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## 内容概要

“每天读点好英文”系列升级版是专为有提高英文水平需要和兴趣的年轻朋友们量身打造的一套“超级学习版”双语读物，此套图书在选取优美文章的同时，附有较强的学习功能。

“美文欣赏”、“词汇笔记”、“小试身手”“短语家族”将是阅读《每天读点好英文：午夜惊恐之谜》的提升重点，这就真正形成了一个初学者的学习体系——记忆单词、学习语法、运用词组、实践运用，不愁英语功底学习得不扎实。

作为双语读物，《每天读点好英文：午夜惊恐之谜》让英语学习变得轻松有趣，在阅读中潜移默化地学习。

突显学习功能，补充句型详解，提升语法实力。

文后附阅读测验，提升文章理解力。

## 作者简介

常青藤语言教学中心，长期致力于双语读物的编撰工作，在编选与翻译方面兼具专业性与权威性。

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## 章节摘录

空中历险记 A Voyage in a Balloon 儒勒·凡尔纳 / Jules Verne 儒勒·凡尔纳 (Jules Verne, 1828—1905), 法国著名科幻小说家、冒险小说家。

1863年, 他凭《在已知和未知世界中奇异的漫游》一举成名, 进一步地激发了他的创作热情。

他一生中共创作了66部小说, 其中《格兰特船长的儿女》《海底两万里》《神秘岛》《八十天环游地球》等风靡全球, 成为家喻户晓的作品。

他以大量著作和突出贡献, 被誉为“现代科学幻想小说之父”。

In the month of September, 1850, I arrived at Frankfort-on-the-Maine. My passage through the principal cities of Germany, had been brilliantly marked by aerostatic balloon; but, up to this day, no inhabitant of the Confederation had accompanied me, and the successful experiments at Paris of Messrs. Green, Godard, and Poitevin, had failed to induce the grave Germans to attempt aerial voyages. Meanwhile, hardly had the news of my approaching ascension circulated throughout Frankfort, than three persons of note asked the favour of accompanying me. Two days after, we were to ascend from the Place de la Comedie. I immediately occupied myself with the preparations. My balloon, of gigantic proportions, was of silk, coated with gutta percha, a substance not liable to injury from acids or gas, and of absolute impermeability. Some trifling rents were mended: the inevitable results of perilous descents. The day of our ascension was that of the great fair of September, which attracts all the world to Frankfort. The apparatus for filling was composed of six hogsheads arranged around a large vat, hermetically sealed. The hydrogen gas, evolved by the contact of water with iron and sulphuric acid, passed from the first reservoirs to the second, and thence into the immense globe, which was thus gradually inflated. These preparations occupied all the morning, and about 11 o'clock, the balloon was three-quarters full; sufficiently so; for as we rise, the atmospheric layers diminish in density, and the gas, confined within the aerostat, acquiring more elasticity, might otherwise burst its envelope. My calculations had furnished me with the exact measurement of gas required to carry my companions and myself to a considerable height. We were to ascend at noon. It was truly a magnificent spectacle, that of the impatient crowd who thronged around the reserved enclosure, inundated the entire square and adjoining streets, and covered the neighbouring houses from the basements to the slated roofs. The high winds of past days had lulled, and an overpowering heat was radiating from an unclouded sky; not a breath animated the atmosphere. In such weather, one might descend in the very spot he had left. I carried three hundred pounds of ballast, in bags; the car, perfectly round, four feet in diameter, and three feet in height, was conveniently attached; the cord which sustained it was symmetrically extended from the upper hemisphere of the aerostat; the compass was in its place, the barometer suspended to the iron hoop which surrounded the supporting cord, at a distance of eight feet above the car; the anchor carefully prepared, all was in readiness for our departure. Among the persons who crowded around the enclosure, I remarked a young man with pale face and agitated features. I was struck with his appearance. He had been an assiduous spectator of my ascensions in several cities of Germany. His uneasy air and his extraordinary pre-occupation never left him; he eagerly contemplated the curious machine, which rested motionless at a few feet from the ground, and remained silent. The clock struck twelve!

This was the hour. My companions had not appeared. I sent to the dwelling of each, and learned that one had started for Hamburg, another for Vienna and the third, still more fearful, for London. Their hearts had failed them at the moment of undertaking one of those excursions, which, since the ingenious experiments of aeronauts, are deprived of all danger. As they made, as it were a part of the programme of the fete, they had feared being compelled to fulfil their agreements, and had fled at the moment of ascension. Their courage had been in inverse ratio to the square of their swiftness in retreat. The crowd, thus partly disappointed, were shouting with anger and impatience. I did not hesitate to ascend alone. To re-establish the equilibrium between the specific gravity of the balloon and the weight to be raised, I substituted other bags of sand for my expected companions and entered the car. The twelve men who were holding the aerostat by twelve cords fastened to the equatorial circle, let them slip between their fingers; the car rose a few feet above the ground. There was not a

breath of wind , and the atmosphere , heavy as lead , seemed insurmountable. “ All is ready !

” exclaimed I , “ attention !

