

(1) The Gift Of The Magi

[一] 博士的禮物

One dollar and eighty-seven cents. That was all. And sixty cents of it was in pennies. Pennies saved one and two at a time by bulldozing the grocer and the vegetable man and the butcher until one's cheeks burned with the silent imputation of parsimony that such close dealing implied. Three times Della counted it. One dollar and eighty-seven cents. And the next day would be Christmas.

一塊八毛七分。就是所有的了。而且其中六毛還是一分錢的銅板。這些銅板是一分，兩分這麼省下來的，每次和雜貨商，菜場賣菜的和賣肉的爭得面紅耳赤，也只有在這種近距離的交易裏才會這麼無言地指責對方小氣。蝶拉算了三次。一塊八毛七分。而明天將是耶誕節。

There was clearly nothing to do but flop down on the shabby little couch and howl. So Della did it. Which instigates the moral reflection that life is made up of sobs, sniffles, and smiles, with sniffles predominating.

很顯然沒辦法了，只好栽倒在舊沙發椅上放聲地哭。蝶拉也就這麼做。這令人連想到生命是由哭泣，哽咽，和微笑所組成，而以哽咽為大宗。

While the mistress of the home is gradually subsiding from the first stage to the second, take a look at the home. A furnished flat at \$8 per week. It did not exactly beggar description, but it certainly had that word on the lookout for the mendicancy squad.

當這家庭的女主人漸次由第一階段的傷感減緩到第二階段的時候，讓我們來看一看這個家。每週八塊錢連傢俱租來的公寓。雖然不會在你描寫的時候言盡詞竭。可是呢，它看起來就有丐幫窩的樣子。

In the vestibule below was a letter-box into which no letter would go, and an electric button from which no mortal finger could coax a ring. Also appertaining thereunto was a card bearing the name 'Mr. James Dillingham Young.'

在樓下玄關的地方，有個從來沒收過信的信筒。也有個從來沒有人按得出聲響的門鈴按鈕。有個從屬的牌子在那裏，上面寫著[楊迪伶詹姆先生]。

The 'Dillingham' had been flung to the breeze during a former period of prosperity when its possessor was being paid \$30 per week. Now, when the income was shrunk to \$20, the letters of 'Dillingham' looked blurred, as though they were thinking seriously of contracting to a modest and unassuming D. But whenever Mr. James Dillingham Young came home and reached his flat above he was called 'Jim' and greatly hugged by Mrs. James Dillingham Young, already introduced to you as Della. Which is all very good.

[迪伶]這兩個字是在前些時較景氣的時候得意地加上去的，那時候楊先生每週週薪是三十塊。現在嘛，因為週薪縮減到二十，這[迪伶]兩個字看起來暗淡無光，好比要審慎地考慮減縮為一個平易的D字母一樣。然而，每當楊迪伶詹姆先生回家，爬上樓梯，到達他的公寓的時候，他總是被楊迪伶詹姆太太稱呼為[吉姆]，而被熱烈地擁抱。她也就是前面提到的蝶拉。這樣子一切都很美好。

Della finished her cry and attended to her cheeks with the powder rag. She stood by the window and looked out dully at a gray cat walking a gray fence in a gray backyard. Tomorrow would be Christmas Day, and she had only \$1.87 with which to buy Jim a present. She had been saving every penny she could for months, with this result. Twenty dollars a week doesn't go far. Expenses had been greater than she had calculated. They always are. Only \$1.87 to buy a present for Jim. Her Jim. Many a happy hour she had spent planning for something nice for him. Something fine and rare and sterling -- something just a little bit near to being worthy of the honor of being owned by Jim.

蝶拉止住了哭泣，拿粉撲子撲了撲臉。她站在窗旁，呆呆地看著灰院子裏，灰牆上爬著一隻灰貓。明天即將是耶誕節，她只有一塊八毛七分給吉姆買一個禮物。她幾個月來節省下每一分錢，落得這樣的結果。每週二十塊很不管用。支出比她所盤算的多。總是這樣子。只一塊八毛七分要給吉姆買禮物。她的吉姆。她曾渡過許多快樂的小時計劃怎麼樣來給他買個好禮物。一件好，稀奇，又有價值的東西--一件比較值得號稱為他所擁有的東西。

There was a pier-glass between the windows of the room. Perhaps you have seen a pier-glass in an \$8 flat. A very thin and very agile person may, by observing his reflection in a rapid sequence of longitudinal strips, obtain a fairly accurate conception of his looks. Della, being slender, had mastered the art.

