

英美文学名著导读详注本 之_____

The Awakening

觉醒

Kate Chopin 凯特·肖班
单雪梅 注释

上海外语教育出版社
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出版说明

为了继承人类精神文明的宝贵财富,培养青年学子的思想境界和道德情操,上海外语教育出版社从2000年起将陆续推出这套丛书。自林纾以降,经过几代译者的不断努力,西方文学经典已渐为国人接受。改革开放以来,原版文学作品更是源源不断进入我国的校园和课堂。时至今日,我们逐步认识到,那种原本刊行的简单的拿来主义难以满足学子发掘作品蕴涵的人文精神的需要,毕竟其中屡屡出现的外来语和各种典故妨碍了解读过程,而且文学语言本身的难度就不是仅靠一两套语言教材就能克服的阅读障碍,所以几经筹划,凭借学界大力襄助,将洋洋大观的英美文学名著汇编为一套导读详注丛书,奉献给广大热爱文学和学习英语的读者。

我社经过较长时间的酝酿和准备,先后充分听取了国内外专家的意见和建议,专门约请了国内知名学者和研究有素的青年教师参与其事,由他们精心撰写导读文字并加以详备的注释。通过导读和详注这种面貌一新的形式,我们希望读者可以“知人论世”而又含英咀华,了解历代文学大师的生平事迹和当时的社会及文化背景,蠡测作家的心路历程和创作轨迹,读者同时可以吸收文学语言的养分,提高文化素养和文学欣赏水平。我们相信从更高的层次来说,语言习得与培养素质应该水乳交融,相得益彰,二者不可偏废,这也是我社推出这套丛书的初衷。

由于涉及作品的时间跨度逾三百年,而期间英语语言也在不断地沿革演化,从而在不同的历史时期呈现出了不同的特色。倘若根据历史阶段陆续推出,未必能够真正有益于青年读者学习英语和领略作品神韵。因此我们将通盘考虑,把不同时期、不同风格的作品放在一起推出,这样读者可以根据各自的喜好有所选择。我们初步计划总数刊行一百种,逐年推出,陆续完成这一规模宏大的出版项目。

我们希望在这套丛书问世之际,得到学界和读者热情关心和支持,给我们提出建议和批评,协助我们精益求精,将丛书出版得更好。

上海外语教育出版社

前言

19世纪末、20世纪初,当时已功成名就的凯特·肖班(Kate Chopin, 1851—1904)发表了《觉醒》(*The Awakening*, 1899),如一股旋风席卷而来,在美国文坛掀起了轩然大波。肖班以主人公艾德娜·庞特里耶的自我意识和性意识的觉醒为主题,大胆而又直率地从深层次探索了已婚女性的内心世界。这在当时的社会背景下无疑是惊世骇俗之举。《觉醒》被列上了黑名单,从书架上撤了下来,铺天盖地的谴责之声将它打入了冷宫。作者本人也因此被剥夺了圣路易斯艺术俱乐部的会员资格,在冷遇中悄然离世。光阴荏苒,20世纪60年代末兴起的妇女解放运动,令尘封达半个世纪之久的肖班及其《觉醒》重见天日,《觉醒》被尊为美国妇女文学最早的代表性作品,成为女性文学的经典。

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凯特·肖班于1851年生于美国密苏里州圣路易斯市。她的父亲是个成功的商人,母亲是法裔贵族家庭出身。凯特·肖班从小受到正统的维多利亚式的教育和天主教的熏陶。1870年凯特与路易斯安那州有名望的克里欧家族的奥斯卡·肖班结婚(克里欧人指路易斯安那州贵族出身的法国和西班牙移民的后裔,他们同美国人的生活方式不同,生活比较保守)。婚后,凯特随夫迁往新奥尔良居住,生育了6个孩子。丈夫去世后,肖班于1884年迁回圣路易斯市陪伴母亲。次年母亲去世。肖班这才正式执笔开始写作。她的作品包括美国最早触及离婚问题的长篇小说《困惑》(*At Fault*, 1890),两本短篇小说集《牛轭湖的人们》(*Bayou Folk*, 1894)与《阿卡迪亚之夜》(*The Night in Acadia*, 1897)。另外还有一本就是《觉醒》。《觉醒》出版后的反响对肖班触动很大,直接影响到她的创作。1900年之后,她只给我们留下了6篇短篇小说,其中有3篇在她身后发表。肖班于1904年与世长辞。

