



The Meaning of Life

Bilingual children's stories

生命的意义

双语儿童的故事

What's it all About?

“Dr. Papaderos, what is the meaning of life?” I asked the aging German professor of Greek culture and history. The usual laughter followed, and people stirred to go.

Papaderos held up his hand, stilled the room, and looked at me for a long time, asking with his eyes if I was serious and seeing from my eyes that I was.

“I will answer your question.” Taking his wallet out of his hip pocket, he fished into a leather billfold and brought out a very small round mirror, about the size of a quarter. And what he said went like this:

“When I was a small child, during the war, we were very poor and we lived in a remote village. One day, on the road, I found the broken pieces of a mirror. A German motorcycle had been wrecked in that place. I tried to find all the pieces and put them together, but it was not possible, so I kept only the largest piece. This one. And by scratching it on a stone I made it round.

生命的意义

“帕帕特罗博士，生命的意义是什么？”我向希腊文化历史学教授询问道。他是一位日渐衰老的德国人。

教室里像通常一样，随即爆发出了一阵哄堂大笑，人们站起身来，准备离开。帕帕特罗举起了手，示意人们安静下来。他注视了我一会儿，察看我是否当真。他看出来，我确实是认真的。

“我将回答你的问题。”说着，他从后裤兜里取出了一只皮钱夹来，又从里面摸出一个非常小的圆镜子，它大约只有25美分硬币那么大。然后，他说出了下面的这段话：

“我小的时候，正逢上战争。那时，我们很穷，住在一个偏僻的小村子里。有一天，我在路上发现了一些碎镜片；因为那里曾有一辆德国的摩托车出了事故。”

“我很想找回所有的碎片，然后再把它们拼到一起，但我却找不到；所以，我就只留了一片最大的，也就是这一片。我在石头上把它磨圆之后，就把它当成了自己的玩具。”

I began to play with it as a toy and became fascinated by the fact that I could reflect light into dark places where the sun would never shine—in deep holes and crevices and dark closets. It became a game for me to get light into the most inaccessible places I could find.

□ I kept the little mirror, and as I went about my growing up, I would take it out in idle moments and continue the challenge of the game. As I became a man, I grew to understand that this was not just a child's game but a metaphor for what I might do with my life. I came to understand that I am not the light or the source of light. But light—truth, understanding, knowledge—is there, and it will only shine in many dark places if I reflect it.

□ I am a fragment of a mirror whose design and shape I do not know. Nevertheless, with what I have I can reflect light into the dark places of this world—into the black places in the hearts of men—and change some things in some people. Perhaps others may see and do likewise. This is what I am about. This is the meaning of my life.”

“有一件事情开始使我着迷，那就是：我能用这片镜子把光芒反射到太阳永远也照不到的黑暗之处，像深洞、裂缝、以及漆黑的壁橱之类的地方。先寻找一个阳光很难射及的地方，然后再把光芒反射进去，这成了我的一项游戏。”

“我一直收藏着这片小镜子，它伴随着我渐渐地长大；在没事的时候，我就会把它拿出来，继续做这个游戏。在我长大之后，我开始意识到：这并不仅仅是个游戏而已，它更是一个隐喻，它在告诉我应该怎样去度过自己的一生！我开始认识到：我并不是光芒，也不是光源。但是，光芒——真理、智慧、知识——是存在的，只有借着我的反射，它才能照进很多黑暗的角落里去。”

“我就是镜子的一个碎片，我不知道自己的图案和形状。然而，凭着所有的一切，我却能把光芒反射到这个世界中的黑暗角落里去——照进人心中的黑暗之处——并使某些人发生改变。或许，在其他人看到之后，也会去模仿我的做法。这就是我的使命，这就是我生命的意义。”

And then he took his small mirror and, holding it carefully, caught the bright rays of daylight streaming through the window and reflected them onto my face and onto my hands folded on the desk.

Much of what I experienced in the way of information about Greek culture and history that summer is gone from memory. But in the wallet of my mind I still carry a small round mirror.

—*Ted Cashion*

Only a life lived for others is a life worthwhile.

—*Albert Einstein (1879-1955)*

然后，他拿起了那片小镜子，小心地放到从窗口照进来的阳光里，并把它们反射到我的脸上，也反射到我合着的双手上。

那年夏天，我学过的大部分希腊文化历史知识都从记忆中消失了，但在我记忆的钱夹中，却仍然保存着那片又小又圆的镜子。

——泰德·凯信 (Ted Cashion)

只有为别人活着，生活才会有价值。

——爱因斯坦 (1879—1955)



A Brother Like That

A friend of mine named Paul received an automobile from his brother as a present. When Paul came out of his office, a street urchin was walking around the shiny new car, admiring it.