那房子窗間有面長長的鏡子。也許你看過週租八塊錢的公寓裏的鏡子。一個身裁細長而靈敏的人，觀察在鏡子裏迅速連串的長條身影，得以蠻準確地知道自己看起來怎麼樣。蝶拉因為苗條，早就熟練了這個藝術。

Suddenly she whirled from the window and stood before the glass. Her eyes were shining brilliantly, but her face had lost its color within twenty seconds. Rapidly she pulled down her hair and let it fall to its full length.

突然間，她猛然從窗子前面轉過身來，站在鏡子前面。她的眼睛閃亮，臉色在二十秒之內失去了色澤。很快地，她把頭髮放下來，讓它垂到最長。

Now, there were two possessions of the James Dillingham Youngs in which they both took a mighty pride. One was Jim's gold watch that had been his father's and his grandfather's. The other was Della's hair. Had the Queen of Sheba lived in the flat across the air shaft, Della would had let her hair hang out the window some day to dry just to depreciate Her Majesty's jewels and gifts. Had King Solomon been the janitor, with all his treasures piled up in the basement, Jim would have pulled out his watch every time he passed, just to see him pluck at his

beard from envy.

目前，楊迪伶詹姆夫婦擁有兩件他們都引以為傲的東西。其一是吉姆的金錶，那從前是他父親的，也是他祖父的。另一件是蝶拉的秀髮。假如希巴的女王住在樓梯口對面的公寓的話，蝶拉會偶爾把頭髮垂放窗子外面涼乾，就想讓女王陛下所擁有的首飾和贈禮貶值貶值。假如所羅門王是公寓看門的門房，把所有的金銀財寶堆放在地下室，吉姆會在每次經過的時候把他的錶拉出來，故意來看他忌妒地捻著下巴的鬍鬚。

So now Della's beautiful hair fell about her rippling and shining like a cascade of brown waters. It reached below her knee and made itself almost a garment for her. And then she did it up again nervously and quickly. Once she faltered for a minute and stood still while a tear or two splashed on the worn red carpet.

於是呢，現在蝶拉的秀髮披身，好比一股棕泉一般蕩著微波而閃閃發光。髮長過膝，簡直成了她的一件外衣。接著，很快地她又緊緊張張地把頭髮再攏起來。她曾停頓一下子，悄悄地站著，同時一，兩滴眼淚灑落到舊紅地毯上。

On went her old brown jacket; on went her old brown hat. With a whirl of skirts and with the brilliant sparkle still in her eyes, she fluttered out the door and down the stairs to the street.

她披上舊棕色外套，戴上舊棕色帽子。裙角一轉，兩眼還閃著亮光，她急急地出了門，下了樓梯，走上了街。

Where she stopped the sign read: 'Mme. Sofronie. Hair Goods of All Kinds.' One flight up Della ran, and collected herself, panting. Madame, large, too white, chilly, hardly looked the 'Sofronie.'

在她停腳的地方，有張招牌寫著：[所芬妮夫人。買賣各色頭髮]。蝶拉急上了一層樓，鎮定了一下自己，還喘著氣呢。夫人長得高大，膚色過白，冷冷的，一點都不像[所芬妮]。

'Will you buy my hair?' asked Della.

'I buy hair,' said Madame. 'Take yer hat off and let's have a sight at the looks of it.'

Down rippled the brown cascade.

'Twenty dollars,' said Madame, lifting the mass with a practiced hand.

'Give it to me quick,' said Della.

[妳要買我的頭髮嗎?]蝶拉問。

[我買頭髮，]夫人說。[把帽子拿掉，讓我們瞧瞧它看起來怎麼樣。]

秀髮像棕泉般落下來。

[二十塊，]夫人說，一面以熟練的手捧起這縷棕絲。

[快點給我，]蝶拉說。

Oh, and the next two hours tripped by on rosy wings. Forget the hashed metaphor. She

was ransacking the stores for Jim's present.

