

The Death of Ying
鷹之死

Back in those days, she was my only teacher, and I was her only student. And there used to be a gaggle of college students crowding the living room outside, conversing with her husband about the brilliance of the old masters, topics which I didn't understand then. Donning a peculiar hat on my head, I would pass them by, wearing a serious expression, and make my way straight into the small room where she waited for me. Curiously, I never quite got why I always wore that hat, and she never asked why. Later, she, too, wrapped a scarf around her head, explaining that "I wore hats when I was young, too."

還有些人正圍着一具屍體痛哭，他知道死者是誰，因為下午他已經看到了。有幾只貓頭鷹在叫，人們稱它們是來自旁遮普的信使.....官署主人的花園裏飄逸出醉人的花香。然而，只有這清真寺是一種獨特的象徵。阿齊茲的思緒從這複雜的夜的魅力中又回到了清真寺，並賦予它豐富的含義，這含義是建設者從來沒有想到的。有一天他也要修建一座清真寺，規模比眼前這個小一點兒，但要風格完美，要讓所有路過的人都能體驗到他現在所感受到的這種幸福。在這座清真寺旁邊應該為自己立個墓碑，把它置於稍低的圓頂建築之下，並刻上波斯語的碑文：

啊，我離人間久矣，
玫瑰花盛開，春天更美麗，
然而深知我心靈的人們——
一定會來拜謁埋葬我的墓地。

Ying once told me I was "tough", and that I reminded her of herself. When she was little, she used to hide a skull under her bed, occasionally taking it out, caressing it, sketching and studying its structure. Once, her father was rummaging for something under the bed and by chance came across the skull: stunned, he turned limp with fear. Ying always took pride in sharing such stories. Only while she was teaching me would she not say much, though she would frequently show me paintings. What she did talk about were funny stories, anecdotes about family life, and about what she was like in her youth. She even sent me a portrait of herself at one point. She knew herself to be good-looking; as an artist, however, she maintained a certain reserve about appearances.

Later, I carefully kept the photo pressed under a clear acrylic sheet on the table. Some time after that, unbeknownst to anyone in the house, the sturdy aloe vera slowly drooped one branch over; day by day, it gradually lowered itself—until one day it brushed against the edge of the table, and oozed out juice that seeped through the acrylic, soaking the picture. This peculiar imagery had me pondering for some while without understanding the significance. Dreams then started coming, about her room. At times, the room would blow up into a thrilling multi-layered suite; at other times, I would simply dream of going through the window and coming into a cluttered room devoid of people.

「那麼請你把所知道的都告訴我吧，不然我永遠也不會瞭解印度。馬拉巴山就是有時我晚上看到的那座山嗎？那些山洞是什麼樣子？」

阿齊茲剛要開始給她講，自己又有了問題。講什麼呢？自己也從未遊覽過馬拉巴山洞，他一直「想着」去，可是因為工作和個人的事情纏身，再加路途遙遠，就沒去成。戈德博爾教授愉快地跟他開玩笑說：「罐子嫌鍋黑！」我親愛的年輕的先生，你聽說過這句有用的諺語嗎？」

「山洞很大嗎？」她問。

「不，不大。」

「戈德博爾教授，請你詳細講講山洞好嗎？」

「那太榮幸了。」教授把椅子向前移動了一下，臉上的表情便緊張起來。小姐拿出香煙，給了教授一枝，也給了阿齊茲，並親自給他們把煙點着。熬過了那令人難忘的沈默之後，教授說：「在那塊大岩石上有個入口，就從那兒進去，走過入口，裏邊就是山洞。」