《觉醒》一书以细腻的笔触描写了女主人公艾德娜追求自由、独立

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和爱情却屡屡遭挫的悲剧一生,展现了她的自我意识和性意识从觉醒、追求到窒息的过程。艾德娜在循规蹈矩的肯塔基长老会家庭长大,母亲过早离开了人世,父亲又管教严厉,因此从小沉默寡言,但感情丰富,有非凡的自制力。成年后她嫁给了长她12岁、出身名门的克里欧人列昂·庞特里耶,并做了两个孩子的母亲。列昂是个商人,头脑精明,处事果断,但心胸狭窄,平庸势利。故事开始时适逢夏季,庞特里耶一家正在距新奥尔良不远的格蓝岛度假。庞特里耶先生平时在新奥尔良忙于生意,周末才到格蓝岛与家人团聚。大部分时间艾德娜与朋友和孩子一起消磨时光。随着时光的流逝,艾德娜同贤妻良母型的阿黛尔·拉提诺结为良伴,同克里欧青年罗伯特·瑞伯仑互生爱慕之情。罗伯特意识到自己陷入了感情的旋涡,远走墨西哥,试图冲淡对艾德娜的思慕之情。但是此时28岁的艾德娜对自己内心涌动的情感尚不甚了解,处于困惑状态。夏季结束后,重返新奥尔良的艾德娜渐渐意识到自我的觉醒和对罗伯特的依恋。她如同大梦初醒,不愿再过以前的那种生活,不愿让社会预设的为人妻、为人母的社会性别角色限制自我的发展。于是,她先是拿起画笔,后又搬出了雍容华贵的豪宅到简朴的“鸽楼”居住,靠卖画所得和母亲留下的一小笔钱生活。期间,纨绔子弟艾洛宾曾唤醒她的性意识。罗伯特从墨西哥回来后对艾德娜缄默而又疏远。后来,两人袒露了心扉,罗伯特听了艾德娜的自我表白之后又一次临阵脱逃。这犹如当头一棒,令艾德娜万分痛苦。经过一夜的思索,第二天一早,艾德娜只身去了格蓝岛,裸身走进了大海。

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在19世纪90年代的美国,社会矛盾日益加剧。1893年至1896年的经济萧条加深了阶级分化,城市化与工业化开始改变传统的生活方式,清教的道德观受到冲击。自19世纪60年代起,妇女运动在美国兴起。上流社会的妇女开始有机会上大学,而下层社会的妇女则为改善不良的工作环境而斗争着。1890年出现了两个为争取普选权而设立的妇女组织。这一时期还造就了一批“新女性”。她们试图做自己的主人,选择自己的生活。但在世俗社会中,她们备受歧视,被视作神智不健全的人,如《觉醒》中医生和庞特里耶先生所谈论的“假知识分子”。1892年移民聚集地新奥尔良受到妇女组织的青睐,但投身妇

女运动的女性只占少数,因为妇女传统的性别角色在男权社会根深蒂固,南方上流社会的女性从小就被要求做高贵温顺的淑女,克里欧女性在相对狭隘的生活空间中扮演着“家庭天使”的角色。然而妇女组织为女性接受教育、开阔视野提供了渠道,潜移默化地影响着她们。

肖班的成长,如美国当代女性主义的代表人物之一伊莱娜·肖瓦尔特所说,是与19世纪美国女性文化与写作的三个阶段同步的。她在50年代感伤主义的氛围中长大,目睹了70、80年代被称作“地方特色派”的女性作家涉足男性作家的创作领域,将写作作为第一任务,将家庭放到第二位,为了事业,为了不受牵累,有的作家甚至选择独身;她也经历了妇女组织勃兴的90年代。虽然肖班既不是一个女权主义者,也没有为妇女争取普选权而奔走呼吁,但她是个崇尚自由,敢于冲破社会习俗的女性,具有独立、耿直的个性。

肖班熟知新奥尔良上流社会的生活。在《觉醒》一书中,她借助于“地方特色派”所擅长的叙述手段,细致入微地描述了极具地方色彩的人物与地理环境,行文中不断使用法语,以此展现法裔居住区独具特色的风貌。肖班的叙述策略体现了她独创性的一面。她没有让叙述陷于感伤中无法自拔,或沉湎于对过去美好时光的怀恋,从而冲淡了小说的现实意义与批评意味。她以自己的方式、自己的声音,描述女性内心世界中各种复杂的情感。