接下去的兩小時好比長了粉紅的翅膀，輕快地飛逝。不要管我胡言亂湊的隱喻。她正在店裏翻箱倒櫃地尋找吉姆的禮物。

She found it at last. It surely had been made for Jim and no one else. There was no other like it in any of the stores, and she had turned all of them inside out. It was a platinum fob chain simple and chaste in design, properly proclaiming its value by substance alone and not by meretricious ornamentation -- as all good things should do. It was even worthy of The Watch. As soon as she saw it she knew that it must be Jim's. It was like him. Quietness and value -- the description applied to both. Twenty-one dollars they took from her for it, and she hurried home with the 87 cents. With that chain on his watch Jim might be properly anxious about the time in any company. Grand as the watch was, he sometimes looked at it on the sly on account of the old leather strap that he used in place of a chain.

她終於找到了。真正是專門為他打造出來。在所有店裏都沒有類似的東西，她已經找翻了所有的商店。那是個白金做成的錶鏈，式樣簡單樸素，以品質表彰其價值，而非以精細的紋飾--好比所有好東西都應該是這樣的。它甚至於配得上那支錶。她一眼，就知道這條錶鏈是屬於吉姆的。它很像他。拿靜與價值來形容，對兩者都適用。他們取價二十一塊，她拿著所剩的八毛七分更快地回家。那支錶有了這個錶鏈，吉姆和任何伙伴在一起，都能規矩地想看看現在是甚麼時候了。儘管錶很好，他有時候看錶都是偷偷地看，因為用的是舊皮錶帶，而不是用的錶鏈。

When Della reached home her intoxication gave way a little to prudence and reason. She got out her curling irons and lighted the gas and went to work repairing the ravages made by generosity added to love. Which is always a tremendous task, dear friends -- a mammoth task.

蝶拉回到家的時候，她陶醉的心情有點恢復到謹慎和理智。她拿出髮捲子，點起瓦斯爐，開始修補為了愛加上慷慨所造成的損害。這永遠是很巨大的工作，我的朋友--龐大的工作。

Within forty minutes her head was covered with tiny, close-lying curls that made her look wonderfully like a truant schoolboy. She looked at her reflection in the mirror long, carefully, and critically.

不到四十分鐘，她頭上蓋滿了緊貼著的小捲，讓她看起來活像個逃學的小男生一樣。她以仔細而挑剔的眼光久久地凝視鏡子裏的形像。

'If Jim doesn't kill me,' she said to herself, 'before he takes a second look at me, he'll say I look like a Coney Island chorus girl. But what could I do -- oh! What could I do with a dollar and eighty-seven cents?'

[假如吉姆，]她跟自己說，[不在看第二眼之前把我宰掉的話，他會說我看起來像康尼島

的歌舞女郎。可是我能怎麼辦呢！一塊八毛七分能做甚麼呢？]

At 7 o'clock the coffee was made and the frying-pan was on the back of the stove hot and ready to cook the chops.

七點的時候，咖啡煮好了，煎盤也在爐子上熱好，準備煮肉塊了。

Jim was never late. Della doubled the fob chain in her hand and sat on the corner of the table near the door that he always entered. Then she heard his step on the stair away down on the first flight, and she turned white for just a moment. She had a habit of saying little silent prayers about the simplest everyday things, and now she whispered: 'Please God, make him think I am still pretty.'

吉姆從來不遲回家。蝶拉把錶鏈對摺，放在手裏，然後坐在靠他每次進來的門的那張桌子的一角。她聽到他的腳步聲踏在樓梯的第一階，臉色變白了一陣子。她有個為日常瑣事靜靜地做小小祈禱的習慣。現在她低聲地說，[上帝，求你讓他認為我還漂亮。]

The door opened and Jim stepped in and closed it. He looked thin and very serious. Poor fellow, he was only twenty-two -- and to be burdened with a family! He needed a new overcoat and he was without gloves.

門打開，吉姆踏進裏面來，又把門關上。他看來瘦而嚴肅。可憐的傢伙，他才二十二歲呢--而且有家庭的負擔！他須要一件新大衣，而且又沒有手套。

Jim stood inside the door, as immovable as a setter at the scent of quail. His eyes were fixed upon Della, and there was an expression in them that she could not read, and it terrified her. It was not anger, nor surprise, nor disapproval, nor horror, nor any of the sentiments that she had been prepared for. He simply stared at her fixedly with that peculiar expression on his face.

