

THE BEST SELECTION
FROM
THEODORE DREISER AND SHERWOOD ANDERSON

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は し が き

本テキストは、Theodore Dreiser (1871-1945) と Sherwood Anderson (1876-1941) の短編小説集であるが、前者からは“The Lost Phoebe”，後者からは“Brothers”と“I Want to Know Why”を選んだ。いずれも評価の定まっている佳品であり、熟読に値しよう。

アメリカには、Poe, Hawthorne, Melville 以来現在まで偉大な短編小説の伝統があるが、20世紀においては短編小説は極めて隆盛を誇り、毎年おびただしい数の作品が発表されている。また大学には短編小説の講座が設けられているし、どこかで必ず作品が論じられている。このような状況の中で書く作家は、限られた短い範囲の中で、細部まで意識して慎重な注意を払わねばならず、現代の短編小説は著しく技巧的になっている。

自然主義作家の Dreiser は、本来長編小説家で、短編小説には不向きな作家である。彼の作風は、たとえば内面の心理を追求する Hawthorne のような作家とは正反対で、重々しく事実を積み上げていく外面描写が中心であり、そのために彼はほとんど技巧に関心がないように思える。短編小説集を5編も出しているが、それらは短編小説というよりも、記録、エピソード、長編小説の下書きのようなものである。なぜもっと多くの短編小説を書かないのかと質問されたとき、彼は『私の小説には大きなキャンパスが必要なのだ』と答えたと伝えられている。

しかし本書の“The Lost Phoebe”はほかの作品と違って、普遍的な人間存在の問題を捕えた成功作である。月光の中に現れた亡妻の後を追ひ、その幻によって死に引きよせられていく老人の描写には孤独な心理が伝わってきて、感動的である。

Anderson は、主に中西部の町を舞台とし、彼の生活経験に基づいた作品を書いた。社会の抑圧的な傾向がいかに人間性を歪曲するかが彼の主題であり、心理学的分析やフロイトの精神分析の理論を自己流に取り入れている。

より若い作家の Ernest Hemingway (1899-1961) や William Faulkner (1897-1962) によって、その作品中でからかわれたこともあるが、彼らを認めて、世間に出してやった Anderson の功績はまぎれもないし、彼らに与えた影響も見逃せない。Faulkner 自身、『私の世代の作家の父親は Anderson であり、Dreiser は Anderson の兄にあたり、2人の父親は Mark Twain (1835-1910) である』と述べている。実際、Dreiser と Anderson は19世紀の文学の伝統を大きく飛躍変貌させて、現代文学を可能にした作家である。

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The Lost Phœbe

THEY lived together in a part of the country which was not so prosperous as it had once been, about three miles from one of those small towns that, instead of increasing in population, is steadily decreasing. The territory was not very thickly settled; perhaps a house every other mile or so, with large areas of corn- and wheat-land and fallow fields that at odd seasons had been sown to timothy and clover. Their particular house was part log and part frame, the log portion being the old original home of Henry's grandfather. The new portion, of now rainbeaten, time-worn slabs, through which the wind squeaked in the chinks at times, and which several overshadowing elms and a butternut-tree made picturesque and reminiscently pathetic, but a little damp, was erected by Henry when he was twenty-one and just married.

That was forty-eight years before. The furniture inside, like the house outside, was old and mildewy and reminiscent

of an earlier day. You have seen the what-not of cherry wood, perhaps, with spiral legs and fluted top. It was there. The old-fashioned four poster bed, with its ball-like protuberances and deep curving incisions, was there also, a sadly
5 alienated descendant of an early Jacobean ancestor. The bureau of cherry was also high and wide and solidly built, but faded-looking, and with a musty odor. The rag carpet that underlay all these sturdy examples of enduring furniture was a weak, faded, lead-and-pink-colored affair woven by
10 Phœbe Ann's own hands, when she was fifteen years younger than she was when she died. The creaky wooden loom on which it had been done now stood like a dusty, bony skeleton, along with a broken rocking-chair, a worm-eaten clothes-press—Heaven knows how old—a lime-stained bench
15 that had once been used to keep flowers on outside the door, and other decrepit factors of household utility, in an east room that was a lean-to against this so-called main portion. All sorts of other broken-down furniture were about this place; an antiquated clothes-horse, cracked in two of its ribs;
20 a broken mirror in an old cherry frame, which had fallen from a nail and cracked itself three days before their youngest son, Jerry, died; an extension hat-rack, which once had had porcelain knobs on the ends of its pegs; and a sewing-machine, long since outdone in its clumsy mechanism by
25 rivals of a newer generation.