” The men arranged themselves ; a last glance informed me that everything was right. “ Attention !

” There was some movement in the crowd which seemed to be invading the reserved enclosure. “ Let go !

” The balloon slowly ascended ; but I experienced a shock which threw me to the bottom of the car. When I rose , I found myself face to face with an unexpected voyager—the pale young man. “ Monsieur , I salute you !

” said he to me. “ By what right - ” “ Am I here - By the right of your inability to turn me out. ”

I was confounded. His assurance disconcerted me ; and I had nothing to say in reply. I looked at him , but he paid no regard to my astonishment. He continued : “ My weight will disturb your equilibrium , Monsieur : will you permit me - ” And without waiting for my assent , he lightened the balloon by two bags of sand which he emptied into the air. “ Monsieur , ” said I , taking the only possible course , “ you are here , well !

you choose to remain , well !

But to me alone belongs the management of the aerostat. ” “ Monsieur , ” replied he , “ your urbanity is entirely French ; it is of the same country with myself !

I press in imagination the hand which you refuse me. Take your measures—act as it may seem good to you ; I will wait till you have ended. ” “ To. ” “ To converse with you. ” The barometer had fallen to twenty-six inches ; we had attained a height of about six hundred metres , and were over the city ; which satisfied me of our complete quiescence , for I could not judge by our motionless flags. Nothing betrays the horizontal voyage of a balloon ; it is the mass of air surrounding it which moves. A kind of wavering heat bathed the objects extended at our feet , and gave their outlines an indistinctness to be regretted. The needle of the compass indicated a slight tendency to float towards the south. I looked again at my companion. He was a man of thirty , simply clad ; the bold outlines of his features betokened indomitable energy ; he appeared very muscular. Absorbed in the emotion of this silent suspension , he remained immovable , seeking to distinguish the objects which passed beneath his view. “ Vexatious mist !

” said he , at the expiration of a few moments. I made no reply. “ What would you - I could not pay for my voyage ; I was obliged to take you by surprise. ” “ No one has asked you to descend !

” “ A similar occurrence , ” he resumed , “ happened to the Counts of Laurencin and Dampierre , when they ascended at Lyons , on the 15th of January , 1784. A young merchant , named Fontaine , scaled the railing , at the risk of upsetting the equipage. He accomplished the voyage , and nobody was killed !

” “ Once on the earth , we will converse !

” said I , piqued at the tone of lightness with which he spoke. “ Bah !

do not talk of returning !

” “ Do you think then that I shall delay my descent - ” “ Descent !

” said he , with surprise. “ Let us ascend !

” And before I could prevent him , two bags of sand were thrown out , without even being emptied.

“ Monsieur !

” said I , angrily. “ I know your skill , ” replied he , composedly ; “ your brilliant ascensions have made some noise in the world. Experience is the sister of practice , but it is also first cousin to theory , and I have long and deeply studied the aerostatic art. It has affected my brain , ” added he , sadly , falling into a mute torpor. The balloon , after having risen , remained stationary ; the unknown consulted the barometer , and said : “ Here we are at 800 metres !

Men resemble insects !

See , I think it is from this height that we should always look at them , to judge correctly of their moral proportions !

The Place de la Comedie is transformed to an immense ant-hill. Look at the crowd piled up on the quays. The Zeil diminishes. We are above the church of Dom. The Maine is now only a white line dividing the city , and this bridge , the Maine-Brucke , looks like a white thread thrown between the two banks of the river. ” The atmosphere grew cooler. “ There is nothing I will not do for you , my host , ” said my companion. “ If you are cold , I will take off my clothes and lend them to you. ” “ Thanks !

” “ Necessity makes laws. Give me your hand , I am your countryman. You shall be instructed by my company , and my conversation shall compensate you for the annoyance I have caused you. ” I seated myself , without replying , at the opposite extremity of the car. The young man had drawn from his great coat a voluminous portfolio ; it was a work on aerostation. “ I possess , ” said he , “ a most curious collection of engraving , and caricatures appertaining to our aerial mania. This precious discovery has been at once admired and ridiculed. Fortunately we have passed the period when the Mongolfiers sought to make factitious clouds with the vapour of water ; and of the gas affecting electric properties , which they produced by the combustion of clamp straw with chopped wool. ” “ Would you detract from the merit of these inventions . ” replied I. “ Was it not well done to have proved by experiment the possibility of rising in the air . ” “ Who denies the glory of the first aerial navigators . Immense courage was necessary to ascend by means of those fragile envelopes which contained only warm air. Besides , has not aerostatic science made great progress since the ascensions of Blanchard . Look , Monsieur. ” He took from his collection an engraving. “ Here is the first aerial voyage undertaken by Pilatre des Rosiers and the Marquis d ’ Arlandes , four months after the discovery of balloons. Louis XVI. refused his consent to this voyage ; two condemned criminals were to have first attempted aerial travelling. Pilatre des Rosiers was indignant at this injustice and , by means of artifice , succeeded in setting out. This car , which renders the management of the balloon easy , had not then been invented ; a circular gallery surrounded the lower part of the aerostat. The two aeronauts stationed themselves at the extremities of this gallery. The damp straw with which it was filled encumbered their movements. A chafing-dish was suspended beneath the orifice of the balloon ; when the voyagers wished to ascend , they threw , with a long fork , straw upon this brazier , at the risk of burning the machine , and the air , growing warmer , gave to the balloon a new ascensional force. “ The two bold navigators ascended , on the 21st of November , 1783 , from the gardens of La Muette , which the Dauphin had placed at their disposal. The aerostat rose majestically , passed the Isle des Cygnes , crossed the Seine at the Barriere de la Conference , and , directing its way between the dome of the Invalides and L ’ Ecole Militaire , approached St. Sulpice ; then the aeronauts increased the fire , ascended , cleared the Boulevard , and descended beyond the Barriere d ’ Enfer. As it touched the ground , the collapsed , and buried Pilatre des Rosiers beneath its folds. ” “ Unfortunate presage !

