

爵士乐时代的代言人

菲茨杰拉德短篇小说选

The Diamond as Big as the Ritz

I

John T. Unger came from a family that had been well known in Hades — a small town on the Mississippi River — for several generations. John's father had held the amateur golf championship through many a heated contest; Mrs. Unger was known "from hot-box to hot-bed," as the local phrase went, for her political addresses; and young John T. Unger, who had just turned sixteen, had danced all the latest dances from New York before he put on long trousers. And now, for a certain time, he was to be away from home. That respect for a New England education which is the bane of all provincial places, which drains them yearly of their most promising young men, had seized upon his parents. Nothing would suit them but that he should go to St. Midas' School near Boston — Hades was too small to hold their darling and gifted son.

Now in Hades — as you know if you ever have been there — the names of the more fashionable preparatory schools and colleges mean very little. The inhabitants have been so long out of the world that, though they make a show of keeping up to date in dress and manners and literature, they depend to a great extent on hearsay, and a function that in Hades would be considered elaborate would doubtless be hailed by a Chicago beef-princess as "perhaps a little tacky."

John T. Unger was on the eve of departure. Mrs. Unger, with maternal fatuity, packed his trunks full of linen suits and electric fans, and Mr. Unger presented his son with an asbestos pocket-book stuffed with money.

"Remember, you are always welcome here," he said. "You can be sure, boy, that we'll keep the home fires burning."

"I know," answered John huskily.

一颗里茨饭店那么大的钻石

哈德斯是密西西比河上的一个小镇，约翰·T·昂格尔出生在这个小镇中一户世代都颇有名望的人家里。约翰的父亲曾多次在竞争激烈的业余高尔夫球比赛中获得冠军；而昂格尔太太则如当地话“从火车的过热轴承箱到温室”所形容的那样，由于她精彩的政治演说而家喻户晓；刚满16岁的小约翰·T·昂格尔却已在换上长裤之前就跳来自纽约的所有时髦舞蹈。现在小约翰就要离开家一些日子了。在许多诸如哈德斯这样的小地方，人们对新英格兰那里的教育都怀着无限的崇尚，而事实上这种崇尚却正是他们的祸根，每年它都攫走了他们当中最优秀的青年。此时约翰的父母也正为这种崇尚所困扰。哈德斯这弹丸之地越来越束缚他们这亲爱的天才儿子的发展。他们非送约翰去波士顿附近的圣·米达斯学校读书不可。

去过哈德斯的人都知道，如今那些更加时髦的预科学校和大学的名字对于那里的人们再不像以前那么重要了。尽管他们在穿着、举止、文学阅读等方面都显得跟得上潮流，但哈德斯的居民们已同这个世界隔离得太久，他们对世界的了解很大程度上仅依赖于道听途说。在哈德斯可能被看作是一次豪华盛会的，到了芝加哥一个牛肉公主眼里无疑只会被说成是“未免寒伧了点儿。”

在约翰·T·昂格尔离家的前夜，昂格尔太太带着作母亲的傻劲儿，在他的行囊里塞满了亚麻衬衫和电扇。昂格尔先生则送给约翰一个塞满钞票的石棉夹子。

“记住，孩子，在这里你永远是受欢迎的，”昂格尔先生说，“你完全可以相信我们会让家中的炉火一直烧旺。”

“知道了。”约翰粗着嗓子回答道。

"Don't forget who you are and where you come from," continued his father proudly, "and you can do nothing to harm you. You are an Unger — from Hades."

So the old man and the young shook hands and John walked away with tears streaming from his eyes. Ten minutes later he had passed outside the city limits, and he stopped to glance back for the last time. Over the gates the old-fashioned Victorian motto seemed strangely attractive to him. His father had tried time and time again to have it changed to something with a little more push and verve about it, such as "Hades — Your Opportunity," or else a plain "Welcome" sign set over a hearty handshake pricked out in electric lights. The old motto was a little depressing, Mr. Unger had thought — but now

So John took his look and then set his face resolutely toward his destination. And, as he turned away, the lights of Hades against the sky seemed full of a warm and passionate beauty.

St. Midas' School is half an hour from Boston in a Rolls-Pierce motor-car. The actual distance will never be known, for no one, except John T. Unger, had ever arrived there save in a Rolls-Pierce and probably no one ever will again. St. Midas' is the most expensive and the most exclusive boys' preparatory school in the world.