在《觉醒》一书中,肖班刻画了艾德娜、阿黛尔·拉提诺和瑞兹小姐这三个相互映衬的女性形象。艾德娜的潜意识说明了她对狭隘、孤寂、呆板的家庭生活的不满。她也曾尝试过做个像拉提诺夫人那样的好妻子、好母亲,但是她生性敏感,独立不羁,难以扭塑自己的个性。她认识到自己过着双重生活,“外在的生活要求她循规蹈矩,但内心却不禁对此产生疑问”。在艾德娜的自我意识的觉醒过程中,拉提诺夫人和瑞兹小姐都起到了举足轻重的作用。拉提诺夫人是个娇美、温顺、忠贞、忘我、富有牺牲精神的贤妻良母,集中体现了南方上流社会和克里欧人所崇尚的女性美德。她崇拜丈夫,宠爱孩子。她对幼年丧母的艾德娜来说,既是朋友,又是母亲或者姐妹,艾德娜在她面前袒露自己的想法,在苦闷时找她寻求帮助。她会弹钢琴,但有趣的是,艾德娜听她的琴声,脑海中会出现各种意象,但不会被深深地触动。正是从她的身上,艾德娜看到了自己,看到了身为女性的不幸与可悲,看到了婚姻中潜在的危机。拉提诺夫人已被婚姻磨蚀得丧失了自我,但她仍以此为乐。而艾德娜有个性,有主见,不愿为他人而让自我身陷囹

圃。她对拉提诺夫人说：“我会放弃无关紧要的东西；我会为了孩子们舍弃金钱，舍弃我的生命，但是，我不会为了他们舍弃自我。”

在拉提诺夫人的另一端是瑞兹小姐。她长相平平，是个蔑视传统、遭人非议的女性。她孑然一身，崇尚自我，为艺术而活着。同拉提诺夫人相比，她才算得上是个钢琴家。听她弹琴，艾德娜会深受震撼，以至情不自禁。琴声令她体验到内心深处的孤寂。在世人的眼中，瑞兹小姐精神不太正常，但是在艾德娜的眼中，她有敏锐的洞察力，是个神智最清醒的人。渐渐苏醒的艾德娜从她那里得到启迪，受益匪浅。如果说拉提诺夫人令艾德娜觉醒的话，那么瑞兹小姐则是在帮助她成长。她洞悉艾德娜的内心世界，理解她的一举一动。她的话貌似调侃，实际上则是在开导并启发艾德娜。她曾告诫艾德娜：“艺术家必须要有勇敢的灵魂。”

在艾德娜的觉醒过程中，三个男性为她展示了三种选择。艾德娜同丈夫列昂志趣迥异。列昂对妻子的情绪波动和觉醒的自我毫不理解，视艾德娜如私有财产，无视她的个性。艾德娜同他很难做到夫唱妇随。与其充当他的私有财产，在无爱的婚姻中苟活，不如听从自我的呼唤，艾德娜抱着这种想法离他而去。艾洛宾唤起了艾德娜沉睡的性意识，但是那不是爱，他同艾德娜在心智上无法沟通，所以艾德娜也不会去当他的情妇。艾德娜同罗伯特在文学和音乐方面志趣相投，他们相互爱慕。但是罗伯特缺乏勇气，跳不出传统的藩篱，结果渐渐成熟的艾德娜的自我宣言把他吓退了。艾德娜直言不讳地告诉他说：“我不再是庞特里耶先生任意处置的财产。我有自己的选择。如果有一天他对你说：‘喂，罗伯特。带她去过快活日子吧！她是你的人了。’我会对你们俩嗤之以鼻的。”这一席话令他变色，最后一走了之。艾德娜原想同他一起共同面对风风雨雨，他的举动无疑给她沉重的打击。相形之下，艾德娜要比罗伯特有勇气得多，她维护了觉醒的自我，不愿让它再度走向毁灭，所以宁愿以死了结残生。

艾德娜裸身出海和自杀无疑从另一个侧面证实了她义无反顾、不向传统势力低头的决心。虽然故事的结尾显得很悲壮，但这却同艾德娜的自我意识的发展相吻合。她不愿在失去罗伯特之后，再回到孩子们身边。投海自尽这一结局有明显的时代痕迹。当时，这被视为“不守妇道的”女性应得的“报应”。但艾德娜即使自杀也不愿让世人耻笑她，借裸身之举折射出她的抗争意识。《觉醒》出版不久，一位医生在给朋友的信中写道：“你觉得艾德娜的情况属例外吗？相信老医生的