” said I , interested in these details , which so nearly concerned me. “ Presage of his catastrophe , ” replied the unknown , with sadness. “ You have experienced nothing similar . ” “ Nothing !

” “ Bah !

Misfortunes often arrive without presage. ” And he remained silent. We were advancing towards the south ; the magnetic needle pointed in the direction of Frankfort , which was flying beneath our feet. “ Perhaps we shall have a storm. ” said the young man. “ We will descend first. ” “ Indeed !

it will be better to ascend ; we shall escape more surely. ” and two bags of sand were thrown overboard. The balloon rose rapidly , and stopped at twelve hundred metres. The cold was now intense , and there was a slight buzzing in my ears. Nevertheless , the rays of the sun fell hotly on the globe , and , dilating the gas it contained , gave it a greater ascensional force. I was stupid. “ Fear nothing , ” said the young man to me. “ We have three thousand five hundred toises of respirable air. You need not trouble yourself about my proceedings. ” I would have risen , but a vigorous hand detained me on my seat. “ Your name . ” asked I. “ My name !

how does it concern you . ” “ I have the honour to ask your name. ” “ I am called Erostratus or Empedocles , as you please. Are you interested in the progress of aerostatic science . ” He spoke with icy coldness , and I asked myself with whom I had to do. “ Monsieur , ” continued he , “ nothing new has



been invented since the days of the philosopher Charles. Four months after the discovery of aerostats, he had invented the valve, which permits the gas to escape when the balloon is too full, or when one wishes to descend; the car, which allows the machine to be easily managed; the network, which encloses the fabric of the balloon, and prevents its being too heavily pressed; the ballast, which is used in ascending and choosing the spot of descent; the coat of caoutchouc, which renders the silk impermeable; the barometer, which determines the height attained; and, finally, the hydrogen, which, fourteen times lighter than air, allows of ascension to the most distant atmospheric layers, and prevents exposure to aerial combustion. On the 1st of December, 1783, three hundred thousand spectators thronged the Tuileries. Charles ascended, and the soldiers presented arms. He travelled nine leagues in the air: managing his machine with a skill never since surpassed in aeronautic experiments. The King conferred on him a pension of two thousand livres, for in those days inventions were encouraged. For every one was interested in the progress of science." The unknown was seized with a violent agitation. "I, Monsieur, have studied; I am satisfied that the first aeronauts guided their balloons. Not to speak of Blanchard, whose assertions might be doubted, at Dijon, Guyton-Morveau, by the aid of oars and a helm, imparted to his machines perceptible motions, a decided direction. More recently, at Paris, a watchmaker, M. Julien, has made at the Hippodrome convincing experiments; for, with the aid of a particular mechanism, an aerial apparatus of oblong form was manifestly propelled against the wind. M. Petin placed four balloons, filled with hydrogen, in juxtaposition, and, by means of sails disposed horizontally and partially furled, hoped to obtain a disturbance of the equilibrium, which, inclining the apparatus, should compel it to an oblique path. But the motive power destined to surmount the resistance of currents, —the helice, moving in a movable medium, was unsuccessful. I have discovered the only method of guiding balloons, and not an Academy has come to my assistance, not a city has filled my subscription lists, not a government has deigned to listen to me!

It is infamous!

"His gesticulations were so furious that the car experienced violent oscillations; I had much difficulty in restraining him. Meanwhile, the balloon had encountered a more rapid current. We were advancing in a southerly direction, at 1200 metres in height, almost accustomed to this new temperature. "There is Darmstadt," said my companion. "Do you perceive its magnificent chateau. The storm-cloud below makes the outlines of objects waver; and it requires a practised eye to recognise localities." "You are certain that it is Darmstadt." "Undoubtedly; we are six leagues from Frankfort." "Then we must descend."

"Descend!

you would not alight upon the steeples!

"said the unknown, mockingly. "No, but in the environs of the city." "Well, it is too warm; let us remount a little." As he spoke thus, he seized some bags of ballast. I precipitated myself upon him; but, with one hand, he overthrew me, and the lightened balloon rose to a height of 1500 metres. "Sit down," said he, "and do not forget that Brioschi, Biot, and Gay-Lussac, ascended to a height of seven thousand metres, in order to establish some new scientific laws." "We must descend;" resumed I, with an attempt at gentleness. "The storm is gathering beneath our feet and around us; it would not be prudent."