「和象島的山洞一樣嗎？」

「哦，不，完全不同，象島有濕婆和雪山神女的雕像，而馬拉巴山洞什麼雕像也沒有。」

「可馬拉巴山神聖無比，這是毫無疑問的。」阿齊茲這麼說，是想幫助老教授講下去。

「哦，不，哦，不。」

「那就是人們在某種程度上把它美化了。」

「哦，不。」

「那麼，為什麼它如此有名？那聞名的馬拉巴山洞簡直成了無人不談的話題。那可能就是我們自吹自擂吧。」

「不，我可不願那麼說。」

「就請你給這位小姐講講吧。」

「那將是一件非常令人愉快的事。」然而他卻沒有細說，

My painting teacher when I was 13 years old had the character "ying" (eagle) in her name. She told me she used to ride on her father's shoulders when she was young, and smash up light bulbs around the house for fun, discovering a peculiar delight in breaking things, somewhat like Qingwen tearing her fan in *The Dream of the Red Chamber*. Yet underneath her veneer of mischief was a polished and gentle demeanor. And as for me, she handled with great care, displaying an admirable selflessness. Her studio, too, radiated tranquility. Oftentimes, on Saturday afternoons, I would go through the door she left open for me, and I would chance upon a captivating arrangement of still lifes. These quiet, luminous tableaux were for me the epitome of beauty. Each fruit appeared to have been carefully chosen from thousands; even ordinary bottles, plates, pots, and spoons were shrouded in a sacred aura. What was this tranquility? It was completely at odds with the world outside. There, I often immersed myself in painting, and she would comment on how I entered into a trance. Seeing this, she would stuff me some snacks, and I could only set down my easel to savor the treats.

「再見，戈德博爾教授！」阿德拉突然感到有些焦慮，連續對教授說：「太遺憾了，我們還從未聽過你唱歌呢。」

「我現在就可以唱。」他說罷，就唱了起來。

他那細弱的歌聲漸漸升起，一個樂句一個樂句排列起來。這歌曲時而聽着好像有節奏，時而聽着又好像是西洋的樂曲。然而聽者時時感到困惑，很快就失去了聽懂歌曲的線索，於是便在噪音的迷宮裏漫遊起來。那歌聲並不刺耳，可也不令人愉悅，就是無法明白。這是一支無名姑娘之歌，只有這裏的僕人才聽得懂，僕人們一面聽着，一面竊竊私語。那個男人正在採集菱角，他一絲不掛地從水塘裏爬了上來，高興得合不攏嘴，露出了他那緋紅色的舌頭。老教授繼續唱着他的歌，過了一會，像開始的時候一樣，那歌聲不在意地就停止了——顯然是一個小節只唱了二分之一，接着便在一個次屬音上停了下來。

「非常感謝。這是什麼歌？」菲爾丁問。

「我來詳細地解釋一下。這是一支宗教歌曲。我自己在歌曲中扮演了一位擠牛奶的少女。我對牧牛神訖里什那（即黑天）說：『來吧！只到我這兒來吧！』可牧牛神拒絕了我的請求。我改變了態度，謙恭地對他說：『不要只到我這兒來。你要變成一百個訖里什那，分別到我的一百個同伴那裏去，啊，宇宙之主啊，就到我這兒來吧！』牧牛神仍然拒絕前來。就這樣重複了數次。這首歌是用拉迦譜寫的，音調與夜晚的氣氛很相宜。」

「但是我希望牧牛神能在另一支歌中出來，這行嗎？」穆爾夫人態度溫和地說。

「哦，不，他拒絕出來。」戈德博爾這麼重複着，他可能沒有理解穆爾夫人提出來的問題。

「我對牧牛神說到，來呀，來呀，來呀！來呀，來呀，來呀！可他就是不來。」

Later, when she fell ill, her bed was placed in the same small room. The last time when I returned to the country and saw her, she lay there in bed, with just a small lamp lighting up the room. A beam of light fell on her body, transforming her into a still life of sorts. I didn't know what she was sick with, what she ate, or what happened. I didn't ask, either. When she cried, I felt nervous. I sensed strange pains I couldn't quite put my finger on, but the energy was palpable. Though there were things I was still to experience, I took in what she was trying to convey that night, which has remained with me ever since.

When you speak, it is at times hard to articulate things clearly. When it comes to getting this across, no one is all that good. Existence itself has revealed so, so much about the self, with our secrets written on our faces. Without our saying anything, so much can be read by all.