话吧！这种事相当普遍。只是艾德娜更高贵一些，她走进了洁净的大海，而其他人苟活下来了。”由此可见肖班的洞察力与勇气在当时是多么难能可贵。

三

《觉醒》体现了肖班高超的语言驾驭能力。小说中意象迭出，前呼后应，将声音、色彩和画面融为一体，给人生动而又形象的视觉印象，同时深化了主题。《觉醒》中的情节大都围绕着大海展开。从在大海中学游泳到掌握游泳技巧，艾德娜对自身的潜力也经历了从无知到顿悟的过程。游泳开阔了她的视野，令她有自由舒展、摆脱一切桎梏的冲动。大海这一意象频频出现。在艾德娜的心目中，它深不可测，就如同她的意识一样。大海的呢喃抚慰着她，不止一次呼唤着她投入它的怀抱。与此同时，大海又同死亡紧密地联系在一起。艾德娜在刚刚学会游泳时就曾遭遇死神的幻象，同故事的结尾相呼应。肖班在描述大海时总是同主人公的心境相符合，没有描写它在暴风雨肆虐时惊涛拍岸的一面。

小说中另一个重复出现的意象是小鸟。每次艾德娜听到她起名为《孤独》的曲子，脑海中都会浮现出一个傍海而立的裸身男人，神情无奈而又认命地凝视着远飞的小鸟。艾德娜是困在笼中的小鸟。如果要挣脱传统和偏见的牢笼，自由飞翔，那么这只鸟儿，如瑞兹小姐所言，“需要有一双强壮的翅膀”。瑞兹小姐告诫艾德娜说：“看着小鸟伤痕累累、筋疲力尽掉到地上是件很悲惨的事。”在艾德娜准备走向死亡之际，一只折了翅的小鸟出现在她的面前，颇有深意地折射出艾德娜自身的体验，遭遇到幻想与现实夹击的艾德娜已无力继续挣扎了，她的翅膀还不够强硬。

最后一章中，艾德娜向远处游去的时候，儿时的情景浮上心头。游在大海中如同儿时走在齐腰深的草丛中一样。在小说第7章中，她曾回忆起当时的感觉：“觉得自己无所事事，漫无目的，不假思索，也无人引导”，之所以回忆，是因为她在那一刻同儿时一样茫然且又困惑。儿时的情景再次出现，说明艾德娜的记忆深处仍然为不切实际的幻想所主宰，从反面衬托出艾德娜觉醒之后内心遭受的深重的痛苦。因此，投入大海的怀抱并没有令她惊惧，而是如同重温儿时的体验一样镇定、坦然。

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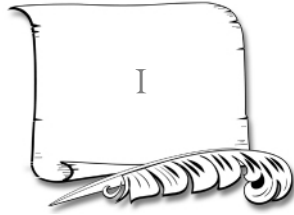
肖班对当时视为洪水猛兽的性意识与自我意识的描述具有重要意义。评论家们认为她的思想比她的同时代人至少超前十年。肖班发掘出了男权社会中女性心理成长过程中所遭遇的波折,并就妇女如何开发自身的潜力并成就自我发表自己的看法。肖班对艾德娜给予无限的同情,但并不可怜她,而是借她折射出已婚女性的困惑、觉醒、挣扎与绝望。她敢言前人所不敢言,这也正是她在当时不被理解的原因。但是,历史是公正的。60年代方兴未艾的女权主义运动大大改善了妇女的处境,为妇女发展自我提供了可能。肖班和她的《觉醒》对提高妇女自身的觉悟不无裨益。在某种程度上,其作用是巨大的。肖班的独特视角在今天对我们仍有警示与启发意义。美国女作家维拉·凯瑟认为,《觉醒》一书是美国的《包法利夫人》。评论家凡·沃·布鲁克斯在1952年提到这本书时写道:“南方19世纪的小说中,有一本是值得牢记的,这本完美的小册子要比许多多产作家的整个作品都要重要。”评论家爱德蒙·威尔逊认为这本书在某些方面启蒙了英国文学大家劳伦斯。由于上述原因,女性主义者更是将《觉醒》奉为经典。在冷遇中离世的肖班可以含笑九泉了。

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A green and yellow parrot , which hung in a cage outside the door , kept repeating over and over :



“ Allez vous-en ! Allez vous-en ! Sapristi !^① That’s all right ! ”

He could speak a little Spanish , and also a language which nobody understood , unless it was the mocking-bird that hung on the other side of the door , whistling his fluty notes out upon the breeze with maddening persistence.

