

正文

I

*The Good Things and
the Bad Things*

The things brought by ill fortune, taking advantage of the feebleness of those brought by good fortune, pursued them closely. They went up to heaven and there asked Zeus to tell them how they should behave with regard to men. Zeus told them that they should present themselves to men not all together but only one at a time. And that is why the bad things, living near to men, assail them constantly, while the good things, who have to come down from the sky, only arrive at long intervals.

Thus we see how good fortune never reaches us quickly, while bad fortune strikes us every day.

2

The Man Selling a Holy Statue

A man carved a wooden statue of the god Hermes and carried it to the market to offer it for sale. But no buyer came along. So the man took it into his head to attract a buyer by crying out that he was selling a god who would provide both goods and profits. A passer-by heard this and said to him:

‘Ha! Well, friend, if he is so beneficent, why are you selling him instead of making use of his help yourself?’

The merchant replied:

1

好事和坏事

厄运带来的坏事见幸运带来的好事软弱可欺，就跟在后面紧追不舍。他们上天进见宙斯^①，请教应该如何去和人类打交道。宙斯告诫他们，去见人类时只能分头前往，不宜结伴同行。结果可想而知，坏事近在咫尺，不断前来骚扰人类，而好事远在天涯，迟迟才能下来惠顾人类。

无怪世人久久不见好运光临，时时横遭厄运侵袭。

2

卖神像的人

有人雕了一座赫耳墨斯神^①的木像，拿到市场上兜售。由于找不到买主，那人为招徕顾客，灵机一动，便大声吆喝起来，说他卖的神像能招财进宝。一个过路人听到了吆喝声，对他说道：“哈，我的朋友，这神要是像你所说的那样灵验，何不留着自个儿享用他给你的好处，偏偏要把他卖了呢？”

卖神像的人回答说：“唉，我这么做也是迫于无奈。我需

^①宙斯 (Zeus) 是希腊神话中的主神，相当于罗马神话中的朱庇特 (Jupiter)。

^②赫耳墨斯 (Hermes) 是希腊神话中众神的使者，系商旅、道路、赌徒和窃贼的庇护神。

‘Oh, it isn’t that. It’s just that I need ready cash and the god is never in a hurry to render his services.’

This fable relates to base, self-seeking men who are not sustained by the gods.

3

The Eagle and the Fox

An eagle and a fox, having become friends, decided to live near one another and be neighbours. They believed that this proximity would strengthen their friendship. So the eagle flew up and established herself on a very high branch of a tree, where she made her nest. And the fox, creeping about among the bushes which were at the foot of the same tree, made her den there, depositing her babies right beneath the eagle.

But, one day when the fox was out looking for food, the eagle, who was very short of food too, swooped down to the bushes and took the fox cubs up to her nest and feasted on them with her own young.

When the fox returned, she was less distressed at the death of her little ones than she was driven mad by frustration at the impossibility of ever effectively avenging herself. For she, a land animal [*chersaia*], could never hope to pursue a winged bird. She had no option but to content herself, in her powerlessness and feebleness, with cursing her enemy from afar.

Now it was not long afterwards that the eagle did actually receive her punishment for her crime against her friend.

Some men were sacrificing a goat in the countryside and the eagle swooped down on the altar, carrying off some burning entrails, which she took up to her nest. A strong wind arose which blew the fire from the burning entrails into some old straw that was in the nest. The eaglets were singed and, as they were not yet able to fly,

要的是马上到手的现钱，而神总是慢腾腾地给人带来财运。”

本则寓言适用于追逐私利之徒，此类人往往为神祇所弃。

3

鹰和狐狸

鹰和狐狸交上了朋友，决定相邻而居，以为彼此靠得近了，友谊会更加牢固。于是，鹰飞上一棵大树，在高高的树枝上筑巢育雏，狐狸钻进同一棵树下的灌木丛，就在鹰巢的下方搭了个窝，在那里哺养儿女。

不料有一天，狐狸外出觅食，鹰也没什么可吃的，就朝灌木丛猛扑下来，把小狐狸一个不留全抓回巢里，和小鹰一起美美地饱餐了一顿。

狐狸回来后，不仅为儿女惨遭不测而难过，更为无法报仇而悲恸欲绝。只怪她自己是走兽，休想指望去追逐飞禽。作为一个无能为力的弱者，她只得站在远处诅咒仇敌，此外也就无计可施了。

嗣后不久，鹰戕害朋友的罪行终于受到了惩罚。

有人在郊外宰羊祭献，鹰猛地 toward 祭坛扑去，抓了几根燃烧着的羊肠飞回巢中。恰逢狂风大作，从羊肠上吹落的火星点燃了巢里的枯草，小鹰身上着了火，因羽毛未丰飞不起来，

when they leaped from the nest they fell to the ground. The fox rushed up and devoured them all in front of the eagle's eyes.