把這些山洞描繪一下並非難事。一條隧道八英尺長，三英尺寬，五英尺高，走進去不遠便是一個圓形的洞室，其直徑大約二十英尺。這種格局在各個洞內都大體相似，同樣的山洞遍布這群山之中，這就是馬拉巴山洞，僅此而已。遊覽者即使在這兒看過一個、兩個、三個、四個甚至十四個、二十四個這樣的山洞，然後返回昌德拉普爾，也難以明確說出，這遊覽是盎然有趣還是索然無味，或是什麼感受也沒有。他們發現，把一個個山洞評論一番十分困難，或者在腦子裏把它們一個個區分開來也很不容易，因為它們的樣式單調，缺乏變化，裏面沒有石雕，甚至連蜜蜂的巢穴或者一隻蝙蝠也沒有，真是難以一一分辨清楚。山洞雖然平平常常無誘人之處，但卻享有盛名。它的名聲不是靠了人類言語的流傳，而好像是靠了周圍的平原和飛過的鳥兒的喊聲，它們喊出這山洞的「奇特」。這「奇特」已牢牢地釘在空中，也深深銘刻在人們的心裏。

Ying was one of those who wasn't much present on the Internet. Later, she would always ask me to teach her how to use the computer. In the same way I learned how to sketch from her, she meticulously jotted notes in a small notebook. The last time we met before she passed away, I had grown up to become her pride. Every time she mentioned it, she would be overcome with emotions, on the verge of breaking into tears.

If only she could have waited till today, till the day after, she could have learned how to go on the Internet. I would still say, "In the future, I could / would / plan to /am going to . . ." But what use am I to her now?

Every artist has a spiritual mother who guides their creative life. For me, it was her—we usually would refer to this person as our "teacher." I always recall tidbits of chitchat, interspersed with long stretches of silence in her studio.

As the Zen master Yunmen Wenyan said, "On the ground are the countless dead; only the good ones pass through the forest of thorns to live."

山洞裏漆黑，甚至在太陽對着洞口的時候，也只有極少的光線擴散到連接圓形洞室的隧道。走進洞裏，幾乎什麼也看不見，必須等五分鐘之後再劃一根火柴，眼睛才能看見東西。奇怪的是，圓形洞室的牆壁被磨得無比光滑，火柴一划着，另一個火焰便立即在牆壁裏面燃起，並且像一個被監禁的幽靈向牆壁的表面移動。兩個火焰在相互靠近，似乎要奮力結合在一起，然而卻不能，因為其中一個火焰在呼吸空氣，而另一個則在石頭裏。那牆壁像一面裝點着漂亮色彩的鏡子，把一對情侶分隔在兩個世界裏，柔和的星光，一會兒粉紅色，一會兒灰色，交替變幻着。鏡子裏還可以看到奇妙的星雲，以及比彗星尾巴或中午的月亮還要黯淡的陰影。這都是花崗岩放出的短暫的生命之火，只有此地可以看到。拳頭和手指狀的山頭，鑽出了那日益增厚的泥土，牢牢地屹立在這兒——馬拉巴山的皮膚終於看到了。那皮膚比任何動物身上的毛皮都美麗，比無風的水面還平滑，甚至比情人更富有肉感美。火光更加明亮起來，兩個火焰相互接觸了，親吻了，但很快便熄滅了。這個山洞又恢復了它原有的黑暗，依然像所有的山洞一樣。

She used the concept of the "whole" to set a standard for my artistic practice. I understood this as creating, within the limited space of the canvas, a harmony like that of the Solar System. The principle could be applied to the works of Giorgione, Peter Paul Rubens, or Nicolas Poussin. The concept of the "whole" also entails a perspective that abandons the excessive obsession and depiction of individual details. This notion left a lasting impression on me, serving as a constant reminder to squint and look beyond the immediate subject. Now that I have limitless time for painting, the habit has become ingrained in my artistic process.

Only this year did I start wearing contact lenses. Prior to this, my world was like a well-rehearsed mantra: Observe the surroundings in broad strokes, without fussing over the details—the details will suck you in! Focus on the whole picture!

戈德博爾教授過去從未說到過回聲，可能回聲從未給他留下什麼印象。印度倒有一些很優美的回聲，在比賈普爾，圍繞着圓形屋頂有一種像低聲耳語一樣的回聲；在曼杜如果講出一些長而完整的話，這些話會在空中遨遊一番，然後完整無損地回到說話人那裏去。馬拉巴山洞的回聲和上面說的那種回聲全然不同，它是一種非常單調而毫無差別的回聲。不管說什麼，回答的都是同樣單調的聲音，聲音來回震動着牆壁，一直到被洞頂吸收為止。「睡——噢——鬥嗨」是一種聲音，用人類的發音可以把它表示成「bou——oum」或者「ou——boum」的形式，聽起來極其單調。充滿希望的呼喊、文雅的交談、擤鼻子的聲音、皮靴發出的咯吱咯吱的響聲，都會產生這種單調的「boum」的聲音。甚至劃一根火柴的聲音都可以造成一個小小螺紋似的聲圈，只是因為太小不能形成回聲，但卻是永遠不可忽視的。假如幾個人同時講話，便可聽到重疊的大聲喧鬧，那就是回聲，回聲又生回聲，就像一條大蛇佔據了這個山洞，這大蛇由許多小蛇組成，小蛇都在任意地翻滾。