John's first two years there passed pleasantly. The fathers of all the boys were money-kings and John spent his summers visiting at fashionable resorts. While he was very fond of all the boys he visited, their fathers struck him as being much of a piece, and in his boyish way he often wondered at their exceeding sameness. When he told them where his home was they would ask jovially, "Pretty hot down there?" and John would muster a faint smile and answer, "It certainly is." His response would have been heartier had they not all made this joke — at best varying it with, "Is it hot enough for you down there?" which he hated just as much.

In the middle of his second year at school, a quiet, handsome boy named Percy Washington had been put in John's form. The newcomer was pleasant in his manner and exceedingly well dressed even for St. Midas', but for some reason he kept aloof from the other boys. The only person with whom he was intimate was John T. Unger, but even to John he was entirely uncommunicative concerning his home or his family. That he was wealthy went without saying, but beyond a few such deductions John knew little of his friend, so it promised rich confectionery for his curiosity when Percy

“别忘了你是谁,你从哪里来,”约翰的父亲骄傲地接着说;“不要做任何伤害自己的事情,你是昂格尔家族的一员——哈德斯的昂格尔。”

于是父子二人握手告别。约翰泪涟涟地走远了。10分钟后约翰越过了小城的边境。他最后一次驻足回望。大门上高悬的老派维多利亚式的题词此时对约翰有着一种奇特的吸引力。约翰的父亲好几次想把这个题词改得更有力度更有激情,例如“哈德斯——你的机遇”,或者在用电影灯打照出来的一个热情的握手之上竖一块简简单单写着“欢迎”字样的招牌。这句老格言显然有些让人沮丧,昂格尔先生曾想过——但是现在……

约翰收回了目光,然后毅然决然地扭头朝向目的地的方向,就在他转身的霎间,哈德斯的万家灯火在夜空的衬托下正散发着无限迷人的温馨、动人的美。

要去圣·米达斯学校,从波士顿坐罗尔斯-皮埃尔斯牌轿车只需半个小时就到了。除了约翰·T·昂格尔以外,其他在这儿读书的孩子过去和将来都是坐着罗尔斯-皮埃尔斯上学的,没人会像他那样。圣·米达斯是世界上最昂贵、最排外的一所男子预科学校。

约翰在那儿的头两年过得非常愉快。那里所有男孩子的父亲都是大富翁,所以暑假时约翰经常被邀请去那些时髦的度假胜地。他非常喜欢那些邀请他一起过暑假的伙伴们,但他们的父亲给他的印象却都如出一辙,他经常为他们超乎寻常的相似而孩子气地感到惊叹。每当约翰告诉他们他的家在哈德斯时,这些富翁总会乐呵呵地半开玩笑地问道:“那儿是不是很热?”于是约翰勉强地挤出一个微笑,回答说:“当然很热。”要不是他们都开这样的玩笑,约翰的回答也许会更自然而坦诚些——这玩笑顶多会变成“你是不是觉着那里非常热?”对于这样的问题约翰同样痛恨。

约翰在校的第二年中,班上来了一位名叫珀西·华盛顿的新同学。这位新同学彬彬有礼,穿着考究,即便在圣·米达斯这样的学校也是不多见的。但不知为什么他总是不太合群。约翰·T·昂格尔是他唯一的朋友。但是即便对约翰他也从来不谈及他的家乡或他的家庭。珀西非常富有,这不用说了,可是除了诸如此类的一些推断外,约翰几乎对珀西一

invited him to spend the summer at his home "in the West." He accepted, without hesitation.

It was only when they were in the train that Percy became, for the first time, rather communicative. One day while they were eating lunch in the dining-car and discussing the imperfect characters of several of the boys at school, Percy suddenly changed his tone and made an abrupt remark.

"My father," he said, "is by far the richest man in the world."

"Oh," said John, politely. He could think of no answer to make to this confidence. He considered "That's very nice," but it sounded hollow and was on the point of saying, "Really?" but refrained since it would seem to question Percy's statement. And such an astounding statement could scarcely be questioned.

"By far the richest," repeated Percy.