"We will ascend above it, and shall have nothing to fear from it. What more beautiful than to reign in heaven, and look down upon the clouds which hover upon the earth!

Is it not an honour to navigate these aerial waves. The greatest personages have travelled like ourselves. The Marquise and Comtesse de Montalembert, the Comtesse de Potteries, Mlle. La Garde, the Marquis of Montalembert, set out from the Faubourg St. Antoine for these unknown regions. The Duc de Chartres displayed much address and presence of mind in his ascension of the 15th of July, 1784; at Lyons, the Comtes de Laurencin and de Dampierre; at Nantes, M. de Luynes; at Bordeaux, D'Arbelet des Granges; in Italy, the Chevalier Andreani; in our days, the Duke of Brunswick; have left in the air the track of their glory. In order to equal these great personages, we must ascend into the celestial regions higher than they. To approach the infinite is to comprehend it." The rarefaction of the air considerably dilated the hydrogen, and I saw the



lower part of the aerostat , designedly left empty , become by degrees inflated , rendering the opening of the valve indispensable ; but my fearful companion seemed determined not to allow me to direct our movements. I resolved to pull secretly the cord attached to the valve , while he was talking with animation. I feared to guess with whom I had to do ; it would have been too horrible !

It was about three-quarters of an hour since we had left Frankfort , and from the south thick clouds were arising and threatening to engulf us. “ Have you lost all hope of making your plans succeed . ” said I , with great apparent interest. “ All hope !

” replied the unknown , despairingly. “ Wounded by refusals , caricatures , those blows with the foot of an ass , have finished me. It is the eternal punishment reserved for innovators. See these caricatures of every age with which my portfolio is filled. ” I had secured the cord of the valve , and stooping over his works , concealed my movements from him. It was to be feared , nevertheless , that he would notice that rushing sound , like a waterfall , which the gas produces in escaping. “ How many jests at the expense of the Abbe Miolan !

He was about to ascend with Janninet and Bredin. During the operation , their balloon took fire , and an ignorant populace tore it to pieces. Then the caricature of The Curious Animals called them Maulant , Jean Mind , and Gredin. ” The barometer had begun to rise ; it was time !

A distant muttering of thunder was heard towards the south. “ See this other engraving , ” continued he , without seeming to suspect my manoeuvres. “ It is an immense balloon , containing a ship , large castles , houses , etc. The caricaturists little thought that their absurdities would one day become verities. It is a large vessel ; at the left is the helm with the pilot ’ s box ; at the prow , maisons de plaisance , a gigantic organ , and cannon to call the attention of the inhabitants of earth or of the moon ; above the stern the observatory and pilot-balloon ; at the equatorial circle , the barracks of the army ; on the left the lantern ; then upper galleries for promenades , the sails , the wings ; beneath , the cafes and general store-houses of provisions. Admire this magnificent announcement. ‘ Invented for the good of the human race , this globe will depart immediately for the seaports in the Levant , and on its return will announce its voyages for the two poles and the extremities of the Occident. Every provision is made ; there will be an exact rate of fare for each place of destination ; but the prices for distant voyages will be the same , 1000 louis. And it must be confessed that this is a moderate sum , considering the celerity , convenience , and pleasure of this mode of travelling above all others. While in this balloon , every one can divert himself as he pleases , dancing , playing , or conversing with people of talent. Pleasure will be the soul of the aerial society. ’ All these inventions excited laughter. But before long , if my days were not numbered , these projects should become realities. ” We were visibly descending ; he did not perceive it !

“ See this game of balloons ; it contains the whole history of the aerostatic art. This game , for the use of educated minds , is played like that of the Jew ; with dice and counters of any value agreed upon , which are to be paid or received , according to the condition in which one arrives. ” “ But , ” I resumed , “ you seem to have valuable documents on aerostation . ” “ I am less learned than the Almighty !

That is all !

I possess all the knowledge possible in this world. From Phaeton , Icarus , and Architas. I have searched all , comprehended all !

Through me , the aerostatic art would render immense services to the world , if God should spare my life !

But that cannot be. ” “ Why not . ” “ Because my name is Empedocles or Erostratus !