吉姆站在門裏邊，像隻薩特獵犬聞到了鶉鳥一般，動都不動。他的眼光凝視蝶拉，眼神裏有一種她沒法理解的表情，那真是嚇壞了她。也不是生氣，也不是吃驚，也不是非難，也不是恐怖，也不是她所準備好的任何一種情緒。他就是這麼以那種特殊的表情牢牢地盯著她。

Della wriggled off the table and went for him.

蝶拉扭動身，下了桌子走向他。

'Jim, darling,' she cried, 'don't look at me that way. I had my hair cut off and sold it because I couldn't have lived through Christmas without giving you a present. It'll grow out again -- you won't mind, will you? I just had to do it. My hair grows awfully fast. "Merry Christmas!"

Jim, and let's be happy. You don't know what a nice -- what a beautiful, nice gift I've got for you.'

[吉姆愛人，]她大聲說，[不要這樣看我。我把頭髮剪掉賣了，因為我不可能不給你一個禮物而過得了耶誕節。它會再長出來的--你不會介意，是嗎？我實在非做不可。我的頭髮長得相當快。<耶誕快樂！>吉姆，讓我們快樂。你不知道有個多好--多美又好的禮物我給你弄來了。]

'You've cut off your hair?' asked Jim, laboriously, as if he had not arrived at that patent fact yet even after the hardest mental labor.

[你把頭髮剪掉了？]吉姆吃力地問。好比他在最辛苦的心神勞力之後，還沒有辦法達到這既成的事實。

'Cut it off and sold it,' said Della. 'Don't you like me just as well, anyhow? I'm me without my hair, ain't I?'

[剪掉而且賣了，]蝶拉說。[不管怎樣，你不是依然喜歡我嗎？我沒有頭髮還是我，不是嗎？]

Jim looked about the room curiously.

吉姆好奇地在房子裏四處看。

'You say your hair is gone?' he said, with an air almost of idiocy.

[你說你的頭髮不在了？]他几乎呆痴地問。

'You needn't look for it,' said Della. 'It's sold, I tell you -- sold and gone, too. It's Christmas Eve, boy. Be good to me, for it went for you. Maybe the hairs on my head were numbered,' she went on with a sudden serious sweetness, 'but nobody could ever count my love for you. Shall I put the chops on, Jim?'

[你不用找了，]蝶拉說。[賣了，我告訴你--賣了而且不在了。今天是耶誕夜，男生。好好對待我，因為它是為你而去的。也許我頭上的髮絲可數，]她跟著突然嚴肅而甜蜜地說，[可是沒有人能夠數出我對你的愛。我應該把肉塊放上開始煮了嗎，吉姆？]

Out of his trance Jim seemed quickly to wake. He enfolded his Della. For ten seconds let us regard with discreet scrutiny some inconsequential object in the other direction. Eight dollars a week or a million a year -- what is the difference! A mathematician or a wit would give you the wrong answer. The magi brought valuable gifts, but that was not among them. This dark assertion will be illuminated later on.

吉姆似乎很快由呆痴狀態回過來。他雙手抱攏他的蝶拉。讓我們趁這十秒鐘的時間細細往另一個方向作一個得不到結果的觀察。每週八塊或者一百萬一年有甚麼區別呢！數學家和智慧的人會給你錯誤的答案。博士們帶來了珍貴的禮物，但是並不包括我們所要的答案。我們隨後會來解釋這個玄機。

Jim drew a package from his overcoat pocket and threw it upon the table.

吉姆由大衣口袋抽出一個包裹，丟在桌上。

‘Don’t make any mistake, Dell,’ he said, ‘about me. I don’t think there’s anything in the way of a haircut or a shave or a shampoo that could make me like my girl any less. But if you’ll unwrap that package you may see why you had me going a while at first.’

[不要把我看錯了，蝶，]他說，[我不認為怎麼理，剪短，或洗頭髮會讓我少愛我的女孩子一點點。但是，假如你打開那包裹，你會明白為甚麼你起先真正把我給愣住了了一會兒。]

White fingers and nimble tore at the string and paper. And then an ecstatic scream of joy; and then, alas! A quick feminine charge to hysterical tears and wails, necessitating the immediate employment of all the comforting powers of the lord of the flat.