"I was reading in the *World Almanac*," began John, "that there was one man in America with an income of over five million a year and four men with incomes of over three million a year, and —"

"Oh, they're nothing," Percy's mouth was a half-moon of scorn. "Catch-penny capitalists, financial small-fry, petty merchants and money-lenders. My father could buy them out and not know he'd done it."

"But how does he —"

"Why haven't they put down *his* income tax? Because he doesn't pay any. At least he pays a little one — but he doesn't pay any on his *real* income."

"He must be very rich," said John simply. "I'm glad. I like very rich people."

"The richer a fella is, the better I like him." There was a look of passionate frankness upon his dark face. "I visited the Schnlitzer-Murphys last Easter. Vivian Schnlitzer-Murphy had rubies as big as hen's eggs, and sapphires that were like globes with lights inside them —"

"I love jewels," agreed Percy enthusiastically. "Of course I wouldn't want any one at school to know about it, but I've got quite a collection myself. I used to collect them instead of stamps."

"And diamonds," continued John eagerly. "The Schnlitzer-Murphys had diamonds as big as walnuts —"

"That's nothing." Percy had leaned forward and dropped his voice to a low whisper. "That's nothing at all. My father has a diamond bigger than the Ritz-Carlton Hotel."

无所知。所以当珀西邀请约翰去他‘西部的’家度假的时候,这对他的好奇心真不啻一顿美餐,他毫不犹豫地答应了。

他们坐上火车后,珀西这才头一回显得健谈起来。这一天,他们坐在餐车里,边吃午饭边谈起学校里一些品行不良的同学,珀西突然改变了语调,冷不防地说道:

“我父亲是迄今世界上最有钱的人。”

“噢,约翰礼貌地说。他想不出对这句知心话该做出什么样的回答。他想说:“这很好”,可听起来显得比较空洞,而且像是说:“真的吗?”所以约翰没这么回答,以免让珀西觉着自己像在怀疑他。然而约翰相信珀西的话是真的。

“最有钱的,到目前为止,珀西又重复了一遍。

“我在《世界年鉴》上曾读到,约翰说;在美国只有1个人年收入超过500万,4个人年收入超过300万,并且——”

“噢,那算不了什么。”珀西半月形的嘴充满了轻蔑与鄙视;他们不过是一些小资本家、金融界的小虫豸、无足轻重的小商人和放债者,我父亲能轻易地把他们通通买下来。”

“那他是怎样……”

“你是想问他们为什么不登记他的个人所得税,因为他根本不缴。应该说他至少还付了一点——但那绝对不是按照他的实际收入交的。”

“他一定非常有钱,约翰直接了当地说;我很高兴,我喜欢有钱人。”

“一个人越有钱,我就越喜欢他。”约翰黑黝黝的脸庞上浮现出极为热烈而坦诚的神情。“去年复活节,我拜访了施尼茨勒—墨菲一家。维维安·施尼茨勒—墨菲有好多颗鸡蛋般大小的红宝石,还有许多做成灯泡样子的蓝宝石,里头闪闪发光的——”

“我喜爱宝石,”珀西热烈地回应道。“当然,我不想让学校里的同学知道,但是我自己收集了好多。我过去一向收集宝石,而不是邮票。”

“还有钻石,”约翰急切地说下去;施尼茨勒—墨菲家有核桃般大小的钻石——

“这没什么了不起,”珀西朝前探了探身子,压低了声音说道。“这真

II

The Montana sunset lay between two mountains like a gigantic bruise from which dark arteries spread themselves over a poisoned sky. An immense distance under the sky crouched the village of Fish, minute, dismal, and forgotten. There were twelve men, so it was said, in the village of Fish, twelve sombre and inexplicable souls who sucked a lean milk from the almost literally bare rock upon which a mysterious populatory force had be gotten them. They had become a race apart, these twelve men of Fish, like some species developed by an early whim of nature, which on second thought had abandoned them to struggle and extermination.