” — 1850年9月,我到达了坐落在美因河畔的法兰克福。

这一次,我乘气球穿越了德国的几个主要城市,煞是引人注目。

但是,直到现在,也没有一个德国人愿意和我同行。

之前我在巴黎成功的升空经历,并没有唤起那群刻板的德国人对气球飞行的半点儿兴致。

当时,我要乘气球升空的消息刚在法兰克福传开,马上就有三个市民自告奋勇,要和我一同实现这一壮举。

两天后,我们将从喜剧广场出发。

我立刻开始着手做各项准备工作。

我的气球体积庞大，由丝质材料制成，上面还涂了一层杜仲胶，这是为了防酸蚀和毒气。

此外，气球的密闭性能特别好。

我还修复了其他一些因为危险降落而损坏的小零件。

我们升空的那天正好是德国9月份的一个大集市，成千上万的人赶到了法兰克福。

装燃料的大容器由六个大桶组成，被密封起来。

氢气完全是由铁水和硫磺酸水反应制成的，然后再从第一个容器输送到第二个容器，继而送到那个大气球里。

气球就是这样被充满的。

我花了整整一个早晨，才完成了这些准备工作。

大约11点的时候，气球充了3/4，这已经完全够用了。

因为随着我们升空，空气的密度会降低，容器里的氢气也会随之膨胀，所以，如果充得太满就可能会爆炸。

根据我和同伴们的重量，我计算出了到达足够飞行高度所需气体的确切体积。

我们计划正午出发。

那场面极其壮观，等得不耐烦的人们在圈出的围场内外你推我搡，临近的街道也被挤得水泄不通。

附近的房子，从地下室到房顶全都挤满了围观的人。

前几天刮的大风今天已经平息下来，但晴朗的天空透着闷热。

这样的天气，气球极有可能刚刚升上去就降下来。

我在袋子里放了300磅重的压舱物。

吊舱是正圆形的，直径长达4英尺，高3英尺，很容易附在气球下面，用来固定吊舱的绳子则均匀地拉直气球的上半部分。

指南针已经摆好，吊舱上方8英尺处有一个拴在固定绳上的金属环，气压计就挂在这个金属环里。

锚也小心地安装好了。

一切就绪，随时可以出发。

在熙熙攘攘的围观人群中，我注意到一个年轻人，他脸色惨白，神情紧张。

他的出现让我备受鼓舞。

他是我的忠实观众，在德国的几次升空当中，我都曾见到过他的身影。

他总是那样心神不安，但又全神贯注。

他注视着这个奇妙的机器悄无声息地上升，离开地面，他却站在那里，一言不发。

12点，该出发了。

可是，我的同伴没有现身。

我派人去找，才得知他们一个去了汉堡，一个去了维也纳，最后一个胆子最小，去了伦敦。

他们的懦弱使他们错失了这次旅行机会。

其实，现在的气球驾驶员有着丰富的驾驶经验，根本不会有任何危险。

他们原本是今天这次盛会的当事人，但他们被自己的承诺吓倒了，就在升空的那一刻，他们临阵脱逃了。

他们逃跑的速度可比面对困难时拿出勇气的速度快多了。

一些围观的人感到很失望，他们愤怒而不耐烦地大喊大叫。

我没有犹豫，立刻决定单飞。

由于气球需要承担的重量有了变化，为了保持平衡，我又塞进了一些沙袋，代替那几个没有来的同伴，然后爬进吊舱。

气球的环型圈上系着12根绳子，分别由12个人拉着，他们稍稍松手，气球上升了几英尺。

一丝风都没有，空气重得像铅块，似乎想阻止我的这次升空。

“都准备好了吗？”

”我宣布，“全体注意！”

”他们全都就绪了，最后一个人看了我一眼，示意一切正常。

“准备！”

”人群中有些动静，好像有什么东西冲出了围场。

“出发！”

”气球缓缓上升，但是我感到吊舱剧烈地晃动了一下，我一时没提防，便跌倒了。我站起来后，发现对面竟然站着一个人——那个脸色苍白的年轻人。

“先生，您好！”

”他对我说。

“你怎么……” “为什么会在这里，对吗？”

因为没有我，您不行。

”我有些困惑。

他的肯定让我有些惊讶，而我也无言以对。

我看着他，可他对我的吃惊似乎并不在意，继续说道：“先生，我的重量破坏了您气球的平衡，您能允许我……”还没等我同意，他就将两个沙袋的沙子撒入空中，来减轻气球的重量。

“先生，你既然来了——那么，想留下的话，就别乱动——让我一个人来驾驶气球。”

”我也只能这样说了。“先生，”他答道，“您的骨子里透着法国人的儒雅气质，我也是法国人。我试着想象您会用哪只手拒绝和我握手。

您做您的事情吧，按照您自己的方式，我等您弄完——” “你还想干什么？”

”“跟您谈谈。”

”气压表已经降到26英寸，这表示我们现在正在距城市约600米的上空。

其实，单凭那个一动不动的旗子，我无法判断现在的情况。

我对现在接近静止的状态感到很满意。

至于气球是否在水平移动，我就不得而知了。

因为是气球周围大量的空气在托着它移动，是一股热浪笼罩着我们脚下的物体，使它们的轮廓渐渐模糊起来。

指南针显示气球在向南飘。

我又将眼前的这个同伴打量了一番。

他30岁左右，衣着朴素，身材轮廓鲜明，看得出他是个身体强壮、精力旺盛而且很有决心的人。

他一动不动地站在这个几乎静止不动的吊舱里，想看清我们下面飘过的东西是什么。

“这讨厌的雾！”

”过了一会儿，他叫道。

我没有应声。

“您还在生气？”

我没有钱付这次旅行的费用，以这种方式上来，实在是迫不得已！”

