls like gleams of sunshine on rocks and ruins—contrasting with all that is rugged or repulsive, and reminding us of the existence of purer and brighter elements.

These things considered, what wonder is it that the works of Shakespeare, next to *the Bible*, are the most highly esteemed of all the classics of English literature. “So extensively have the characters of Shakespeare been drawn upon by artists, poets, and writers of fiction,” says an American author,—“So interwoven are these characters in the great body of English literature, that to be ignorant of the plot of these dramas is often a cause of embarrassment.” But Shakespeare wrote for grown-up people, for men and women, and in words that little folks cannot understand.

Hence this volume. To reproduce the entertaining stories contained in the plays of Shakespeare, in a form so simple that young people can understand and enjoy them, was the object had in view by the author of these Beautiful Stories from Shakespeare.

前言

莎翁的著作，一直被称为“平凡天才所写过最丰富、最道地、最美好的作品”，莎士比亚乐于受教，单单他一个人的剧作（只有在科学方面不足道哉）中所蕴含的真正智慧，即使集全体英国人的学识都无法企及。

他是诸善之师，让我们认识了怜悯、慷慨、真勇和爱，他闪耀的才智可以经过各种“剪裁”，即使在小角色的身上都可看到，而其厚实渊博的知识也融入我们的口语和俗谚中，并因此广为流传，使得如今的英语世界中几乎没有一个角落不受到他的启发，即使在穷乡僻壤的茅屋瓦舍也因其丰富精彩。

莎翁的惠赠就像大海一样，虽然常未受到公认，但处处都能感受到，就像他的朋友班·强生对他的描述：“他的荣耀不单是属于某个时代的，而是千秋万世永垂不朽的。”他始终能保持人生的正途，不会在感情和心境上彷徨歧路。

在他的创作中，我们找不出道德上的拦路强盗、感情上的盗贼、有趣的恶棍，以及亲切而高雅的女冒险家——也没有微妙纠结的情势，致使在隐身于时尚和感情方面肤浅魅力下的心灵面前出现最粗野的形象。

他没有吹捧不适的情欲，不会假善名行恶之实，也不会蔑视合理而适切的原则。因此，他使我们不至于嘲弄痴愚，或是对罪恶打颤。莎翁使我们仍保有对人类的愛，以及懂得自重。

他熟识所有美丽的形式和影像，它们全都在大自然的单纯面貌中，在对花草和芬芳不灭的爱中，以及在对露珠、清水、柔和的轻风和声响、朗朗晴空和孤寥的森林，以及明月下的树阴等永无止境的爱中，呈现出甜美又高雅的一面。这些都成了诗的素材，也让我们敏锐地意识到它们和心智感情间那种无法界定的关

系，而这正是它们的本质和其跃动的心灵，在他最忙碌和悲剧性的场景之中，它们的来临就像是阳光洒落在岩石和废墟上一样，和一切的崎岖险恶及排斥形成鲜明的对比，并提醒我们有更纯净和更光彩夺目的要素存在着。

令人惊异之处在于，莎翁的作品被视为除了《圣经》之外，为所有英国古典文学最受到高度尊崇的。“所以莎翁笔下的人物性格，被艺术家、诗人和小说作家们广泛地撷取，”一位美国作家曾说：“所以交织在一起的是英国文学主义中的人物性格，而对这些戏剧情节的无知，也往往会成为让你无地自容的主因。”可是，莎翁的作品是为成年的男男女女而写的，字里行间是年幼者所无法了解的。

有鉴于此，本书系以一种极简单的形式，让莎翁剧作中那些有趣的故事得以再生，使年少的人也能了解并欣赏它们，这正是本书作者所期许的目的。

E.T.R.



William Shakespeare
(1564-1616)

It may be said of Shakespeare, that from his works may be collected a system of civil and economical prudence. He has been imitated by all succeeding writers; and it may be doubted whether from all his successors more maxims of theoretical knowledge, or more rules of practical prudence can be collected than he alone has given to his country.

—Dr. Samuel Johnson



Samuel Johnson
(1709-1784)



Shakespeare's birthplace in Stratford

A BRIEF LIFE OF SHAKESPEARE

In the register of baptisms of the parish church of Stratford-upon-Avon, a market town in Warwickshire, England, appears, under date of April 26, 1564, the entry of the baptism of William, the son of John Shakspeare. The entry is in Latin—"Gulielmus filius Johannis Shakspeare."

The date of William Shakespeare's birth has usually been taken as three days before his baptism, but there is certainly no evidence of this fact. The family name was variously spelled, the dramatist himself not always spelling it in the same way. While in the baptismal record the name is spelled "Shakspeare," in several authentic autographs of the dramatist it reads "Shakspere," and in the first edition of his works it is

printed "Shakespeare."

Halliwell tells us, that there are not less than thirty-four ways in which the various members of the Shakespeare family wrote the name.

Shakespeare's father, while an alderman at Stratford, appears to have been unable to write his name, but as at that time nine men out of ten were content to make their mark for a signature, the fact is not specially to his discredit.