Out of the blue-black bruise in the distance crept a long line of moving lights upon the desolation of the land, and the twelve men of Fish gathered like ghosts at the shanty depot to watch the passing of the seven o'clock train, the Transcontinental Express from Chicago. Six times or so a year the Transcontinental Express, through some inconceivable jurisdiction, stopped at the village of Fish, and when this occurred a figure or so would disembark, mount into a buggy that always appeared from out of the dusk, and drive off toward the bruised sunset. The observation of this pointless and preposterous phenomenon had become a sort of cult among the men of Fish. To observe, that was all; there remained in them none of the vital quality of illusion which would make them wonder or speculate, else a religion might have grown up around these mysterious visitations. But the men of Fish were beyond all religion — the barest and most savage tenets of even Christianity could gain no foothold on that barren rock — so there was no altar, no priest, no sacrifice; only each night at seven the silent course by the shanty depot, a congregation who lifted up a prayer of dim, anæmic wonder.

On this June night, the Great Brakeman, whom, had they deified any one, they might well have chosen as their celestial protagonist, had ordained that the seven o'clock train should leave its human (or inhuman) deposit at Fish. At two minutes after seven Percy Washington and John T. Unger disembarked, hurried past the spellbound, the agape, the fearsome eyes of the twelve men of Fish, mounted into a buggy which had obviously appeared from nowhere, and drove away.

的算不得什么，我父亲有一颗比里茨——卡尔顿酒店还要大的钻石。”

二

蒙大拿的落日镶嵌在两座山峰之间，像一块巨大的瘀痕，向四周中毒的天空伸展着条条黑色的动脉。天幕下，遥遥匍伏着一个名叫菲舍的村子，卑微、沉郁，为世遗忘。传说这里住着 12 个男人——12 个忧郁的、神秘的灵魂。一股具有繁殖能力的神奇力量将他们降生在这块光秃秃的山石上，他们便从这个山石上吮取贫瘠的乳汁。于是，菲舍村的这 12 个男人便成了一个独特的种族，像世界上其它的一些物种，是大自然开初一时的怪念头使其产生，然后经过再三思索又将其抛弃，任凭它们痛苦地挣扎直至消亡。

远处，透过青紫色瘀痕般的落日，荒芜的土地上缓慢前行着一队灯光，此时，这 12 个男人像幽灵一般聚集在破烂不堪的村庄小站里，等待观看 7 点钟的这趟从芝加哥发出的‘横穿大陆特快列车’从这里驶过。也不知是经过了谁的允许，这趟横穿大陆的列车每年都要在菲舍村停靠 6 次左右。每当列车停靠的时候，就会有一两个人从火车上走下来，这时总会有一辆马车在暮色中出现，于是他们钻进马车，朝那片伤痕似的暮日驶去。观望这无聊而又反常的场面对菲舍村的男人们已成为一种膜拜仪式。但观望便是膜拜的所有内容。他们身上早已不存幻想所必需的品性让他们惊叹，让他们沉思，否则围绕着这些神奇的来访，宗教早就应该在他们当中产生了。但菲舍村的男人们又是超越一切宗教的——因为在这样贫瘠的岩石上，即便是基督教最原始最赤裸的信条也是无立足之地的，——所以在这里没有圣坛，没有神父，没有祭祀有的只是每晚 7 点破旧小站中安静的聚合——一群会众扬起一片微弱无力的、贫血症般的、惊疑的祈祷声。

如果菲舍村的男人们想要神化什么人的话，那么他们一定会选择火车上的扳道工他们的天神。这样一个六月的晚上，伟大的司闸天神命定 7 点钟的这趟列车在菲舍村会放下旅客或货品。7 点钟过 2 分的时候珀西·华盛顿和约翰·T·昂格尔下了火车，从这 12 个菲舍村男人着了

After half an hour, when the twilight had coagulated into dark, the silent negro who was driving the buggy hailed an opaque body somewhere ahead of them in the gloom. In response to his cry, it turned upon them a luminous disk which regarded them like a malignant eye out of the unfathomable night. As they came closer, John saw that it was the tail-light of an immense automobile, larger and more magnificent than any he had ever seen. Its body was of gleaming metal richer than nickel and lighter than silver, and the hubs of the wheels were studded with iridescent geometric figures of green and yellow — John did not dare to guess whether they were glass or jewel.

Two negroes, dressed in glittering livery such as one sees in pictures of royal processions in London, were standing at attention beside the car and as the two young men dismounted from the buggy they were greeted in some language which the guest could not understand, but which seemed to be an extreme form of the Southern negro's dialect.

"Get in," said Percy to his friend, as their trunks were tossed to the ebony roof of the limousine. "Sorry we had to bring you this far in that buggy, but of course it wouldn't do for the people on the train or those Godforsaken fellas in Fish to see this automobile."