”“没人要赶你走。”

”“您知道吗？”

1784年1月15日那天的情形和今天差不多。

当时，洛朗森伯爵和皮埃尔伯爵正准备从里昂升空，一个叫方丹的年轻商人，冒着弄翻气球的危险翻过围栏。

他完成了旅行，大家也都平安着陆。

”“等到了地面，咱们再谈这个。”

”我很讨厌他说话时那种轻描淡写的口气。

“哎哟，您还想回去？”

”“你以为我会推迟降落时间？”

”“降落？”

”他吃了一惊，说，“咱们还是升上去吧！”

”就在我阻止他之前，他又把两袋沙包扔了出去，而且是连包扔的，不是只把沙子撒出去。

“先生！”

”我呵斥他。

“我知道您的能耐，”他从容地说，“您这次的辉煌旅程已经妇孺皆知了。虽说经验与实践密不可分，但缺乏理论知识也是不行的。

我学习飞行术已经很长时间了。

现在，这些飞行理论已经全都装在我脑袋里了。

”他说话时很伤心，接着又陷入了沉默。

气球升高了一些，又静止了下来。

陌生人看了一眼气压计，说道：“我们现在升到800米高空了！

地上的人看起来和虫子一样。

看哪。

我认为我们应该永远站在这个高度审视众人，对他们的道德水平进行评判。

喜剧广场简直变成了一个蚂蚁堆。

看看那个码头的人山人海。

蔡尔大街越来越小了。

我们现在在教堂上空了。

现在看来，美因河就像一条白色的带子，将整个城市一分为二。

还有那座大桥，就像连接两岸的一根细线。

”空气变凉了。

“我的主人，您让我干什么都行，”我的同伴说，“你要是冷了，我就把衣服脱下来给您穿。

”“不用了，谢谢。

”“需要什么您就说。

把手给我，咱们可是同乡呢。

我会一直陪着您，我希望能陪您聊聊天，补偿我给您带来的不快，好吗？

”我没说话，在吊舱里离他最远的一角坐下了。

这个年轻人从大衣里掏出一大卷手稿，那是关于气球驾驶的文章。

“我收集了那些最稀奇古怪的，关于有飞行癖好的人的漫画和版画。

人们发现这一点后，在羡慕不已的同时却又对我冷嘲热讽。

幸运的是，我们已经过了蒙戈尔费埃时代，不会再用水蒸气，或是用燃烧的湿草和碎羊毛所产生的带电气体去制造人工云彩了。

”“你竟敢贬低这些伟大的发明？

”我问他，“假如没有当初那些升空的实验，我们今天又怎么可能在天空自由翱翔呢？

”“有谁敢否认第一批飞行者的丰功伟绩呢？

那时，飞上天空该需要多么大的勇气啊！

想想看，在那脆弱得不堪一击的飞行器里，除了热空气，其他什么都没有。

而且，自从布朗夏尔之后，飞行科学有过任何进步吗？

先生，您再看看这个！

”那个年轻人又从手稿里抽出一张版画。

“这是皮拉特尔·德罗齐埃和阿尔朗公爵进行的人类首次空中飞行，要知道，四个月前，气球才刚刚发明。

路易十六不同意这项冒险活动，两个最早企图尝试这一活动的人还被判了刑。

皮拉特尔·德罗齐埃对这一不公正的判决愤恨不已，于是他想了个点子，最终成功地出发了。

那时还没有发明吊舱，所以，控制气球并不像今天这样容易。

当时的飞行器的底部有一个环形的通道。

两个飞行员只能各自站在通道的两边，充塞于气球内部的湿草让他们行动很困难。

气球口下面悬着一个火盆。

如果飞行员想要升高，他们就用一个长长的叉耙子往火盆里添草。

随后，空气受热产生一个上升力，从而推动气球上升。



这样做很危险，因为很有可能会将飞行器点燃。

“1783年11月21日，这两个勇敢的飞行员从米埃特皇家花园起飞了。

在他们的恳请下，皇太子特许他们将此地作为起飞场所。

气球升天了，那景象十分壮观。

它飘过了大雁岛，飘过了教区旁的塞纳河，在医院和军事院校的圆形顶楼逗留了一会儿，接着飘过了圣叙尔皮斯教堂的上空。

然后，这两个飞行员把火点旺，气球升得更高了，穿过大街之后，准备降落。

气球就在接触到地面的一刹那，砰的一声爆炸了，皮拉特尔·德罗齐埃葬身火海。

” “真是不幸啊！”

”我听得入迷了，故事的悲惨结局让我有些难过。

“真为他的悲剧难过！”

”年轻人悲伤地说，“您没有经历过类似的事情吗？”

” “从来没有。”

” “唉，灾难总是不期而至。”

”然后，他就沉默了。

我们正在往南飞，指针指的是法兰克福的方向，我们正从它的上空飞过。

“也许我们会遇到一场风暴。”

”那个年轻人说。

“我们先降落吧。”

” “事实上，我们最好还是继续上升，那样肯定能躲过这场风暴。”

