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英语幽默精品

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前 言

幽默是生活的清新剂，它能把人们从沉闷、尴尬或不快中解脱出来。幽默也常常用夸张、讽喻、双关、影射、曲解等多种手段善意地揭露生活中的种种乖谬和不尽人意之处。幽默不仅仅逗人笑，它还应包含有机智的成分，在好的幽默作品中，幽默 (humour) 和机智 (wit) 也是分不开的。有了机智，幽默作品才能雅俗共赏，引人深思。这本集子正是基于上述目的和标准来编译的。

幽默不等于笑话，笑话只是幽默的一种表现形式。幽默也大量存在于严肃的文学作品中，马克·吐温、查尔斯·狄更斯、威廉·莎士比亚等伟大作家都把幽默作为他们作品中的重要成分。幽默的表现形式丰富多彩，包括小故事、短文、书信、诗歌、小说、戏剧等。在本书中，读者既可读到一些无名氏的打油诗，也可读到像 W. B. 叶芝和约翰·但恩等大诗人写的幽默诗；既可读到一些通俗的笑话，也可读到狄更斯、马克·吐温等大师的小说片断。向读者展现幽默的多种风格是本书区别于其他幽默故事集的特点。

本书的体例是按照不同的话题分类，中英文对照，外加适当的注释。选材有难有易，适合学英语人士的不同层次的需要。

在此我谨向本书的各位译者给予的大力支持和帮助深表感谢！也希望读者能为本书提出宝贵的意见。

柯彦玢

1995 年仲夏

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1. You've Lost

On her return from school, little Dolly, aged ten, was pulled on to her Daddy's knee, and informed that the fairies had that day brought a big surprise—a little baby brother. She seemed glad, and presently said:

“Will you give me a stamp, daddy? I want to write and tell brother Tom.”

The father was touched by this, and provided the little lass with the materials to write a letter to her brother, who was away at school. Later, curious to know how she would tell the news, he took an opportunity to read what she had written. He received something of a shock on reading the following:

“Dear Tom,

“It's come off today. You've lost; it's a boy.”

你 输 了

放学回到家里，十岁的小多莉被拉过来坐在她爸爸的膝上，她被告知那天仙女们带来了一个大大的惊奇——一个婴儿小弟弟。她似乎很高兴，马上说：

“爸爸，你能不能给我一张邮票？我要写信告诉汤姆哥

哥。”

父亲被这话感动了，他为小姑娘提供了给她哥哥写信所需的各种用具，她的哥哥住在学校里。后来，想知道她是怎么报告这个消息的，他找机会读了她写的信。在读到下面这两行字时，他差点儿惊呆了：

“亲爱的汤姆：

“今天结果出来了，你输了；是个男孩。”

柯彦玢 译

2. Puberty

One evening, in the midst of dinner preparation, our 10-year-old daughter asked, “Mommy, what’s puberty?” My wife was rushed at the moment, so she suggested that Peggy look up the word in the dictionary, after which they could talk about it.

A few minutes later, Peggy returned. Her mother asked what the dictionary had said. “Puberty means,” announced Peggy, “the earliest age at which a girl is able to bear children.”

“What do you think of that?” my wife asked.

“I’m not sure,” Peggy replied. “I’ve always been able to bear children. It’s adults I can’t bear.”

青 春 期

一天晚上，在准备晚饭的时候，我们十岁的女儿问：“妈妈，什么是青春期？”我的妻子此时正忙得不亦乐乎，所以她建议佩吉到字典上查这个词，然后她们可以再讨论它。

几分钟以后，佩吉回来了。她妈妈问字典上怎么说。

“青春期的意思是，”佩吉宣布：“一个女孩能忍受孩子^①的最早年龄。”

“你怎么想呢？”我妻子问。

“我不知道，”佩吉回答。“我总能忍受孩子。让我忍受不了的是大人。”

柯彦汾 译

① bear children: 生孩子。bear 一词也可作“忍受”解。

3. A Gentleman

Dick was seven years old, and his sister, Catherine, was five. One day their mother took them to their aunt's house to play while she went to the big city to buy some new clothes.

The children played for an hour, and then at half past four their aunt took Dick into the kitchen. She gave him a nice cake and a knife and said to him, "Now here's a knife, Dick. Cut this cake in half and give one of the pieces to your sister, but remember to do it like a gentleman."

"Like a gentleman?" Dick asked. "How do gentlemen do it?"

"They always give the bigger piece to the other person." answered his aunt at once.

"Oh" said Dick. He thought about this for a few seconds. Then he took the cake to his sister and said to her, "Cut this cake in half, Catherine."

绅 士

迪克年龄七岁，他的妹妹凯瑟琳五岁。一天，妈妈把他们带到姨妈家去玩，自己就到大城市去买些新的衣服。

孩子们玩了个把小时，在四点半的时候，姨妈领着迪克