The traditions and other sources of information about the occupation of Shakespeare's father differ. He is described as a butcher, a woolstapler, and a glover, and it is not impossible that he may have been all of these simultaneously or at different times, or that if he could not properly be called any one of them, the nature of his occupation was such as to make it easy to understand how the various traditions sprang up.

He was a landed proprietor and cultivator of his own land even before his marriage, and he received with his wife, who was Mary Arden, daughter of a country gentleman, the estate of Asbies, 56 acres in extent.

William was the third child. The two older than he were daughters, and both probably died in infancy. After him was born three sons and a daughter. For ten or twelve years at least, after Shakespeare's birth his father continued to be in easy circumstances. In the year 1568 he was the high bailiff or chief magistrate of Stratford, and for many years afterwards he held the position of alderman as he had done for three years before.

To the completion of his tenth year, therefore, it is natural to suppose that William Shakespeare would get the best education that Stratford could afford. The free school of the

town was open to all boys and like all the grammar-schools of that time, was under the direction of men who, as graduates of the universities, were qualified to diffuse that sound scholarship which was once the boast of England.

There is no record of Shakespeare's having been at this school, but there can be no rational doubt that he was educated there. His father could not have procured for him a better education anywhere. To those who have studied Shakespeare's works without being influenced by the old traditional theory that he had received a very narrow education, they abound with evidences that he must have been solidly grounded in the learning, properly so called, was taught in the grammar schools.

Nor was Stratford shut out from the general world, as many country towns are. It was a great highway, and dealers with every variety of merchandise resorted to its markets. The eyes of the poet dramatist must always have been open for observation. But nothing is known positively of Shakespeare from his birth to his marriage to Anne Hathaway in 1582, and from that date nothing but the birth of three children until we find him an actor in London about 1589.

How long acting continued to be Shakespeare's sole profession we have no means of knowing, but it is in the highest degree probable that very soon after arriving in London he began that work of adaptation by which he is known to have begun his literary career.

To improve and alter older plays not up to the standard that was required at the time was a common practice even among the best dramatists of the day, and Shakespeare's abilities

would speedily mark him out as eminently fitted for this kind of work. When the alterations in plays originally composed by other writers became very extensive, the work of adaptation would become in reality a work of creation. And this is exactly what we have examples of in a few of Shakespeare's early works, which are known to have been founded on older plays.

It is unnecessary here to extol the published works of the world's greatest dramatist. Criticism has been exhausted upon them, and the finest minds of England, Germany, and America have devoted their powers to an elucidation of their worth.

Shakespeare died at Stratford on the 23rd of April, 1616. Shakespeare's fellow-actors, fellow-dramatists, and those who knew him in other ways, agree in expressing not only admiration of his genius, but their respect and love for the man. Ben Jonson said, "I love the man, and do honor his memory, on this side idolatry, as much as any. He was indeed honest, and of an open and free nature."

He was buried on the second day after his death, on the north side of the chancel of Stratford church. Over his grave there is a flat stone with this inscription, said to have been

written by himself:

*Good friend for Jesus sake forbear
To digg the dust enclosed heare:
Blest be ye man yt spares these
stones,
And curst be he yt moves my bones.*



Shakespeare's funerary monument

1 Romeo and Juliet 罗密欧 与 茱丽叶



Once upon a time there lived in Verona two great families named Montagu and Capulet. They were both rich, and I suppose they were as sensible¹, in most things, as other rich people. But in one thing they were extremely silly. There was an old, old quarrel between the two families, and instead of making it up like reasonable folks, they made a sort of pet² of their quarrel, and would not let it die out³.



So that a Montagu wouldn't speak to a Capulet if he met one in the street—nor a Capulet to a Montagu—or if they did speak, it was to say rude and unpleasant things, which often ended in a fight.

And their relations and servants were just as foolish, so that street fights and duels⁴ and uncomfortablenesses of that kind were always growing out of the Montagu-and-Capulet quarrel.

Now Lord Capulet, the head of that family, gave a party—a grand⁵ supper and a dance—and he was so hospitable⁶ that he said anyone might come to it except (of course) the Montagues.



But there was a young Montagu named Romeo, who very much wanted to be there, because Rosaline, the lady he loved, had been asked.

This lady had never been at all kind to him, and he had no reason to love her; but the fact was that he wanted to love somebody, and as he hadn't seen the right lady, he was obliged to love the wrong one. So to the Capulet's grand party he came, with his friends Mercutio and Benvolio.



- 1 sensible ['sensəbəl] (a.) having sound reason and judgment 明智的
- 2 pet [pet] (n.) a fit of sulkiness 愠怒
- 3 die out: to become less common and finally stop existing 逐渐消失
- 4 duel ['du:əl] (n.) a fight with weapons between two people, used in the past to settle a quarrel 决斗
- 5 grand [grænd] (a.) splendid in style and appearance 盛大的
- 6 hospitable ['hɑ:spɪtəbəl] (a.) friendly, welcoming, and generous to guests or strangers 好客的