”又有两袋沙子被扔了出去。

气球急速上升，在1200米的高度停了下来。

现在天气变得很冷，我的耳朵也嗡嗡作响。

尽管如此，阳光仍然照着这个气球，它内部的空气更热了，而这给了它一个更大的升力。

我有点儿眩晕了。

“怕什么？”

”那年轻人说，“我们有3500突阿斯（法国旧的长度单位，长度单位约等于1.95米或6.4英尺，应用于早期的大地测量中）可供呼吸的空气。

你不用管我。”

”我想站起来，可一只强劲有力的大手把我按回到座位上。

我问他：“你是谁？”

” “我是谁？”

这跟您有什么关系！”

” “我有资格知道你的名字！”

” “我叫罗斯特拉斯，或恩培多克勒，您想怎么叫都行。”

您对飞行科学的进程感兴趣吗？”

”他冷冷地说着，我暗自纳闷，这个人到底是谁？”

“先生，”他自顾自地说着，“继物理学家查理之后，就再也没有出现过任何新发明了。

发明气球四个月以后，他发明了阀门，这东西可以帮助我们释放出气球里多余的气体，还可以控制气球，让气球下降；接着，他又发明了吊舱，使控制气球变得更加容易；然后是一种网状物，它覆盖在气球表面，可以减少对气球的压力；而压舱物则用于升空和选择降落点，他发明的弹性橡胶外层比丝绸的防渗透性要好，而气压计则可以测量你所处的高度；最后，他发现了氢气，它的质量只有空气的1/14，这样，气球就可以升到足够高的高度，而不必再担心它会爆炸。

