

Books and Arts; My family and other animals

文艺：我的家庭和一些动物

Various Pets Alive and Dead. By Marina Lewycka.

《活着以及死去的各种宠物》，玛丽娜·柳薇卡著。

Not many authors could successfully mix lentils, bra-burning and free love with city traders, quantitative analysts and the mathematical calculations that supposedly make naked short selling, CDOs and subprime mortgages infallible. But Marina Lewycka is an exception. The bestselling author of a 2005 hit, "A Short History of Tractors in Ukrainian", has set her fourth book in London and Doncaster and uses farce, irony and biting wit to explore serious issues.

扁豆，激烈到烧掉胸罩的妇女维权运动，自由恋爱，城市贸易商，为裸卖空进行的数量分析和数学计算，债务抵押债券，次级房贷.....能把这些成功地混合在一起而不犯错误，这样的作家不多，玛丽娜·柳薇卡就是其中之一。作为一名畅销书作家，她 2005 年的《乌克兰拖拉机短史》曾经热卖一时。《活着以及死去的各种宠物》是她的第四本书，书中地点设在伦敦和唐卡斯特，用闹剧、讽刺以及辛辣的智慧来探索严肃的议题。

"Various Pets Alive and Dead" features a group of sharply drawn and sharp-tongued characters. Marcus and Doro, elderly ex-hippies from Solidarity Hall, a left-wing commune, still wear their slogan T-shirts and crave the "non-bourgeois non-private non-nuclear non-monogamous community" of their past. To make the present bearable, Marcus is writing a never-ending history of the left-wing movement, while Doro looks after the Down's syndrome child they are raising. She fulfils her longing for militant action by campaigning to save local allotments.

书中这些人物性格特别的鲜明，其言语表达也十分尖酸辛辣。马库斯和多萝，一对年老的前嬉皮士人物，来自左翼社区团结工会，他们仍然穿着写有标语的 T 恤衫，仍然渴望旧日里“没有资产阶级、没有私有制、没有核能、没有一夫一妻制度的社区”。可当下的现实如此难熬，马库斯只得寄情写作，书写左翼运动没有休止的历史，而多萝的寄托则在照顾他们领养的患唐氏综合症的小孩，另外，她还参加保护当地土地的运动，也算圆了自己参与斗争运动的梦想。

Their daughter Clara (named after Clara Zetkin, a German proto-feminist), and son Serge (Victor Serge, a Belgian-Russian revolutionary) are somewhat different. Clara, a Doncaster schoolteacher, battles to educate children who smell of cigarette smoke, chip fat and urine, while craving order, clean bathrooms and a man—preferably Mr Gorst, the headmaster, whose hunky presence makes her giddy with girlish desire.

一双儿女却与父母不同，女儿名叫克拉拉，取自女权运动先驱人物德国的克拉拉·蔡特金，儿子谢尔盖，取自俄国革命家维克多·谢尔盖。克拉拉在唐卡斯特一所学校教书，她一边要教好这群油腻腻的浑身烟味和骚味的小孩，一边又要在生活中争取一些秩序，争取能有干净的卫生间，一边还在恋着一个男人——近乎完美的古斯特校长，英俊潇洒令她怦然心动。

Her brother Serge, whose parents think he is studying for a Cambridge PhD in maths (a worthy validation of their ideals), has ditched academic life to become a City fat cat at Financial and Trading Consolidated Alliance (FATCA), in London. When he is not fixated by the figures on his computer screen he fantasises about the figure of Maroushka Malko, a haughty eastern European quant in slinky skirts and slingback shoes "you could stab kittens with".

谢尔盖呢，父母引以为豪，以为他在剑桥攻读数学博士学位，实际上他已放弃学术生涯，就

业于伦敦金融与贸易统一联盟，成了金融城一名富佬。不用盯着电脑显示器看数据的时候，他就会幻想着 Maroushka Malko 的身体，Malko 是一个骄傲的数据分析师，来自东欧，穿着紧身裙子、露跟女鞋，那鞋跟绝对可以把小猫给砸死。

This quartet takes the story from present to past and back again in a series of sparkingly humorous vignettes. The clever bit is that while whooshing the reader along on a tide of wit, the author also neatly explores the morals and values of different generations and the impact that these have on family dynamics. Never has reading about something serious been quite so much fun.

这样一个四重奏，用一系列幽默的小插曲，把过去与现在穿插起来。比较巧妙的是，作者不仅妙语连珠，让读者感受噼里啪啦的智慧，而且还同时巧妙地探讨两代人的道德观与价值观，以及不同的观点对于整个家庭的影响。如此严肃的问题，也能探讨得饶有趣味，以前还未读过这样的好书。