Mr. Pontellier^② , unable to read his newspaper with any degree of comfort , arose with an expression and an exclamation of disgust. He walked down the gallery and across the narrow “ bridges ” which connected the Lebrun cottages one with the other.^③ He had been seated before the door of the main house. The parrot and the mocking-bird were the property of Madame Lebrun , and they had the right to make all the noise they wished. Mr. Pontellier had the privilege of quitting their society when they ceased to be entertaining.

He stopped before the door of his own cottage , which was the fourth one from the main building and next to the last. Seating himself in a wicker rocker^④ which was there , he once more applied himself to the task of reading the newspaper. The day was Sunday ; the paper was a day old. The Sunday papers had not yet reached Grand Isle^⑤. He was already acquainted with the market reports , and he glanced restlessly over the editorials and bits of news which he had not had time to read before quitting New Orleans the day before.

Mr. Pontellier wore eye-glasses. He was a man of forty , of medium height and rather slender build ; he stooped a little. His hair

① Allez vous-en ! Allez vous-en ! Sapristi ! : (法) 走开 ! 走开 ! 看在上帝的份上 !

② Mr. Pontellier : (小说中的) 庞特里耶先生是新奥尔良有名的商人 ③ He walked ... the other : 他走下长廊, 穿过连接瑞伯仑家度假小屋的“小桥”。瑞伯仑夫人在格蓝岛拥有十来幢度假小屋, 靠出租小屋过着悠闲的生活 ④ wicker rocker : 藤摇椅

⑤ Grand Isle : 格蓝岛位于距新奥尔良五十英里处, 介于墨西哥湾和卡半那达湾之间。该岛在 19 世纪早期是有名的海盗据点, 到 19 世纪末成为克里欧人 (the Creole) 的避暑胜地, 于 1893 年毁于一场飓风。由此可见, 这本小说的背景应设在 1893 年之前。克里欧人是新奥尔良地区法国和西班牙移民的后裔, 皆为贵族

was brown and straight , parted on one side. His beard was neatly and closely trimmed.

Once in a while he withdrew his glance from the newspaper and looked about him. There was more noise than ever over at the house. The main building was called “ the house , ” to distinguish it from the cottages. The chattering and whistling birds were still at it. Two young girls , the Farival twins , were playing a duet from “ Zampa ”^① upon the piano. Madame Lebrun was bustling in and out , giving orders in a high key to a yard-boy whenever she got inside the house , and directions in an equally high voice to a dining-room servant whenever she got outside. She was a fresh , pretty woman , clad always in white with elbow sleeves. Her starched skirts crinkled as she came and went.^② Farther down , before one of the cottages , a lady in black was walking demurely up and down , telling her beads^③. A good many persons of the pension had gone over to the Cheniere Caminada^④ in Beaufelet’s lugger to hear mass. Some young people were out under the water-oaks playing croquet^⑤. Mr. Pontellier’s two children were there — sturdy little fellows of four and five. A quadroon nurse followed them about with a faraway , meditative air.^⑥

Mr. Pontellier finally lit a cigar and began to smoke , letting the paper drag idly from his hand. He fixed his gaze upon a white sunshade that was advancing at snail’s pace from the beach. He could see it plainly between the gaunt trunks of the water-oaks and across the stretch of yellow camomile. The gulf looked far away , melting hazily into the blue of the horizon. The sunshade continued to approach slowly. Beneath its pink-lined shelter were his wife , Mrs. Pontellier , and young Robert Lebrun. When they reached the cottage , the two seated themselves with some appearance of fatigue upon the upper step of the porch , facing each other , each leaning against a supporting post.