1783年12月1日，30万人聚集在杜伊勒利宫，观看查理乘气球升空，士兵们为他振臂欢呼。

他在空中飞行了9里格。

而他驾驶飞行器的技术，恐怕到现在仍然无人能及。

国王赏赐他2000里弗（古时法国的货币单位及其银币），因为在那个年代，政府鼓励发明创造，人们

都对科技的进步很感兴趣。

” 那个年轻人显得很激动。

“ 先生，我研究过了。

我很欣慰我们第一代驾驶员知道如何驾驶气球。

且不说有争议的布朗夏尔，就拿吉东·蒙沃来说吧，他单靠桨和舵就能去任何想去的地方。

再近一些的是，在巴黎的那次，那个钟表商，朱利安先生，他不是赛马场上做了几次令人信服的飞行实践吗？

他用了一个特别的装置，椭圆形的，完全可以逆风飞行。

佩坦先生那次则是并排放了四只氢气球，他把翼折叠起来一部分，水平固定，这样仪器倒向另一边，为的就是打破平衡，让气球侧身飞行。

人们发明了螺旋桨来克服气流带来的阻力，可螺旋桨本身就是一个活动的媒介，所以发挥不了太大的作用。

我找到了唯一能够控制气球的方法，可是没有一个学院愿意协助我，也没有一个城市愿意资助我，更没有一个政府愿意屈尊听我的意见。

真无耻！

” 他激动得手舞足蹈，吊舱都随之剧烈地摇晃起来。

让他停下来可真不容易。

这时，气球正好遇上有一股强大的气流，我们向更南的方向飞去。

现在已经到达1200米的高空，我也习惯了四周的气温。

“ 达姆施塔特，” 我的同伴说，“ 看到城堡没有？

脚下的乌云挡住了地面的景物，显得有些模糊。

只有经验特别丰富的人，才能认出方向。

” “ 你确定那是达姆施塔特？

” 我问。

“ 绝对没错，我们已经离开法兰克福6里格了。

” “ 那我们现在必须降落了。

” “ 降落？

您不是想在这个尖尖的建筑物上降落吧！

” 年轻人笑了，语气中略带一些嘲讽的意味。

“ 当然不是，但我们可以在郊外降落。

” “ 哦，这里太热了。

我们再升高一点儿吧。

” 他说着，提起几袋压舱物，我朝他扑了过去。

但他手一挥，就把我挡了回来。

变轻的气球升高到了1500米。

“ 你给我坐下。

别忘了布廖斯基、布里奥、盖·吕萨克，他们为了进行科学定律测试，升到了7000米！

” “ 我们必须降落！

” 我坚持，并努力使自己的语气显得温和些，“ 风暴就在我们周围，就在我们脚下，你这样做太轻率了！

” “ 那么，我们可以凌驾于风暴之上，这样，我们就不必惧怕它了。

还有什么比站在天堂里俯瞰笼罩大地的云彩更美妙呢？

徜徉于云海之间，这难道不是一件令人骄傲的事情吗？

那些显赫的人物，在世间的时候不就是我们现在这样吗？

侯爵夫人、女伯爵蒙塔朗贝尔、波特娜女伯爵、加尔德夫人，还有蒙塔朗贝尔侯爵，不就是从圣安东尼出发，飞向那些鲜为人知的地方吗？

1784年7月15日，夏尔特公爵在那次升空中表现得超常的冷静。

洛朗森伯爵和当皮埃尔伯爵在里昂，利埃·安德列尼在意大利，还有，与我们同一时代的布吕斯维克公爵，他们全都在天空中留下了自己光辉的痕迹。

为了向这些伟大的人物看齐，我们必须飞得更高。

只有冲上云霄，才能揭开它神秘的面纱。

“空气越来越稀薄，气球里的氢气迅速增加。

我看到气球底部在膨胀，那本来是空的。

打开阀门已经变得刻不容缓，可我那个可怕的同伴说什么都不让我控制飞行的方向。

我决定在他兴致勃勃、高谈阔论的时候，偷偷解开那控制阀门的绳子。

我想象不出这个人到底是谁，这太恐怖了。

我们已经飞离法兰克福45分钟了，厚重的云层从南面飘来笼罩在我们身边，几乎要将我们吞没。

“你对自己的计划已经不抱任何成功的希望了吗？”

“我饶有兴趣地问。

“不抱任何希望？”

“这个陌生人歇斯底里地喊着，“他们总是侮辱我、挖苦我、鄙视我，是他们毁了我。

他们永远抨击我们这些试图创新的人。

我的包里装满了各个时期讽刺这种现象的作品。

“我趁他专心弯腰看画卷时，偷偷拉住了控制气阀的绳子，他并没有发现。

尽管如此，我还是心惊胆战。

因为他很有可能注意到阀门打开时发出的嘶嘶的漏气声。

“他们无数次地取笑阿贝·米奥兰！”

他马上就要和加内特和布勒东一起升空了。

在操作过程中，他们的气球着火了。

那些无知的人便将气球撕碎。

在那张名为《怪物》的漫画中，他们给这三个人分别起了谐音绰号。

“气压开始上升，时机到了！”

南面传来了轰隆隆的雷声。

“看看这幅版画！”

“陌生人继续说道，好像并没发觉我在做什么，“上面画了一个硕大无朋的气球，上面有船只、巨大的城堡，还有房子之类的东西。

漫画家们永远也不会想到，他们认为荒谬至极的东西，有一天竟会变成现实。

那是一艘巨大的船，左边是舵轮和驾驶舱，前面是一个休息室，还摆了一尊吸引地球和月球上居民注意的大炮。

上面是观测台和测风气球，中间是一个圆形的营房，营房左面是灯塔，再往上还有长廊，人们可以在上面散步，有帆，有翼，下面是咖啡馆和储藏室。

听听这伟大的赞美之词吧：‘人类为了追求幸福而发明了气球，这个大球马上就要带大家飞往雷凡特，回来时它将会公布飞往两极以及最西端的计划。

一切都准备好了。

飞往每一站的价格各不相同，现在已经制定好了。

不过远程票价是一样的，都是1000金路易。

与其他交通工具的速度、舒适程度以及旅途中所享受的乐趣相比较，我必须说，这个价格一点儿都不高。

气球上的每一个乘客都可以随心所欲地做任何事情，跳舞、玩耍，与那些精英人士交流。

这个空中社会的宗旨便是舒适惬意。

‘这只会引得大家发笑，但不久以后，如果我还在世的话，这些就可以变成现实了！’

“很明显，我们在下降，可他竟然没有觉察出来。

“气球的游戏，涵盖了整个飞行科学的发展历史。

这个游戏是给那些头脑精明的人玩的，就像是犹太人在掷骰子，赌注已经下好，输赢在此一搏。



” 我说：“你似乎有一些航空学方面的珍贵资料？”

” “我只比上帝笨一点儿，就那么一点点。”

我几乎学过这世上的所有知识。

从法厄同、伊卡洛斯到阿契塔斯，我都有所涉猎，我了解他们的理论！

如果上帝赐予我足够长的生命，我肯定能在航空学领域里作出巨大贡献，但这不会成为现实。

” “为什么？”

” “因为我是恩培多克勒或罗斯特拉斯。”

” （译者注：恩培多克勒是首先提出世界的本原有多个的希腊哲学家，而罗斯特拉斯是伊斯兰教众的人物。）

) induce [in'dju:s] v. 引诱；诱使；劝；说服；劝；说服      What induced you to do such a stupid thing .      是什么促使你做出这等蠢事？

ascend [·'send] v. 上升；登高；追溯      The rocket ascended into the cloud.      火箭高高地飞入云端。

apparatus [·p·'reit·s] n. 装置；设备；器官；仪器      Firemen needed breathing apparatus to enter the burning house.      消防队员需要呼吸器械才能进入燃烧的房屋。

horizontal [·h·ri'z·nt·l] adj. 水平的；地平的；横的；地平线上的      It's very serious for horizontal deformation to damage building.      水平变形对建筑物的破坏极为严重。

我要乘气球升空的消息刚在法兰克福传开，马上就有三个市民自告奋勇，要和我一同实现这一壮举。

我们对新生婴儿能有多大的期待呢？

但愿我这次不同寻常的可怕经历能够警示读者，但又不至于吓退那些未来的空中探险者。

The apparatus for filling was composed of...      be composed of：由.....组成      It was rich in incident.  
be rich in：富有.....的      .....

编辑推荐

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