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前 言

收集在这本小书中的是十几篇英美文学史上的散文名作，全部出自名家高手。有的是完整的篇章，有的是节选的章节。它们可以当作学习英语的阅读范文，也可以作为优秀文学作品而细细品赏。

这十几篇散文，从体裁方面看，大致可以分为四类，即说理或论说文，抒情文、描述文和哲理文。当然，这只是一个大致的分法。其实，在许多文章里，我们可以看到，作者在论说道理或阐述哲理的同时也时常伴有情感的抒发，在状物抒情的同时也处处可见思想的火花。这是这些作品的共同点，体现了名家的风格，也是散文之所以为散文的要素。

阅读散文的感觉是丰富多彩的：它使你感到心灵沟通的愉悦，直抒胸臆的通畅，喜笑怒骂的快感，受到情绪的感染，理智的顿悟，心灵的熏陶，直至达到灵魂升华的境地。这本小书里的散文或多或少会给你这种感觉。

为了读者的方便，每篇文章都有作者简介和难点注释以及译文。译文除署名者外，其他为编者所译。诗歌难译，散文亦同样如此。译文要表达的不仅是语义层次上的内容，更多的则是语义、句法、语气等构成的风格内容。

有三篇选用前辈学者水天同先生、著名作家徐迟先生和著名散文译家高健先生的译文，另外北京大学英语系张晓全帮助注释了部分文章，编者在注释时曾就某些疑难问题请教

过北京大学英语系陈瑞兰、陶洁两位教授，她们都给予了热心的指导，在此一并表示感谢。

金衡山

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Here Is New York

这就是纽约

1. Francis Bacon

弗兰西斯·培根

【作者简介】

弗兰西斯·培根 (Francis Bacon, 1561—1626), 英国哲学家、自然科学家、文学家。曾任检察长和掌玺大臣等职, 后因受贿被解职, 遂专心从事写作。培根对英国文学的主要贡献是开创了随笔体裁。他的《随笔录》共收随笔五十八篇, 涉及哲学、伦理、道德、生活处世、行为准则等诸多方面, 篇幅短小, 但内容精悍, 说理透彻, 警句迭出, 文字隽永。他的随笔在以后很长一段时期内为后人所不能匹敌。

Of Friendship

It had been hard for him that spake¹ it to have put more

truth and untruth together in a few words, than in that speech, *Whosoever is delighted in solitude is either a wild beast or a god*². For it is most true that a natural and secret hatred and aversion towards society, in any man, hath somewhat of the savage beast; but it is most untrue that it should have any character at all of the divine nature³, except it proceed, not out of a pleasure in solitude, but out of a love and desire to sequester⁴ a man's self for a higher conversation⁵; such as is found to have been falsely and feignedly in some of the heathen; as Epimenides the Candian⁶, Numa the Roman⁷, Empedocles the Sicilian⁸, and Apollonius of Tyana⁹; and truly and really in divers of the ancient hermits and holy fathers of the church. But little do men perceive what solitude is, and how far it extendeth. For a crowd is not company, and faces are but a gallery of pictures, and talk but a tinkling cymbal¹⁰, where there is no love. The Latin adage¹¹ meeteth with it a little, *Magna civitas, magna solitudo*¹², because in a great town friends are scattered; so that there is not that fellowship, for the most part, which is in less neighbourhoods. But we may go further and affirm most truly, that it is a mere and miserable solitude to want¹³ true friends, without which the world is but a wilderness; and even in this sense also of solitude, whosoever in the frame of his nature and affections is unfit for friendship, he taketh it of the beast, and not from humanity.

A principal fruit of friendship is the ease and discharge of the fulness and swellings of the heart, which passions of all

kinds do cause and induce. We know diseases of stoppings and suffocations are the most dangerous in the body; and it is not much otherwise¹⁴ in the mind; you may take sarza¹⁵ to open the liver, steel to open the spleen¹⁶, flowers of sulphur¹⁷ for the lungs, castoreum¹⁸ for the brain; but no receipt openeth the heart, but a true friend, to whom you may impart griefs, joys, fears, hopes, suspicions, counsels, and whatsoever lieth upon the heart to oppress it, in a kind of civil shrift¹⁹ or confession.

It is a strange thing to observe how high a rate²⁰ great kings and monarchs do set upon this fruit of friendship whereof²¹ we speak; so great, as they purchase it many times at the hazard of²² their own safety and greatness. For princes, in regard of the distance of their fortune from that of their subjects and servants, cannot gather this fruit, except (to make themselves capable thereof) they raise some persons to be as it were companions and almost equals to themselves, which many times sorteth²³ to inconvenience. The modern languages give unto such persons the name of *favourites*, or *privadoes*²⁴; as if it were matter of grace, or conversation²⁵. But the Roman name attaineth the true use and cause thereof, naming them *participes curarum*²⁶, for it is that which tieth the knot. And we see plainly that this hath been done, not by weak and passionate princes only, but by the wisest and most politic that ever reigned; who have oftentimes joined to themselves some of their servants, whom both themselves have called *friends*, and

allowed others likewise to call them in the same manner, using the word which is received between private men.