This story shows that if you betray friendship, you may evade the vengeance of those whom you wrong if they are weak, but ultimately you cannot escape the vengeance of heaven.

4

The Eagle and the Scarab Beetle

An eagle was once pursuing a hare. This hare, seeing his position was hopeless, turned to the only creature whom fate offered for help: it was a scarab beetle. The hare begged the beetle to save him. The scarab beetle reassured him, and upon the eagle's approach the beetle beseeched her not to carry off the hare. But the eagle, disdainful of his small size and insignificance, devoured the hare as the beetle looked on.

From that time, the scarab beetle, full of malice, never ceases to search out the places where the eagle builds her nest. And when the eggs are laid, the beetle gets into the nest, hoists himself up and rolls the eggs out of the nest so that they fall and break.

The eagle is consecrated to Zeus, and so the eagle appealed to Zeus to find her a safe sanctuary where she could raise her young. Zeus allowed her to lay her eggs in his lap. But the scarab beetle saw through this trick. He made a pellet of dung, took flight, and when he got above the lap of Zeus he let it fall. Zeus stood up to shake off the dung pellet, and the eggs were thrown to the ground without his thinking.

Since that time, it is said, eagles no longer nest during the season when the scarab beetles appear.

The fable teaches one not to despise anyone. One must say to oneself that there is no being so feeble that he is not capable one day of avenging an insult.

跃出巢外时纷纷坠地而死。狐狸一个箭步蹿上去，当着鹰的面把小鹰都吃了。

本则寓言意谓：背信弃义之徒，欺受害者孱弱而一时免遭报复，终难逃脱天谴神罚。

4

鹰和屎壳郎

鹰追逐一只野兔，正当兔子走投无路时，也是天缘奇遇，碰巧附近有一只屎壳郎，兔子便跑去向他求救。屎壳郎劝他不必惊慌。正说话时，鹰追踪而至，屎壳郎便恳求她别把兔子抓走。鹰压根儿没拿区区的屎壳郎放在眼里，硬是当着他的面把兔子吞吃了。

从那以后，满腔悲愤的屎壳郎总是四处寻觅筑有鹰巢的所在。只要鹰一产卵，屎壳郎便飞入巢内，用自己的身体把卵纷纷顶出巢外，跌得个稀巴烂。

作为宙斯的圣鸟，鹰就逃到宙斯那里，恳求赐她一个安全场所孵化小鹰。宙斯允许鹰在他的怀里产卵。屎壳郎识破了这一诡计，就滚了一个粪蛋，飞到宙斯那儿，把它丢进他的怀里。宙斯站起身来抖落粪蛋，没留神把鹰卵也抖掉了。

相传打那以后，每逢有屎壳郎出没的时节，鹰就不孵化小鹰了。

本则寓言劝谕世人，勿生侮慢之心，须知弱者受辱怯意顿消，无不伺机报仇雪耻。

The Eagle, the Jackdaw and the Shepherd

An eagle, dropping suddenly from a high rock, carried off a lamb. A jackdaw saw this, was smitten by a sense of rivalry and determined to do the same. So, with a great deal of noise, he pounced upon a ram. But his claws merely got caught in the thick ringlets of the ram's fleece, and no matter how frantically he flapped his wings, he was unable to get free and take flight.

Finally the shepherd bestirred himself, hurried up to the jackdaw and got hold of him. He clipped the end of his wings and, when evening fell, he carried him back for his children. The children wanted to know what sort of bird this was. So the shepherd replied:

'As far as I can see, it's a jackdaw, but it would like us to think it's an eagle!'

Just so, to compete with the powerful is not only not worth the effort and labour lost, but also brings mockery and calamity upon us.

The Eagle with Clipped Wings and the Fox

One day a man caught an eagle. He clipped its wings and released it into his farmyard to live with the poultry. The eagle hung his head in sorrow and refused to eat. One would have taken him for an imprisoned king.