1. In hindsight, Ying, and I, were for real. When someone embarks on the journey of art, they forget they are human, even if only for a moment, and take on a role akin to a creator, a god, a ruler of the universe. Elements materialize on their fingertips, with something seemingly out of nothing. You dictate the arrangement of everything, shaping a world within your grasp; here, you must bear full responsibility for all. When you are immersed within, you will set aside other possible states and be filled with an eternal calm.

2. Yet family and the world at large demand you to be "human": to be someone capable of collaboration, someone who is one part of something else. Family and friends will certainly not greet you as a deity. You are one constitutive element within a greater whole, one stroke in a painting. In this role, you grasp how you can never master the whole.

那種難忍的擁擠和那難聞的氣味她可以忘掉，可那回聲以一種難以描述的方式在破壞她控制生活的能力。這回聲恰好在於她極度疲倦的時候傳來，好像是在低聲說：「憐憫、虔誠、勇氣——世界上都有，但是卻毫無差異，就連淫猥也是如此。世界上什麼東西都有，可什麼東西都沒有價值。」假如先前有人在那山洞裏講粗鄙的言語，或者引述高雅的詩篇，那得到的反響一定都是相同的一聲「ou——boum」。如果先前有人用天使之口替世界上一切的苦難和誤會（不論是過去的，現在的，還是將來的）辯護，為一切痛苦的人伸冤，不管他們的痛苦來自什麼觀點和立場，也不管他們多麼想避開或假裝不怕痛苦——結果都不會有什麼兩樣，像天上的巨蛇座一樣，降下來，然後還要升上去。來自北方的惡魔，可以用詩描寫他們，但是卻沒有人能夠為馬拉巴山增添浪漫色彩，因為它奪走了「無限」和「永恆」這兩個概念的深遠意義，也正是這兩個概念為人類所提供的東西。

When you are consumed with the present, you forget you could be something else.

In my self-centered teenage years, I could not understand her pain.

"Listen to me. Don't get married," she cried as she spoke. It was a frightful moment, like seeing a solid family which had nurtured and raised me now crumbling, an eternal, beautiful fruit in a still life on the cusp of rotting: the woman who had been my source of strength now sobbing. I felt, at that point, an overwhelming urge to run away.

阿德拉在麥克布賴德家裏已經躺了好幾天了。她不但被太陽灼傷，而且身上扎進了數百根仙人掌的針刺，這針刺必須一根根從肌膚裏拔出來。德里克小姐和麥克布賴德夫人用放大鏡在她身上查找拔除，一個小時一個小時地過去了，可總是發現還有許多許多。那些突然斷在肉裏的毛狀針刺如果不拔出來，就會被吸收到血液裏去。她消極地躺在那裏任她們的手指觸摸，這情景使她在山洞裏產生的那種恐懼情緒越發嚴重起來。到目前為止，她並不很在意是否有人觸動過她，她的感官異常遲鈍，她感覺到的唯一的接觸，就是精神上的交往。現在好像一切問題都轉移到了她身體的表面，並且開始報復自己，連吃飯都感到有害於健康。有些人使人感到親近，有些人令人感到疏遠，除此以外，人們似乎沒有什麼差異。她們一面給她向外拔刺，一面聽她自言自語地重複着「在空間裏萬物緊密相聯，而在時間上卻相互分離」——她的頭腦顯得很愚鈍，以致連這句話是一種哲理還是某種雙關語她都無法斷言。

On January 31, 2013, as I lay in bed in Philadelphia, I woke up to the news of her passing. It was a beautiful day: the warmth of the sun filtering through the curtains, with the whirr of a vacuum cleaner from afar, the cozy comfort of the soft bedding, and the intricate vegetative pattern of leaves and vines on the quilt. What do these have to do with death?

Whenever I think of her, I feel something of Goujian, the King of Yue, who endured the hardships of defeat to accomplish revenge. What is kindness? Is it that moment of emptiness, vulnerability, or cowardice in the face of fear?