“ What folly ! To bathe at such an hour in such heat ! ” exclaimed

① Zampa:《尚巴》是法国作曲家路易斯·哈罗德(Louis Herold. 1791—1833)所作的浪漫歌剧,描述了一对在大海中遇难的恋人 ② Her starched ... and went: 她进进出出时,浆过的裙子沙沙作响 ③ telling her beads: 数着念珠 ④ the Cheniere Caminada: 尚奈儿岛是路易斯安那州和格蓝州之间的小岛 ⑤ croquet: 槌球游戏 ⑥ A quadroon ... meditative air: 一个混血儿保姆跟在孩子们身后,看上去神情恍惚,若有所思。quadroon:(有四分之一黑人血统的)混血儿

Mr. Pontellier. He himself had taken a plunge^① at daylight. That was why the morning seemed long to him.

“You are burnt beyond recognition,” he added, looking at his wife as one looks at a valuable piece of personal property which has suffered some damage.^② She held up her hands, strong, shapely hands, and surveyed them critically, drawing up her lawn sleeves above the wrists. Looking at them reminded her of her rings, which she had given to her husband before leaving for the beach. She silently reached out to him, and he, understanding, took the rings from his vest pocket and dropped them into her open palm. She slipped them upon her fingers; then clasping her knees, she looked across at Robert and began to laugh. The rings sparkled upon her fingers. He sent back an answering smile.

“What is it?” asked Pontellier, looking lazily and amused from one to the other. It was some utter nonsense; some adventure out there in the water, and they both tried to relate it at once. It did not seem half so amusing when told. They realized this, and so did Mr. Pontellier. He yawned and stretched himself. Then he got up, saying he had half a mind to go over to Klein’s hotel and play a game of billiards.^③

“Come go along^④, Lebrun,” he proposed to Robert. But Robert admitted quite frankly that he preferred to stay where he was and talk to Mrs. Pontellier.

“Well, send him about his business when he bores you, Edna,” instructed her husband as he prepared to leave.

“Here, take the umbrella,” she exclaimed, holding it out to him. He accepted the sunshade, and lifting it over his head descended the steps and walked away.

“Coming back to dinner?” his wife called after him. He halted a moment and shrugged his shoulders. He felt in his vest pocket; there was a ten-dollar bill there. He did not know; perhaps he would return for the early dinner and perhaps he would not. It all depended upon the company which he found over at Klein’s and the size of “the

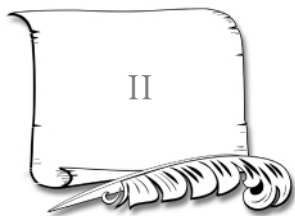
① taken a plunge: 跃入水中, 游泳 ② You are ... some damage: “你给晒得都认不出了!”他加了一句。他看看太太,如同在看一件遭到损害的有价值的财产。

③ Then he ... of billiards: 然后他起身,说想去克莱因饭店打台球 ④ Come go along: 一起去吧! Come 在这里是感叹词,表示鼓励

game. ^① He did not say this , but she understood it , and laughed , nodding good-by to him.

Both children wanted to follow their father when they saw him starting out. He kissed them and promised to bring them back bonbons and peanuts.

① It all ... “the game”: 这要看他在克莱因饭店碰到哪些人,台球玩得怎么样了



Mrs. Pontellier's eyes were quick and bright; they were a yellowish brown^①, about the color of her hair. She had a way of turning them swiftly upon an object and holding them there as if lost in some inward maze of contemplation or thought.

Her eyebrows were a shade darker than her hair. They were thick and almost horizontal, emphasizing the depth of her eyes. She was rather handsome than beautiful.^② Her face was captivating by reason of a certain frankness of expression and a contradictory subtle play of features. Her manner was engaging.

Robert rolled a cigarette. He smoked cigarettes because he could not afford cigars, he said. He had a cigar in his pocket which Mr. Pontellier had presented him with, and he was saving it for his after-dinner smoke.

This seemed quite proper and natural on his part. In coloring he was not unlike his companion.^③ A clean-shaved face made the resemblance more pronounced than it would otherwise have been.^④ There rested no shadow of care upon his open countenance. His eyes gathered in and reflected the light and languor of the summer day.

Mrs. Pontellier reached over for a palm-leaf fan that lay on the porch and began to fan herself, while Robert sent between his lips light puffs from his cigarette. They chatted incessantly: about the things around them; their amusing adventure out in the water — it had again assumed its entertaining aspect; about the wind, the trees, the people who had gone to the Cheniere^⑤; about the children playing croquet under the oaks, and the Farival twins, who were now performing the overture to "The Poet and the Peasant"^⑥.