"Gosh! What a car!" This ejaculation was provoked by its interior. John saw that the upholstery consisted of a thousand minute and exquisite tape stripes of silk, woven with jewels and embroideries, and set upon a background of cloth of gold. The two armchair seats in which the boys luxuriated were covered with stuff that resembled duvetyn, but seemed woven in numberless colors of the ends of ostrich feathers.

"What a car!" cried John again, in amazement.

"This thing?" Percy laughed. "Why, it's just an old junk we use for a station wagon."

By this time they were gliding along through the darkness toward the break between the two mountains.

"We'll be there in an hour and a half," said Percy, looking at the clock. "I may as well tell you it's not going to be like anything you ever saw before."

If the car was any indication of what John would see, he was prepared to be astonished indeed. The simple piety prevalent in Hades has the earnest worship of and respect for riches as the first article of its creed — had John felt otherwise than radiantly humble before them, his parents would have

魔的、目瞪口呆的、惊恐的目光前匆匆而过，钻进了一辆来路不明的马车，驶去了。

半个小时后，当暮色凝成黑暗时，一直沉默的黑人马夫朝前方黑暗中的一个黑影高呼起来。紧接着，一个圆碟形状的东西向他们射来耀眼的光芒，在深不可测的夜色中，像一只邪恶的眼睛死死地盯着他们。当他们靠近时，约翰才看清这其实是一辆大轿车的尾灯。约翰从没见过这么大这么华丽的轿车，它的车身用一种闪光的金属做成，比镍更贵重，比银子还要亮，车轂上镶满了绿黄相间五光十色的几何图案——约翰不敢确定这些图案是用玻璃做的，还是用宝石做的。

两位黑人侍者立正站在车旁，他们身着的制服闪闪发光，就像人们在伦敦皇家仪仗队行进的画片上看到的一样。两位年轻人走下马车时，黑人侍者向他们致意，可是约翰一点也听不懂他们在说些什么，只觉得听起来像是南方黑人的一种土得透顶的方言。

“上车吧，”珀西对约翰说，这时他们的行李也被扔上了这辆豪华轿车的乌木顶棚。“非常抱歉，我们不得不先用马车把你送到这儿，因为我们不能让火车上和那舍村的那帮被上帝遗弃的家伙看到这辆车。”

“天哪，这车真是太棒了！”看到车的内部，约翰禁不住啧啧赞叹。车内的装饰由无数块细小精致的真丝绒绣成，它以金丝织物为底衬，上面缀满宝石和花边。供两个少年尽情享受的两只沙发座椅上铺的是一种毛绒绒的织物，但看来却像是五彩的鸵鸟羽绒织成。

“这车真是太棒了！”约翰再次惊叹。

“就这东西？”珀西大笑。“咳，这只是我们去车站接人用的老爷车。”

他们正说着，这辆豪华轿车已载着他们在黑暗中飞快地向两山间的缺口处驶去。

“还有一个半小时就到了，”珀西看了看表说道，“我可以告诉你，你将要看到的是你有生以来所看过的任何事物都无法比拟的。”

假如这辆轿车便是约翰即将见到的事物的一种象征，那他的确准备好了要大吃一惊。哈德斯流行着的那种纯朴的虔诚向来以对财富真诚的崇拜和尊仰为其教派首要的信条。如果约翰在财宝面前还不谦卑恭敬的话，他的父母都会视其为亵渎神灵，吓得掉头而去。

turned away in horror at the blasphemy.

They had now reached and were entering the break between the two mountains and almost immediately the way became much rougher.

"If the moon shone down here, you'd see that we're in a big gulch," said Percy, trying to peer out of the window. He spoke a few words into the mouthpiece and immediately the footman turned on a searchlight and swept the hillsides with an immense beam.

"Rocky, you see. An ordinary car would be knocked to pieces in half an hour. In fact, it'd take a tank to navigate it unless you knew the way. You notice we're going uphill now."