“Is this your car, Mister?” he asked.

Paul nodded. “My brother gave it to me.”

The boy was astounded. “You mean your brother gave it to you and it didn’t cost you nothing? Boy, I wish—” He hesitated.

Of course Paul knew what he was going to wish for. He was going to wish he had a brother like that. But what the lad said jarred Paul all the way down to his heels.

“I wish,” the boy went on, “that I could be a brother like that.”

Paul looked at the boy in astonishment, then impulsively he added, “Would you like to take a ride in my automobile?”

“Oh yes, I’d love that!”

After a short ride, the boy turned and with his eyes aglow, said, “Mister, would you mind driving in front of my house?”

一个像那样的哥哥

有个名叫保罗的朋友，他的哥哥送给他一辆汽车。当保罗下班、走出他的办公室时，一个在街上游荡的穷苦小男孩正绕着他那辆全新的汽车走动，并以羡慕的眼光注视着那辆车。

“先生，这辆车是您的吗？”他问道。

保罗点点头：“这是我哥哥送给我的礼物。”

那男孩大吃一惊的说：“你的意思是说，你哥哥送给你这辆车，不花你分文钱？”然后他迟疑地说：

“哇。但愿我……”

保罗当然知道他的愿望是什么——他希望他能有个像这样的哥哥。然而那个小男孩继续说出来的话，却使他惊讶得几乎跌倒。

那小男孩说：“我但愿我能做一个像这样的哥哥。”

保罗大感惊讶地看着那个小男孩，然后情不自禁地问他：“你想不想坐我的车子兜一下风啊？”

“哦，我当然想啦。”

在乘坐了一会儿之后，那个男孩兴奋地对他：“先生，你可以把车子开到我家门口吗？”

Paul smiled a little. He thought he knew what the lad wanted. He wanted to show his neighbors that he could ride home in a big automobile. But Paul was wrong again. “Will you stop where those two steps are?” the boy asked.

He ran up the steps. Then in a little while Paul heard him coming back, but he was not coming fast. He was carrying his crippled younger brother. He sat him down on the bottom step, then sort of squeezed up against him and pointed to the car.

“There she is, Buddy, just like I told you upstairs. His brother gave it to him and it didn’t cost him a cent. And some day I’m gonna give you one just like it. □ And then you can ride around and see for yourself all the things that I’ve been trying to tell you about.”

Paul got out and lifted the lad to the front seat of his car. The shining-eyed older brother climbed in beside him and the three of them began a memorable ride. That day, Paul learned “*It is more blessed to give than to receive.*”

—Dan Clark

保罗微笑地答应了，他心想他知道那个男孩的打算是什么。他想要炫耀给他的邻居看，他竟能坐一辆豪华轿车回家；但是保罗又想错了。“你可以停在楼梯的前面吗？”那个男孩请求。

他随之跑上了楼梯。过了一会儿，保罗听到了他回来的脚步声，然而他回来的速度很慢。因为，他正抱着他那位跛脚的弟弟往外走。他把他弟弟安顿在楼梯下，亲昵地搂着他，并指着那辆新车对他说：

“弟弟，你看，这就是我在楼上告诉你的车子。他哥哥送给他作为礼物，不花他一分钱。有一天，我也会给你一辆像这样的车子……好让你也能坐着它到处逛，并亲眼去看那些我曾告诉过你的所有东西。”

保罗下了车，把那个跛脚的小男孩抱上车子的前座。那位兴高采烈的哥哥坐在弟弟的身旁。于是，三个人开始了令人难以忘怀的乘车兜风。在那个天，保罗领悟了：“*施比受更有福。*”

——丹克拉格

Reach Out—and See What One Person Can Do

As the old man walked the beach at dawn he noticed a youth ahead of him picking up starfish and flinging them into the sea. Finally, catching up with the youth, he asked him why he was doing this. The answer was that the stranded starfish would die if left in the morning sun. □

But the beach goes on for miles and there are millions of starfish, □ countered the old man. □ How can your effort make any difference? □