Then, I witnessed Gandalf presenting Bilbo Baggins with Sting.

"This is about your size."

"I can't take this."

"The blade is of elvish make, which means it will glow blue when orcs or goblins are nearby."

"I have never used a sword in my life."

"And I hope you never have to, but if you do, remember this: true courage is about knowing not when to take a life, but when to spare one."

然而她接受了她那頗好的運氣，但並沒有激起她的熱情。她已經進入了這樣一種境地：在那裏她不僅看到了世界的恐怖，同時也看到了世界的吝嗇——這叫做暮年雙重眼光，許多老年人大都生活在這種境界之中。假如我們不喜歡眼前這個世界，那麼，不管怎麼說，還有天堂、地獄和靈魂與肉體的毀滅——那些巨大的物體中總會有這一個或另一個存在，以及那個浩瀚無際、景色美麗的背景，上面有無數的大小星體和有時藍有時黑的天空。一切英雄的和所有被認為是藝術的偉業，都認為這樣的背景是存在的，正像一切普普通通的事業一樣，如果我們喜歡這個世界，那麼這個世界就是一切。但是以那種暮年雙重眼光來看，一種精神上的混亂狀態就出現了，其狀態用什麼誇張的言辭都無法描繪。我們不能有所作為，也不能抑制有所作為，我們不能忽視無限，可也不能崇拜無限。穆爾夫人一直傾向於聽從命運的安排。她剛一到達印度，似乎感到這兒的一切都美好。當她看到水流經清真寺聖水池，看到恆河，或是月亮和其他星斗一起系在夜幕上的時候，她感到這裏很美，是她嚮往的一個地方，是一塊安樂的土地，它和整個宇宙融為一體！所以它是很高貴的，又是很樸實的。然而人總是應該首先履行一點職責，人生像紙牌，新牌是從逐漸減少的舊牌中翻過來才被放到適當位置上的，她在消磨時光的時候，聽到了馬拉巴山傳來的鐘聲。

In the midst of great doubt and fear, I find myself unable to sleep. Various bits of muddled facts swirl in my head. Lost among the chaos of the crowd, I know not where to go, when this feeling can end, or which path to take. Whenever I think of the painful moments, my tears come streaming down. Hot, hot tears, how can they burn with such heat? People hate this feeling: the body unable to rest, always tense, always rigid besides itself; the heart unable to rest, pounding and thumping; the mind unable to rest, forced to observe and operate.

Many years later, I came across a particular taste, and I thought of her.

這就是印度公認的愛神生辰慶典的高潮。大雨安安穩穩地下了好久，把每一個人和每一件衣服都淋得濕透濕透的。轎上的金衣和昂貴的圓形旗幟很快被淋壞了。有些火炬已經熄滅，煙火已不再點放，歌聲開始漸漸少了，聖盤最後又回到了戈德博爾教授的手裏，他抓起一把粘在聖盤上的泥，沒有舉行什麼儀式，就隨便地抹在了自己的前額上。先前不知還發生了什麼事情，等幾個闖進來觀看盛典的人從湖水中爬起來時，成群結隊的印度教徒開始散亂地往城裏走去。那國王的塑像也不見了。第二天一些紅色和綠色的幕布從王室聖陵的前面降落下來，那塑像便自己秘密地消失了。那歌聲延續的時間比較長久.....宗教瀕於失常.....不能最令人滿意的、平淡無奇的混亂.....「愛神就是人類之愛」。二十四小時過去了，回頭看看那一系列模糊不清的巨大場面，沒有任何人能說出其動人的中心何在，要想說出來，真比指出一塊雲彩的中心還難。

First, live life to the fullest and steer your own course.

Any one painting, exhibition, or project: this is not of the essence. No need to struggle for the sake of one particular moment: first, live!

"A sea turtle, when it opens its eyes, might not be able to see; when it closes its eyes, it gains sight of the world. Observe this carefully, for it truly is a great miracle."

英文段落翻譯自楊伯都撰寫的文章；

中文段落摘自E·M·福斯特小說《印度之行》，楊自儉譯，譯林出版社（2008）。

English passages are translated from Yang Bodu's writing;

Chinese passages are excerpts from *A Passage to India* by E. M. Forster, translated by Yang Zijian, Yilin Press (2008).