They were obviously ascending, and within a few minutes the car was crossing a high rise, where they caught a glimpse of a pale moon newly risen in the distance. The car stopped suddenly and several figures took shape out of the dark beside it — these were negroes also. Again the two young men were saluted in the same dimly recognizable dialect; then the negroes set to work and four immense cables dangling from overhead were attached with hooks to the hubs of the great jeweled wheels. At a resounding "Hey-yah!" John felt the car being lifted slowly from the ground — up and up — clear of the tallest rocks on both sides — then higher, until he could see a wavy, moonlit valley stretched out before him in sharp contrast to the quagmire of rocks that they had just left. Only on one side was there still rock — and then suddenly there was no rock beside them or anywhere around.

It was apparent that they had surmounted some immense knife-blade of stone, projecting perpendicularly into the air. In a moment they were going down again, and finally with a soft bump they were landed upon the smooth earth.

"The worst is over," said Percy, squinting out the window. "It's only five miles from here, and our own road — tapestry brick — all the way. This belongs to us. This is where the United States ends, father says."

"Are we in Canada?"

"We are not. We're in the middle of the Montana Rockies. But you are now on the only five square miles of land in the country that's never been surveyed."

"Why hasn't it? Did they forget it?"

"No," said Percy, grinning, "they tried to do it three times. The first time my grandfather corrupted a whole department of the State survey; the sec-

不久，他们乘坐的轿车来到并驶进了两山间的断层，脚下的路几乎立刻变得极为坎坷不平。

“如果月光能照到这里的话，你会看见我们正在一个大峡谷里。”珀西说着，极力朝窗外看去。他向传声筒里说了几句话，侍者立刻打开了一盏探照灯，巨大的光柱横扫着周围的群山。

“看到了吧，尽是石头。普通的轿车在这儿开上半个小时就会散架。事实上，除非非常熟悉这里的路，不然的话得开上辆坦克才能走过这片布满岩石的山路。看，我们正在上山呢！”

他们显然在向山上驶去，不一会儿便翻越了一道高坡，他们从那儿瞥见一轮惨白的明月在远处刚刚升起。车突然停住了，几个身影在黑暗中闪现——他们也是黑人。这些黑人再一次用那种难以辨认的土语向这两位年轻人致意。紧接着他们迅速地投入工作：4根带着钩子的巨大缆绳从山顶垂下，他们用这4只钩子紧紧地钩住那4只镶满宝石的轮毂。在一声宏亮的“嘿哟”声中，约翰感到车被慢慢地从地上抬起来了，一点点向上……越过了两侧最高的岩石……继续升高……直到看见一片洒满月光、山势如波澜起伏的山谷在面前伸展开去。这与刚才的那片怪石嶙峋的山地形成鲜明的对比。只剩一面还有山石——然后，突然间，他们周围一块石头也不见了。

很显然，他们越过了一座巨大的、刀锋般耸立着的山岩。不一会儿车又被慢慢地放下，随着一声柔和的碰撞声，他们终于在一片平坦的土地上安全着陆了。

“最艰难的时刻总算过去了，”珀西斜视着窗外说道，“还有5英里地我们就到家了，这是一条我们自己的路，全部是花砖路。这条路属于我们。父亲说这里便是美利坚合众国的尽头。”

“我们现在是在加拿大吗？”

“不。我们现在在蒙大拿境内的洛基山脉的中部。但是你现在所在的地方是这个国家唯一尚未被勘测的5平方英里土地。”

“为什么没被勘测呢？是人们遗忘了它吗？”

“不，”珀西咧嘴一笑，说道，“这个国家曾3次派人想来测量这片土地。第一次，我的祖父买通了国家测量部的全部人马，第二次他在合众国

ond time he had the official maps of the United States tinkered with — that held them for fifteen years. The last time was harder. My father fixed it so that their compasses were in the strongest magnetic field ever artificially set up. He had a whole set of surveying instruments made with a slight deflection that would allow for this territory not to appear, and he substituted them for the ones that were to be used. Then he had a river deflected and he had what looked like a village built up on its banks — so that they'd see it, and think it was a town ten miles farther up the valley. There's only one thing my father's afraid of," he concluded, "only one thing in the world that could be used to find us out."

"What's that?"

Percy sank his voice to a whisper.

"Aeroplanes," he breathed. "We've got half a dozen anti-aircraft guns and we've arranged it so far — but there've been a few deaths and a great many prisoners. Not that we mind *that*, you know, father and I, but it upsets mother and the girls, and there's always the chance that some time we won't be able to arrange it."