The young man looked at the starfish in his hand and then threw it to the safety of the waves. □ will make a difference to this one, □ he said. —Brian Cavanaugh, *The Sower's Seeds*

伸出援助之手，看看一个人能做些什么？

在黎明时分，有一位老人正走在海滩上，他看到走在他前面的一个年轻人正在拾着海星，然后又把它们抛进大海里去。终于，他追上了那个年轻人，问他为什么要这么做？年轻人回答说：如果搁浅的海星留在岸上的话，就会在清晨的阳光下死去。“但是，这个海滩长达数哩，会有上百万的海星啊！”老人又反问道：“你这么做法不是很徒然的吗？”

那个年轻人看了看自己手里的那颗海星，然后便把它抛进了安全的海浪里。

“对这颗海星却不然！”他这样回答说。——布莱恩·卡凡诺 (Brian Cavanaugh)，摘自《播种者的种子》(The Sower's Seeds)



A most important question

During my second month of nursing school our professor gave us a pop quiz. I was a conscientious student and had breezed through the questions, until I read the last one: **W**hat is the first name of the woman who cleans the school?

Surely this was some kind of joke. I had seen the cleaning woman several times. She was tall, dark-haired, and in her 50s, but how would I know her name? I handed in my paper, leaving the last question blank.

Before class ended, one student asked if the last question would count toward our quiz grade. **A**bsolutely, **s**aid the professor. **I**n your careers you will meet many people. **A**ll are significant. They deserve your attention and care, even if all you can do is smile and say hello.

I've never forgotten that lesson. I also learned her name was Dorothy.

—JoAnn C. Jones

一个最重要的问题

当我在护士学校进修到了第二个月的时候，教授对我们进行了一次测验。因为我是一个有责任心的学生，也曾好好地读书，所以我很轻松地就做完了前面的题目；可是最后一道题竟是这样的：“学校里的清洁女工叫什么名字？”

我以为这是一个玩笑。我曾见过几次这个清洁女工的面，她个子很高，有一头黑发；她的年龄大约在50岁左右。但我怎么会知道她的名字呢？我没有回答最后的那个问题就交了考卷。

在下课之前，有一个学生问道：最后一道题的答案是否也要被算在测验的成绩里？

“当然要算了！”教授回答说：“在你们的工作生涯中，将会遇到很多人，而且他们全都很重要的！他们应该得到你们的关心和爱护，即使你们能做的只是向他们微笑和打招呼。”

我永远也不会忘记那节课。我还弄清了那个清洁女工的名字，她叫黛丽斯。

——祖安·钟丝 (JoAnn C. Jones)

The Water

It was one of the hottest days of the dry season. We had not seen rain in almost a month. The crops were dying. Cows had stopped giving milk. The creeks and streams were long gone, having faded back into the earth.

Every day my husband and his brothers would go about the arduous process of trying to get water to the fields. Lately this process had involved taking a truck to the local water rendering plant and filling it up with water. But now severe rationing had cut everyone off. If we didn't see some rain soon, we would lose everything. It was on this day that I learned a true lesson of sharing, and witnessed the only miracle I have seen with my own eyes.

I was in the kitchen making lunch for my husband and his brothers when I saw my six-year-old son Billy walking toward the woods. He wasn't walking with the usual carefree abandon of youth, but with a serious purpose. He was obviously walking with great effort, trying to be as still as possible. Minutes after he disappeared into the woods, he came running out again, toward the house

水

那是干燥季节里最热的一天。已经快一个月没有下雨了，农作物正在枯萎，乳牛停止供给牛奶，小溪和河流已经不存在了，土地干涸了。

我的丈夫和他的兄弟每天都会尝试用费劲的方法把水灌溉到田地里。最近一次他们必需用卡车到当地水厂得到援助，并把货车注满水运回来。但现在，严格的配给形势切断了对每一个人的供应。如果我们不能立刻见到雨水，我们将会失去所有的东西。正是那天，我学到了关于真正地分享的一课，并且亲眼见证了一个奇迹的发生。

那天，我在厨房为我的丈夫和他的兄弟们作午饭。我看见我六岁大的儿子贝力正走向森林。他没有了通常他那个年龄的无忧无虑和无拘无束，而是有一个很重要的目的。我只能看见他的背影。很明显，他努力的尽可能的使自己走得平稳。几分钟后，他消失在森林中，然后又跑出森林向着房子冲了过来。

I went back to making sandwiches, thinking that whatever task he had been doing was completed. Moments later, however, he was once again walking with that slow purposeful stride toward the woods.