白玉般敏捷的手指迅速地撕開包裹的繩子和包裝紙。接著一聲欣喜的驚叫，然後，糟糕！一陣女性竭斯底里的性子又是淚，又是哭，必須由公寓的男主人馬上用盡百般安慰的工夫。

For there lay The Combs -- the set of combs, side and back, that Della had worshiped for long in a Broadway window. Beautiful combs, pure tortoise shell, with jeweled rims -- just the shade to wear in the beautiful vanished hair. They were expensive combs, she knew, and her heart had simply craved and yearned over them without the least hope of possession. And now, they were hers, but the tresses that should have adorned the coveted adornments were gone.

因為桌子上放著的是梳子--一套梳子，旁邊的，後邊的，這是蝶拉在一個百老匯街的櫥窗裏崇拜了好久的了。美麗的梳子，純龜殼做成，寶石鑲邊的--色澤明暗正好配得上已經消失的秀髮。它們是昂貴的梳子，她知道，她心理曾渴望它們而明明知道根本不可能擁有它們。現在呢，它們是屬於她的了，可是該拿這些另人欣羨的飾物來打扮的髮絲已經不在。

But she hugged them to her bosom, and at length she was able to look up with dim eyes and a smile and say: ‘My hair grows so fast, Jim!’

然而，她把它們摟在懷裏，她終於能淚眼迷矇地抬起頭看，而微笑著說，[我的頭髮長得這麼快，吉姆！]

And then Della leaped up like a little singed cat and cried, ‘Oh, oh!’

突然，蝶拉像燒焦了毛的小貓一樣跳起來，一面高聲地說，[喔，喔！]

Jim had not yet seen his beautiful present. She held it out to him eagerly upon her open palm. The dull precious metal seemed to flash with a reflection of her bright and ardent spirit.

吉姆還沒看到他的美麗的禮物呢。她急切地張開手心拿給他。這暗淡而珍貴的金屬似乎映著她明朗熱烈的精神而閃著亮光。

‘Isn’t it a dandy, Jim? I hunted all over town to find it. You’ll have to look at the time a hundred times a day now. Give me your watch. I want to see how it looks on it.’

[這不是很俏嗎，吉姆？我整個城都找過了才找到它。現在起，你每天要看一百次時間了。把你的錶給我。我要瞧瞧它在錶鏈上看起來怎樣。]

Instead of obeying, Jim tumbled down on the couch and put his hands under the back of his head and smiled.

他並沒有聽她的話，相反地，他一股腦兒坐到沙發上而且把雙手放在腦後，一面微笑。

‘Dell,’ said he, ‘let’s put our Christmas presents away and keep ‘em a while. They’re too nice to use just at present. I sold the watch to get the money to buy your combs. And now suppose you put the chops on.’

[蝶，]他說，[讓我們把耶誕禮物擺在一邊，暫時保留保留。它們在目前太好了，還用不上。我把錶賣了，拿那些錢去買你的梳子。現在是不是要把肉塊放到爐子上。]

The magi, as you know, were wise men -- wonderfully wise men -- who brought gifts to the Babe in the manger. They invented the art of giving Christmas presents. Being wise, their gifts were no doubt wise ones, possibly bearing the privilege of exchange in case of duplication. And here I have lamely related to you the uneventful chronicle of two foolish children in a flat who most unwisely sacrificed for each other the greatest treasures of their house. But in a last word to the wise of these days let it be said that of all who give gifts these two were the wisest. Of all who give and receive gifts, such as they are wisest. Everywhere they are wisest. They are the magi.

博士們，你也知道，是聰明人--極為聰明的人--他們帶禮物給馬廄裏的聖嬰。他們發明了送耶誕禮的藝術。由於他們聰明，無疑地，他們的禮物也聰明，很可能有如假包換的權力。在此地，我很笨拙地跟你們講了這公寓裏兩個傻孩子平凡的故事，他們都為對方很不智地把家裏最珍貴的寶貝給犧牲掉了。但是，為今天的聰明者進最後一言，讓我說，所有送禮者之中，以這兩位最為明智。在所有收，送禮物者中，像這兩位的人是最聰明的。他們在任何地方都最聰明。他們就是給聖嬰送禮的博士。