Shreds and tatters of chinchilla, courtesy clouds in the green moon's heaven, were passing the green moon like precious Eastern stuffs paraded for the inspection of some Tartar Khan. It seemed to John that it was day, and that he was looking at some lads sailing above him in the air, showering down tracts and patent medicine circulars, with their messages of hope for despairing, rockbound hamlets. It seemed to him that he could see them look down out of the clouds and stare — and stare at whatever there was to stare at in this place whither he was bound — What then? Were they induced to land by some insidious device there to be immured far from patent medicines and from tracts until the judgment day — or, should they fail to fall into the trap, did a quick puff of smoke and the sharp round of a splitting shell bring them drooping to earth — and "upset" Percy's mother and sisters. John shook his head and the wraith of a hollow laugh issued silently from his parted lips. What desperate transaction lay hidden here? What a moral expedient of a bizarre Cræsus? What terrible and golden mystery?...

The chinchilla clouds had drifted past now and outside the Montana night was bright as day. The tapestry brick of the road was smooth to the tread of the great tires as they rounded a still, moonlit lake; they passed into darkness for a moment, a pine grove, pungent and cool, then they came

的官方正式地图上做了手脚,这一招拖了他们 15 年。最后一次情况最为严峻。我的父亲设法使他们的指南针陷进了人工设置的最强大的磁场中。他还请人专门制造了一整套有小偏差的勘测仪器来代替他们原先应该使用的仪器,而这些小偏差足以使这块土地显不出来。然后我父亲又使一条河流改道,并在它的两岸修建了一些看去近似村落的建筑。这样一来,他们看了就会以为这是沿山谷上游 10 英里远的一个小镇。现在我父亲只惧怕一件事”,他最后说,“这是世界上惟一一样可以发现我们的东西。”

“那是什么呢?”,

珀西压低声音,悄声说道:

“飞机,”他轻声说道。“我们只有 6 门高射炮,到目前为止情况还算好。我们已经打死几个,并且俘虏了许多人。你知道父亲和我并不介意这些,但是我母亲和我的姐妹们却为此悲伤沮丧。而且总有这样的可能,有时候我们会顾不过来。”

新月的天空中,破碎的灰鼠皮似的云朵殷勤地从新月前飘过,如同被陈列出的珍稀东方呢绒在接受鞑靼可汗的检阅。约翰忽然觉得此时此刻还是白昼,他好像看见一群小男孩在头顶上方的空中飞过,朝这些为岩石所困的、绝望的小山村撒下许多小册子和专卖药品的推销传单,给他们带来希望的信息。他似乎看见他们透过云层密切注视着他所要去的地方以及那里的一切。然后会怎样呢?他们会不会为某种阴险的手段所引诱在那里着陆,接着也被禁闭起来,远离那些专卖药品和小册子,直至最后的审判日。或者,要是他们没落入陷阱,又会不会随着一阵烟雾、一声炮弹的炸裂而坠落地面,使珀西的母亲和姐妹们‘不安’呢?约翰摇了摇头,咧嘴并不由衷的悄悄一笑。这里到底隐藏着什么交易?这古怪的富豪在道德上又采取了什么权宜之计呢?这一切又是怎样一个可怕却又闪着金子般耀眼光辉的谜呢?……

灰鼠皮般的云彩飘过去了,车外蒙大拿的夜空如同白昼一样明亮。他们绕着一泓静谧的、洒满月光的湖水行驶,路上花毯似的方砖在巨大车轮的辗压下感觉无比平滑。一时间他们驶入一片黑暗,一座小松林,一团浓烈的气息,一阵凉意;接着他们驶出松林上了一条宽阔的绿草铺成

out into a broad avenue of lawn and John's exclamation of pleasure was simultaneous with Percy's taciturn "We're home."