This activity went on for an hour: walk carefully to the woods, run back to the house. Finally I couldn't take it any longer, and I crept out of the house and followed him on his journey. He was cupping both hands in front of him as he walked, being very careful not to spill the precious water he held in them, maybe two or three tablespoons in his small hands.

I sneaked close as he went into the woods. Branches and thorns slapped his face, but he did not try to avoid them. He had a much higher purpose. As I leaned in to spy on him, I saw the most amazing sight. Several large deer loomed in front of him. Billy walked right up to them. I almost screamed for him to get away. A huge buck with elaborate antlers was dangerously close. But the buck did not threaten him. He didn't even move as Billy knelt down. And I saw a tiny fawn lying on the ground, obviously suffering from dehydration and heat exhaustion, lift its head with great effort to lap up the water cupped in my beautiful boy's hands.

我继续作三文治，并想无论什么艰难的事他已经完成了。然而过了一会，他再次用缓慢的充满目的的步态走向森林。这个行动持续了一个小时：小心翼翼的走向森林，然后又跑着回房子。

最后，我终于忍不住了。我偷偷溜出房子并跟在他后面。当他走动的时候，他把双手捧在前面成杯状。很小心的不让手中宝贵的水溅出来。在他小手中的水大概有两到三汤匙。

当他走进森林的时候，我偷偷地靠近他。树枝和荆棘刮在他的脸上，但他没有尝试着去躲避它们。他有一个更重要的目的。当我倾向前观察他时，我看见了最令人惊讶的景象。几只高大的鹿可怕地出现在他的面前。贝力直接向它们走去。我几乎尖叫起来，想让他离开。一只有着尖锐鹿角的巨大的雄鹿离他很近，他很危险。但那只雄鹿并没有威胁他。当贝力跪下时它甚至没有移动。我还看见一只小鹿躺在地上。显而易见，它正受着脱水 and 高温引起的筋疲力尽的折磨。它尽全力地抬起头来舔着我的美丽的男孩捧着的水。



When the water was gone, Billy jumped up to run back to the house and I hid behind a tree. I followed him back to the house, to a spigot that we had shut off the water to. Billy opened it all the way and a small trickle began to creep out. He knelt there, letting the drip-drip slowly fill up his makeshift “cup,” as the sun beat down on his little back. It took almost twenty minutes for the drops to fill his hands. When he stood up and began the trek back, I was there in front of him. His eyes just filled with tears. “I’m not wasting,” was all he said.

As he began his walk, I joined him, with a small pot of water from the kitchen. I let him tend to the fawn. I stayed away. It was his job. I stood on the edge of the woods watching the most beautiful heart I have ever known working so hard to save another life.

As the tears that rolled down my face began to hit the ground, they were suddenly joined by other drops ... and more drops ... and more. I looked up at the sky. It was as if God Himself was weeping with pride.

当水用完后，贝力跳起来，并跑回房子，我躲在树后面。我跟着他回到了房子，来到一个我们关掉水的水龙头前。贝力把他开到尽头，一股细小的水珠开始滴了出来。他跪在那里，让一滴滴的水珠慢慢的装满他那临时的“杯子”。太阳暴烈的晒在他那娇小的背上。几乎花了二十分钟水滴才装满他的手。当他站起来开始艰难跋涉地回森林去的时候，我出现在他的面前。他的眼睛马上充满了泪水。只说了一句，“我没有浪费水。”

当他开始又走的时候，我加入了，并带着从厨房拿来的一小壶水。我站在一旁，让他去照顾那只小鹿。那是他的工作。我站在森林的边上看着我曾经知道的最美丽的心灵正在努力的去拯救另一个生命。

当我的眼泪从脸上滚动着开始掉在地上时，忽然越来越多的水滴打在了地上。我往天上看。那就像是上帝正在自豪的落泪。

Some will probably say that this was just a huge coincidence. That miracles don't really exist. That it was bound to rain sometime. And I can't argue with that—I'm not going to try. All I can say is that the rain that came that day saved our farm, just like the actions of a little boy saved a life.

- Author unknown

或许有人会说这只是非常罕见的巧遇，根本不存在神迹，有时候注定要下雨。我不能够争论什么——我也不打算争论。我所能够说的就是那天下的雨拯救了我们的农场，就像一个小男孩的行动拯救了一个生命一样。

-作者不详



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