The orchard to the east of the house was full of gnarled old apple-trees, worm-eaten as to trunks and branches, and fully ornamented with green and white lichens, so that it had a sad, greenish-white, silvery effect in moonlight. The low

outhouses, which had once housed chickens, a horse or two, a cow, and several pigs, were covered with patches of moss as to their roof, and the sides had been free of paint for so long that they were blackish gray as to color, and a little spongy. The picket-fence in front, with its gate squeaky and askew, and the side fences of the stake-and-rider type were in an equally run-down condition. As a matter of fact, they had aged synchronously with the persons who lived here, old Henry Reifsneider and his wife Phœbe Ann.

They had lived here, these two, ever since their marriage, forty-eight years before, and Henry had lived here before that from his childhood up. His father and mother, well along in years when he was a boy, had invited him to bring his wife here when he had first fallen in love and decided to marry; and he had done so. His father and mother were the companions of himself and his wife for ten years after they were married, when both died; and then Henry and Phœbe were left with their five children growing lustily apace. But all sorts of things had happened since then. Of the seven children, all told, that had been born to them, three had died; one girl had gone to Kansas; one boy had gone to Sioux Falls, never even to be heard of after; another boy had gone to Washington; and the last girl lived five counties away in the same State, but was so burdened with cares of her own that she rarely gave them a thought. Time and a commonplace home life that had never been attractive had weaned them thoroughly, so that, wherever they were, they gave little thought as to how it might be with their father and mother.

Old Henry Reifsneider and his wife Phœbe were a loving couple. You perhaps know how it is with simple natures that fasten themselves like lichens on the stones of circumstance and weather their days to a crumbling conclusion. The great world sounds widely, but it has no call for them. They have no soaring intellect. The orchard, the meadow, the corn-field, the pigpen, and the chicken-lot measure the range of their human activities. When the wheat is headed it is reaped and threshed; when the corn is browned and frosted it is cut and shocked; when the timothy is in full head it is cut, and the hay-cock erected. After that comes winter, with the hauling of grain to market, the sawing and splitting of wood, the simple chores of fire-building, meal-getting, occasional repairing, and visiting. Beyond these and the changes of weather—the snows, the rains, and the fair days—there are no immediate, significant things. All the rest of life is a far-off, clamorous phantasmagoria, flickering like Northern lights in the night, and sounding as faintly as cow-bells tinkling in the distance.

Old Henry and his wife Phœbe were as fond of each other as it is possible for two old people to be who have nothing else in this life to be fond of. He was a thin old man, seventy when she died, a queer, crotchety person with coarse grayblack hair and beard, quite straggly and unkempt. He looked at you out of dull, fishy, watery eyes that had deep-brown crow's-feet at the sides. His clothes, like the clothes of many farmers, were aged and angular and baggy, standing out at the pockets, not fitting about the neck, protuberant and worn at elbow and knee. Phœbe Ann was thin

and shapeless, a very umbrella of a woman, clad in shabby black, and with a black bonnet for her best wear. As time had passed, and they had only themselves to look after, their movements had become slower and slower, their activities fewer and fewer. The annual keep of pigs had been reduced 5 from five to one grunting porker, and the single horse which Henry now retained was a sleepy animal, not overnourished and not very clean. The chickens, of which formerly there was a large flock, had almost disappeared, owing to ferrets, foxes, and the lack of proper care, which produces disease. 10 The former healthy garden was now a straggling memory of itself, and the vines and flower-beds that formerly ornamented the windows and dooryard had now become choking thickets. A will had been made which divided the small tax-eaten property equally among the remaining four, so that it 15 was really of no interest to any of them. Yet these two lived together in peace and sympathy, only that now and then old Henry would become unduly cranky, complaining almost invariably that something had been neglected or mislaid which was of no importance at all. 20

“Phœbe, where’s my corn-knife? You ain’t never minded to let my things alone no more.”

“Now you hush, Henry,” his wife would caution him in a cracked and squeaky voice. “If you don’t, I’ll leave yuh. I’ll git up and walk out of here some day, and then where would 25 y’ be ? Y’ ain’t got anybody but me to look after yuh, so yuh just behave yourself. Your corn-knife’s on the mantel where it’s allus been unless you’ve gone an’ put it summers else.”