But another man came along and bought the eagle. He lifted up the wing feathers and rubbed the place with myrrh so that they grew again. The eagle soared upwards into the air once more and spotted

5

鷹、穴鸟和牧人

鷹突然从峭壁上飞下来，把一只羔羊叼走了。见此情景，穴鸟不甘示弱，刻意模仿鷹的做法，啪嗒一声猛扑到公羊背上，不料脚爪被公羊浓密的髯毛缠住了，任他怎么拼命扑动翅膀，也休想再飞得起来。

最后，轮到牧人大显身手了，他跑上去一下逮住穴鸟，剪去了翅膀上的羽毛。傍晚时分，他把穴鸟带回家，送给了孩子们。孩子们想知道那是什么鸟，牧人回答说：“就我所知，这分明是一只穴鸟，可他偏偏希望人家把他看作是一头雄鹰。”

恰如本则寓言所示，逞气与强者竞争，岂止徒劳无功，且将招人哂笑，乃至祸及己身。

6

鷹和狐狸

某日，有人逮到了一只鷹，剪短了他的翅膀，把他关进场院和家禽一起喂养。鷹十分伤心，垂头丧气，拒不进食。那副神态，活像是一位被囚的君王。

后来另一个人来把鷹买去了。他撩起鷹翅膀上的羽毛，在受伤部位涂上一些没药^①，于是翅膀又长成了原来的模样。

^① 没药是用于主治痈疽肿痛、跌打损伤等症的药物。

a hare. He seized the hare in his talons and offered it to the man as a gift.

A fox had seen all this and said to the eagle:

‘You shouldn’t give the hare to him. You should give it to your first master. The second master is naturally good. But you ought to give a present to the first one to deter him from catching you and clipping your wings again.’

Thus, one should generously repay the favours of one’s benefactors and prudently keep out of the way of wicked people.

7

The Eagle Hit by an Arrow

An eagle had perched on the crest of a craggy rock to scan the ground below for hares. A man shot him with an arrow, which lodged in his flesh. The end of the arrow, feathered with eagle’s feathers, stuck out of him and stared him in the face. Seeing it, he cried out:

‘This is the crowning insult, to die because of the danger I myself presented!’

The pangs of suffering are made more poignant when we are beaten at our own game.

8

The Nightingale and the Hawk

A nightingale, perched on a tall oak, was singing as usual when a hawk saw her. He was very hungry, so he swooped down upon her

鹰再度飞入高空，发现了一只野兔，就把他捉了来作为礼物送给主人。

狐狸把这一切全看在眼里，就对鹰说道：“你不该把野兔送给现在的主人，而该送给原来的主人。现在的主人本性善良，但原来的主人你非得给他送礼不可，免得他又来逮你，剪你的翅膀。”

由此可见，对恩人自当不吝图报，遇歹徒则宜谨加防备。

7

中箭的鹰

鹰高踞岩石顶上俯察地面，正打算去捕获一只兔子。有人一箭命中了他，箭头射人体内，饰有鹰的羽毛的箭杆露出体外，不偏不倚正对着他，看上去十分刺眼鹰望着箭杆叹道：“死于自己的羽翎，真是奇耻大辱呀！”

本欲设计害人，岂料卒致害己，惟因事与愿违，尤感创巨痛深。

8

夜莺和鹰

夜莺栖息在高高的橡树上，像往常那样唱着歌，却被鹰发现了。饥肠辘辘的鹰猛地飞扑过去，一把抓住了她。夜莺临

and seized her. Seeing herself about to die, the nightingale pleaded to the hawk to let her go, saying she was not a sizeable enough meal and would never fill the stomach of a hawk, and that if he were hungry he ought to find some bigger birds. But the hawk replied:

‘I would certainly be foolish if I let a meal go which I already have in my talons to run after something else which I haven’t yet seen.’

Men are foolish who, in hope of greater things, let those which they have in their grasp escape.

9

The Nightingale and the Swallow

The swallow urged the nightingale to take up residence under the roofs of men and live near them, as she herself did.

The nightingale replied:

‘No, thank you. I have no desire to revive the memories of all my past misfortunes.’

Thus, some people afflicted by a stroke of bad luck wish to avoid the place where the misfortune occurred.

10

The Athenian Debtor

In Athens, a debtor summoned by his creditor to repay his debt begged for more time because things were very difficult for him. Not being able to persuade his creditor, he led a sow, the only one he owned, and offered it for sale in front of him. A buyer came

死之际，恳求鹰放了她，说她个子小，填不满鹰的肚子，鹰要是觉得饿，就该去寻觅比她大的鸟。鹰回答说：“我如果放弃已经到手的食物，而去追求虚无缥缈的东西，岂不是太傻了。”

一味贪求苟得，遂使掌中之物，顷刻渺无踪影，此乃愚者行径。

9

夜莺和燕子

燕子劝夜莺学她的榜样，在屋檐下栖身，和人类做邻居。

夜莺回答说：“不，谢谢你，我可不愿勾起对不幸往事的回忆。”^①

与之相仿，有不幸遭际者，于祸患降临所在，避之惟恐不及。

10

雅典的欠债人

事情发生在雅典，有人欠了债，被债主召去催还债务，他却推说手头拮据，要求延缓债期。债主不肯通融，欠债人便牵出仅有的一头大母猪，当着债主的面出售。有个买主走了过

古希腊人有吃夜莺的习惯，但他们从不吃燕子。

along and asked if the sow were fertile.