L. Sylla²⁷, when he commanded Rome, raised Pompey²⁸ (after surnamed the Great) to that height, that Pompey vaunted himself for Sylla's overmatch. For when he had carried the consulship²⁹ for a friend of his, against the pursuit of Sylla, and that Sylla did a little resent thereat, and began to speak great, Pompey turned upon him again, and in effect bade him be quiet; *for that more men adored the sun rising than the sun setting*. With Julius Caesar³⁰, Decimus Brutus³¹ had obtained that interest, as he set him down in his testament³² for heir in remainder³³ after his nephew. And this was the man that had power with him to draw him forth to his death. For when Caesar would have discharged the senate, in regard of some ill presages, and specially a dream of Calpurnia³⁴, this man lifted him gently by the arm out of his chair, telling him he hoped he would not dismiss the senate till his wife had dreamt a better dream. And it seemeth his favour was so great, as Antonius³⁵, in a letter which is recited *verbatim* in one of Cicero's³⁶ *Philippics*³⁷, calleth him *venefica*, "witch"; as if he had enchanted Caesar. Augustus³⁸ raised Agrippa³⁹ (though of mean birth) to that height, as, when he consulted with Maecenas⁴⁰ about the marriage of his daughter Julia⁴¹, Macenas took the liberty to tell him, *that he must either marry his daughter to Agrippa, or take away his life; there was no third way, he had made him so great*. With Tiberius Caesar⁴²,

Sejanus⁴³ had ascended to that height, as they two were termed and reckoned as a pair of friends. Tiberius in a letter to him saith, *Haec proamicitiâ nostrâ non occultavi*;⁴⁴ and the whole senate dedicated an altar to Friendship, as to a goddess, in respect of the great dearness of friendship between them two. The like or more was between Septimius Severus⁴⁵ and Plautianus⁴⁶. For he forced his eldest son to marry the daughter of Plautianus; and would often maintain Plautianus in doing affronts⁴⁷ to his son; and did write also in a letter to the senate by these words; *I love the man so well, as I wish he may overlive me*. Now if these princes had been as a Trajan⁴⁸, or a Marcus Aurelius⁴⁹, a man might have thought that this had proceeded of an abundant goodness of nature; but being men so wise, for such strength and severity of mind, and so extreme lovers of themselves, as all these were, it proveth most plainly that they found their own felicity (though as great as ever happened to mortal men) but as an half piece, except they mought have a friend to make it entire; and yet, which is more, they were princes that had wives, sons, nephews; and yet all these could not supply the comfort of friendship.

It is not to be forgotten, what Commineus⁵⁰ observeth of his first master, Duke Charles the Hardy⁵¹; namely, that he would communicate his secrets with none; and least of all, those secrets which troubled him most. Whereupon he goeth on and saith, that towards his latter time *that closeness did impair and a little perish his understanding*. Surely Commineus

mought have made the same judgement also, if it had pleased him, of his second master, Lewis the Eleventh⁵², whose closeness was indeed his tormentor. The parable of Pythagoras⁵³ is dark, but true, *Cor ne edito*⁵⁴, "Eat not the heart." Certainly, if a man would give it a hard phrase, those that want friends to open themselves unto are cannibals of their own hearts. But one thing is most admirable (wherewith I will conclude this first fruit of friendship), which is, that this communicating of a man's self to his friend works two contrary effects; for it redoubleth joys, and cutteth griefs in halves. For there is no man that imparteth his joys to his friends, but he joyeth the more; and no man that imparteth his griefs to his friend, but he grieveth the less. So that it is in truth of operation upon a man's mind, of like virtue as the alchymists use to attribute to their stone⁵⁵ for man's body; that it worketh all contrary effects, but still to the good and benefit of nature. But yet, without praying in aid of alchymists, there is a manifest image of this in the ordinary course of nature. For in bodies, union strengtheneth and cherisheth any natural action; and, on the other side, weakeneth and dulleth any violent impression; and even so is it of minds.