Full in the light of the stars, an exquisite château rose from the borders of the lake, climbed in marble radiance half the height of an adjoining mountain, then melted in grace, in perfect symmetry, in translucent feminine languor, into the massed darkness of a forest of pine. The many towers, the slender tracery of the sloping parapets, the chiselled wonder of a thousand yellow windows with their oblongs and hexagons and triangles of golden light, the shattered softness of the intersecting planes of star-shine and blue shade, all trembled on John's spirit like a chord of music. On one of the towers, the tallest, the blackest at its base, an arrangement of exterior lights at the top made a sort of floating fairyland — and as John gazed up in warm enchantment the faint acciaccare sound of violins drifted down in a rococo harmony that was like nothing he had ever heard before. Then in a moment the car stopped before wide, high marble steps around which the night air was fragrant with a host of flowers. At the top of the steps two great doors swung silently open and amber light flooded out upon the darkness, silhouetting the figure of an exquisite lady with black, high-piled hair, who held out her arms toward them.

"Mother," Percy was saying, "this is my friend, John Unger, from Hades."

Afterward John remembered that first night as a daze of many colors, of quick sensory impressions, of music soft as a voice in love, and of the beauty of things, lights and shadows, and motions and faces. There was a white-haired man who stood drinking a manyhued cordial from a crystal thimble set on a golden stem. There was a girl with a flowery face, dressed like Titania with braided sapphires in her hair. There was a room where the solid, soft gold of the walls yielded to the pressure of his hand, and a room that was like a platonic conception of the ultimate prison — ceiling, floor, and all, it was lined with an unbroken mass of diamonds, diamonds of every size and shape, until, lit with tall violet lamps in the corners, it dazzled the eyes with a whiteness that could be compared only with itself, beyond human wish or dream.

Through a maze of these rooms the two boys wandered. Sometimes the floor under their feet would flame in brilliant patterns from lighting below, patterns of barbaric clashing colors, of pastel delicacy, of sheer whiteness, or of subtle and intricate mosaic, surely from some mosque on the Adriatic

的林荫路。约翰欢呼起来,与此同时,珀西静静地说道:“我们到家了。”

在星光的照耀下,一座精致的城堡在湖畔拔地而起,周身闪耀着大理石的光辉,依偎在毗邻山峰的半山腰处,然后优雅地、极为匀称地,带着完美的对称,半透明的、女性般的娇慵与一片黑压压的松林融为一体。城堡上一座座塔楼,一排排护栏上精美的雕刻,一扇扇令人叹为观止的雕镂成椭圆形、六边形或是三角形的、透射出金光的黄色窗子,以及那些在皎洁的星光和蓝色的暗影分别笼罩下的交错的平面所透出的错落的柔和感,所有这一切像一支拨动在约翰弦上的美妙和弦。其中那座最高、底部最暗的塔楼顶的外部安装了许多明灯,远远看去像一片飘浮在空中的人间仙境。约翰着迷地仰望着这所有的一切。这时一股微弱轻柔短促的小提琴声奏出洛可可式的和弦,当空流下。约翰从未听到过这样的乐音。不一会儿,车在一片高大宽阔的大理石台阶前停下。台阶四周,夜风中弥漫着幽幽的花香。台阶顶上的两扇大门悄然打开,琥珀色的灯光顿时破门而出,驱走了门前的黑暗。一位贵夫人的身影出现在门口。她乌黑的头发高高盘起,向这两位刚刚到来的年轻人张开了双臂。

“母亲,”珀西说道,“这是我的朋友,约翰·昂格尔,他是哈德斯人。”

过后约翰还记得到这儿的第一个晚上,那个夜晚充满了扑朔迷离的色彩,转瞬即逝的感官印象、如爱语般的美妙音乐,到处浮动着美丽的事物,光与影,形形色色的人。花白头发的老人饮着金座水晶酒杯里多彩的甜酒;美丽的姑娘头发里绾着蓝宝石编成的发带,穿得如同泰坦尼亚仙后一般。有一个房间,纯金打成的四壁柔软得可以让他的手掌按动。另一个房间则好似按柏拉图关于最终的监狱的观念建成——天花板、地板等四周满满镶了一圈钻石,大小不同,形状各异,房间四角高照着紫罗兰色的灯,映得房间里一片眩目的雪白,真是无与伦比,超乎世人的愿望和梦想。

两个男孩漫步在如迷宫般的城堡里。有时候,他们脚下的地板被底下的灯光映照出绚烂多彩的图案:属于蛮族的刺目图案,色调柔和的图案,或者一片纯白,还有精致复杂的马赛克图案,它定然是来自亚得里亚海滨的某一座清真寺。有时候,层层水晶下面旋转着蓝色或绿色的水流,