'Oh yes, she's fertile,' replied the debtor, 'extraordinarily so. During the time of the Eleusinian Mysteries she gives birth to females, and during the Panathēnaic Festival she gives birth to males.'

The buyer was stunned on hearing this. The creditor added sarcastically:

'I shouldn't be surprised if I were you. Why, it's quite clear that this sow would also doubtless give birth to baby goats for the god Dionysius.'

This fable shows that people do not hesitate to pledge the impossible when they are desperate.

11

The Ethiopian

A man who bought an Ethiopian slave presumed that his [black] colour was due to neglect by his former owner. Taking him home, he set to work scrubbing him down with soap. He tried every method of washing which he knew, to try and whiten him. But he could not alter his colour. Indeed, he made himself ill with his exertions.

This fable shows that the nature of something is seen straightaway.

12

The Cat and the Cock

A cat who had caught a cock wanted to give a plausible reason for devouring it. So she accused it of annoying people by crowing at

来，问那头母猪是否还会下崽。

“哦，没错，她不光会下崽，”欠债人回答说，“而且下崽的本领非同小可。她在丰收女神节会下母崽，在护城女神节会下公崽。”

买主听了惊诧不已。债主接着用嘲讽的语气说道：“换了我就不会那么大惊小怪了。嗨，一点也不含糊，这头母猪到了酒神节一准会生下小山羊哩。”

本则寓言意谓：人处山穷水尽之境，于荒诞不经之事，亦不惜言之凿凿。

11

黑人

有人买了一个黑人奴隶，认定黑人的肤色是因为原主人的疏失而造成的。那人把黑人领回家后，忙不迭地用肥皂为他擦洗，尝试了各种方法，企图让他的皮肤变白。结果他非但没能改变黑人的肤色，自己却累得病倒了。

本则寓言意谓：事物本相，彰明较著，欲求更易，徒劳无功。

12

猫和公鸡

猫逮到了公鸡，想找一个堂而皇之的理由把他吃了。她先是指责公鸡夜里啼叫，吵得人睡不好觉。

night and disturbing their sleep.

The cock defended himself by saying that he did it to be helpful. For, if he woke people up, it was to summon them to their accustomed work.

Then the cat produced another grievance and accused the cock of insulting Nature by his relationship with his mother and sisters.

The cock replied that in this also he was serving his master's interests, since it was thanks to this that the chickens laid lots of eggs.

'Ah well!' cried the cat, 'I'm not going to go without food just because you can produce a lot of justifications!' And she ate the cock.

This fable shows that someone with a wicked nature who is determined to do wrong, when he cannot do so in the guise of a good man, does his evil deeds openly.

13

The Cat and the Mice

A house was infested with mice. A cat discovered this, went there and caught them one after the other and ate them. The mice, seeing themselves continually being caught, were forced back to their holes. Not wanting to wait endlessly for them to come out, the cat thought of a ruse to tempt them out. He climbed up on to a wooden peg and hung there, pretending to be dead. But one of the mice, poking his head out to have a look around, saw him and said:

'Hey, friend! Even if you're going to hang there pretending to be a sack, I'm certainly not going to come near you!'

This fable shows that sensible men, when they have put to the test the wickedness of certain people, are no longer taken in by their falseness.

公鸡为自己辩解说，他这样做对人有益，为的是把他们唤醒，以便振作精神去从事日常工作。

猫又提出一条理由，指责公鸡伤风败俗，竟然与亲生母亲和同胞姐妹乱伦。公鸡回答说，这也是为主人着想，要不母鸡就不会生那么多的蛋了。

“算了吧！”猫大声嚷道，“任凭你理由再多，也不能让我饿肚子呀！”猫终于把公鸡给吃了。

本则寓言意谓：生性邪恶之徒，蓄意为非作歹，一旦原形毕露，肆行无所忌惮。

13

猫 和 鼠

某幢房子里经常有老鼠出没，一只猫发现这个情况后，便到那儿把他们一一逮来吃了。眼见同类接连被猫逮走，剩下的老鼠只得躲回洞里藏身。老鼠总不出来，猫等得不耐烦了，就想了一个引鼠出洞的计谋。他爬上屋梁，抓住木钩吊在半空装死。此时，一只老鼠从洞里探出头来四处张望，看见了猫，说道：“喂，朋友！即使你装成袋子模样一直悬挂在那儿，我也决不会向你靠拢半步。”

本则寓言意谓：智者一旦受人欺蒙，任凭对方甘言巧辞，休望诱其再度入彀。