Robert talked a good deal about himself. He was very young, and

① a yellowish brown: 带点黄褐色 ② She was ... than beautiful: 与其说她美丽, 不如说她端庄健美 ③ In coloring ... his companion: 他的肤色同他的同伴十分相像

④ A clean-shaved ... have been: 刮得干干净净的脸使他看上去同艾德娜更像了

⑤ Cheniere: 即尚奈尔岛 ⑥ The Poet and the Peasant: 《诗人与农夫》是弗朗士·凡·苏泊(Franz Von Suppe)所作的一出轻松小歌剧

did not know any better.^① Mrs. Pontellier talked a little about herself for the same reason. Each was interested in what the other said. Robert spoke of his intention to go to Mexico in the autumn, where fortune awaited him. He was always intending to go to Mexico, but some way never got there. Meanwhile he held on to his modest position in a mercantile house^② in New Orleans, where an equal familiarity with English, French and Spanish gave him no small^③ value as a clerk and correspondent.

He was spending his summer vacation, as he always did, with his mother at Grand Isle. In former times, before Robert could remember, "the house" had been a summer luxury of the Lebruns. Now, flanked by its dozen or more cottages, which were always filled with exclusive visitors from the "Quartier Francais"^④, it enabled Madame Lebrun to maintain the easy and comfortable existence which appeared to be her birthright.

Mrs. Pontellier talked about her father's Mississippi plantation and her girlhood home in the old Kentucky bluegrass country^⑤. She was an American woman, with a small infusion of French which seemed to have been lost in dilution. She read a letter from her sister, who was away in the East, and who had engaged herself to be married. Robert was interested, and wanted to know what manner of girls the sisters were, what the father was like, and how long the mother had been dead.

When Mrs. Pontellier folded the letter it was time for her to dress for the early dinner.

"I see Leonce isn't coming back," she said, with a glance in the direction whence her husband had disappeared. Robert supposed he was not, as there were a good many New Orleans club men over at Klein's.

When Mrs. Pontellier left him to enter her room, the young man descended the steps and strolled over toward the croquet players, where, during the half-hour before dinner, he amused himself with the little Pontellier children, who were very fond of him.

① He was ... any better: 他很年轻,还有点天真 ② mercantile house: 商业征信所
 ③ no small: 系固定用法,表示相当大的 ④ the "Quartier Francais": 法区是新奥尔良最古老的居住区。法国人自18世纪早期开始来此定居。19世纪时克里欧人大都在此居住 ⑤ bluegrass country: 长满六月禾(一种植物)的乡村



It was eleven o'clock that night when Mr. Pontellier returned from Klein's hotel. He was in an excellent humor^①, in high spirits, and very talkative. His entrance awoke his wife, who was in bed and fast asleep when he came in. He talked to her while he undressed, telling her anecdotes and bits of news and gossip that he had gathered during the day. From his trousers pockets he took a fistful of crumpled bank notes and a good deal of silver coin, which he piled on the bureau indiscriminately with keys, knife, handkerchief, and whatever else happened to be in his pockets. She was overcome with sleep, and answered him with little half utterances.^②

He thought it very discouraging that his wife, who was the sole object of his existence, evinced so little interest in things which concerned him, and valued so little his conversation.^③

Mr. Pontellier had forgotten the bonbons and peanuts for the boys. Notwithstanding he loved them very much, and went into the adjoining room where they slept to take a look at them and make sure that they were resting comfortably. The result of his investigation was far from satisfactory.^④ He turned and shifted the youngsters about in bed. One of them began to kick and talk about a basket full of crabs.

Mr. Pontellier returned to his wife with the information that Raoul had a high fever and needed looking after. Then he lit a cigar and went and sat near the open door to smoke it.

Mrs. Pontellier was quite sure Raoul had no fever. He had gone to bed perfectly well, she said, and nothing had ailed him all day. Mr. Pontellier was too well acquainted with fever symptoms to be mistaken.^⑤

He assured her the child was consuming at that moment in the next

① in an excellent humor: 心境特佳, 情绪很好。同 in an ill humor 相对 ② She was ... half utterances: 睡意袭来, 她迷迷糊糊地应着 ③ He thought ... his conversation: 这句话体现了庞特里耶先生对妻子的不满, 为后来发生的事埋下了伏笔
④ The result ... from satisfactory: 巡视的结果令他很不满意 ⑤ Mr. Pontellier ... be mistaken: 庞特里耶先生对发烧的症状太了解了, 他绝对不会搞错的