The second fruit of friendship is healthful and sovereign for the understanding, as the first is for the affections. For friendship maketh indeed a fair day in the affections, from storm and tempests; but it maketh daylight in the understanding, out of darkness and confusion of thoughts. Neither is this

to be understood only of faithful counsel, which a man receiveth from his friend; but before you come to that, certain it is that whosoever hath his mind fraught with many thoughts, his wits and understanding do clarify and break up, in the communicating and discoursing with another; he tosseth his thoughts more easily; he marshalleth⁵⁶ them more orderly; he seeth how they look when they are turned into words; finally, he waxeth⁵⁷ wiser than himself; and that more by an hour's discourse than by a day's meditation. It was well said by Themistocles⁵⁸ to the king of Persia, that *speech was like cloth of Arras, opened and put abroad; whereby the imagery doth appear in figure; whereas in thoughts they lie but as in packs*. Neither is this second fruit of friendship, in opening the understanding, restrained only to such friends as are able to give a *man counsel*. (they indeed are best); but even without that, a man learneth of himself, and bringeth his own thoughts to light, and whetteth his wits as against a stone, which itself cuts not. In a word, a man were better relate himself to a statua or picture, than to suffer his thoughts to pass in smother.

Add now, to make this second fruit of friendship complete, that other point, which lieth more open, and falleth within vulgar observation; which is faithful counsel from a friend. Heraclitus⁵⁹ saith well in one of his enigmas, *Dry⁶⁰ light is ever the best*. And certain it is that the light that a man receiveth by counsel from another is drier and purer than that which cometh from his own understanding and judgement;

which is ever infused and drenched in his affections and customs. So as there is as much difference between the counsel that a friend giveth, and that a man giveth himself, as there is between the counsel of a friend and of a flatterer. For there is no such flatterer as is a man's self; and there is no such remedy against flattery of a man's self as the liberty of a friend⁶¹. Counsel is of two sorts; the one concerning manners, the other concerning business. For the first; the best preservative to keep the mind in health is the faithful admonition of a friend. The calling of a man's self to a strict account is a medicine, sometime, too piercing and corrosive. Reading good books of morality is a little flat and dead. Observing our faults in others is sometimes improper for our case. But the best receipt (best, I say, to work, and best to take) is the admonition of a friend. It is a strange thing to behold what gross errors and extreme absurdities many (especially of the greater sort) do commit, for want of a friend to tell them of them, to the great damage both of their fame and fortune. For, as St. James⁶² saith, they are as men, *that look sometimes into a glass, and presently forget their own shape and favour*. As for business, a man may think, if he will, that two eyes see no more than one; or that a gamester seeth always more than a looker-on; or that a man in anger is as wise as he that hath said over the four and twenty letters; or that a musket may be shot off as well upon the arm as upon a rest; and such other fond and high imaginations, to think himself all in all. But when all is done, the help of good

counsel is that which setteth business straight. And if any man think that he will take counsel, but it shall be by pieces; asking counsel in one business of one man, and in another business of another man; it is well (that is to say, better perhaps than if he asked none at all); but he runneth two dangers. One, that he shall not be faithfully counselled; for it is a rare thing, except it be from a perfect and entire friend, to have counsel given, but such as shall be bowed and crooked⁶³ to some ends which he hath that giveth it. The other, that he shall have counsel given, hurtful and unsafe (though with good meaning), and mixed partly of mischief and partly of remedy: even as if you would call a physician, that is thought good for the cure of the disease you complain of, but is unacquainted with your body; and therefore may put you in way for a present cure, but overthrowth your health in some other kind; and so cure the disease and kill the patient. But a friend that is wholly acquainted with a man's estate will beware, by furthering any present business, how he dasheth upon⁶⁴ other inconvenience. And therefore rest not upon scattered counsels; they will rather distract and mislead than settle and direct.

After these two noble fruits of friendship (peace in the affections, and support of the judgement) followeth the last fruit, which is like the pomegranate⁶⁵, full of many kernels; I mean aid and bearing a part in all actions and occasions. Here the best way to represent to life the manifold use of friendship is to cast⁶⁶ and see how many things there are which man can-

not do himself; and then it will appear that it was a sparing speech of the ancients, to say, *that a friend is another himself*: for that a friend is far more than himself. Men have their time, and die many times⁶⁷ in desire of some things which they principally take to heart; the bestowing⁶⁸ of a child, the finishing of a work, or the like. If a man have a true friend, he may rest almost secure that the care of those things will continue after him. So that a man hath as it were two lives in his desires. A man hath a body, and that body is confined to a place; but where friendship is, all offices of life⁶⁹ are as it were granted to him and his deputy. For he may exercise them by his friend. How many things are there which a man cannot, with any face or comeliness say or do himself! A man can scarce allege his own merits with modesty, much less extol them; a man cannot sometimes brook to supplicate⁷⁰ or beg; and a number of the like. But all these things are graceful in a friend's mouth, which are blushing in a man's own. So again, a man's person hath many proper relations which he cannot put off. A man cannot speak to his son but as a father; to his wife but as a husband; to his enemy but upon terms; whereas a friend may speak as the case requires, and not as it sorteth with the person. But to enumerate these things were endless; I have given the rule, where a man cannot fitly play his own part; if he have not a friend, he may quit the stage.