Old Henry, who knew his wife would never leave him in

any circumstances, used to speculate at times as to what he would do if she were to die. That was the one leaving that he really feared. As he climbed on the chair at night to wind the old, long-pendulumed, double-weighted clock, or went
5 finally to the front and the back door to see that they were safely shut in, it was a comfort to know that Phœbe was there, properly ensconced on her side of the bed, and that if he stirred restlessly in the night, she would be there to ask what he wanted.

10 "Now, Henry, do lie still ! You're as restless as a chicken."

"Well, I can't sleep, Phœbe."

"Well, yuh needn't roll so, anyhow. Yuh kin let me sleep."

This usually reduced him to a state of somnolent ease. If she wanted a pail of water, it was a grumbling pleasure for
15 him to get it; and if she did rise first to build the fires, he saw that the wood was cut and placed within easy reach. They divided this simple world nicely between them.

As the years had gone on, however, fewer and fewer people had called. They were well-known for a distance of
20 as much as ten square miles as old Mr. and Mrs. Reifsneider, honest, moderately Christian, but too old to be really interesting any longer. The writing of letters had become an almost impossible burden too difficult to continue or even negotiate via others, although an occasional letter still did
25 arrive from the daughter in Pemberton County. Now and then some old friend stopped with a pie or cake or a roasted chicken or duck, or merely to see that they were well; but even these kindly minded visits were no longer frequent.

One day in the early spring of her sixty-fourth year Mrs.

Reifsneider took sick, and from a low fever passed into some indefinable ailment which, because of her age, was no longer curable. Old Henry drove to Swinnerton, the neighboring town, and procured a doctor. Some friends called, and the immediate care of her was taken off his hands. Then one 5
chill spring night she died, and old Henry, in a fog of sorrow and uncertainty, followed her body to the nearest graveyard, an unattractive space with a few pines growing in it. Although he might have gone to the daughter in Pemberton or sent for her, it was really too much trouble and he was too 10
weary and fixed. It was suggested to him at once by one friend and another that he come to stay with them awhile, but he did not see fit. He was so old and so fixed in his notions and so accustomed to the exact surroundings he had known all his days, that he could not think of leaving. He 15
wanted to remain near where they had put his Phœbe; and the fact that he would have to live alone did not trouble him in the least. The living children were notified and the care of him offered if he would leave, but he would not.

"I kin make a shift for myself," he continually announced 20
to old Dr. Morrow, who had attended his wife in this case. "I kin cook a little, and, besides, it don't take much more'n coffee an' bread in the mornin's to satisfy me. I'll get along now well enough. Yuh just let me be." And after many 25
pleadings and proffers of advice, with supplies of coffee and bacon and baked bread duly offered and accepted, he was left to himself. For a while he sat idly outside his door brooding in the spring sun. He tried to revive his interest in farming, and to keep himself busy and free from thought by

looking after the fields, which of late had been much neglected. It was a gloomy thing to come in of an evening, however, or in the afternoon and find no shadow of Phœbe where everything suggested her. By degrees he put a few of
5 her things away. At night he sat beside his lamp and read in the papers that were left him occasionally or in a Bible that he had neglected for years, but he could get little solace from these things. Mostly he held his hand over his mouth and looked at the floor as he sat and thought of what had
10 become of her, and how soon he himself would die. He made a great business of making his coffee in the morning and frying himself a little bacon at night; but his appetite was gone. The shell in which he had been housed so long seemed vacant, and its shadows were suggestive of immedicable
15 griefs. So he lived quite dolefully for five long months, and then a change began.

It was one night, after he had looked after the front and the back door, wound the clock, blown out the light, and gone through all the selfsame motions that he had indulged
20 in for years, that he went to bed not so much to sleep as to think. It was a moonlight night. The green-lichen-covered orchard just outside and to be seen from his bed where he now lay was a silvery affair, sweetly spectral. The moon shone through the east windows, throwing the pattern of the
25 panes on the wooden floor, and making the old furniture, to which he was accustomed, stand out dimly in the room. As usual he had been thinking of Phœbe and the years when they had been young together, and of the children who had gone, and the poor shift he was making of his present days.

The house was coming to be in a very bad state indeed. The bed-clothes were in disorder and not clean, for he made a wretched shift of washing. It was a terror to him. The roof leaked, causing things, some of them, to remain damp for weeks at a time, but he was getting into that brooding state 5 where he would accept anything rather than exert himself. He preferred to pace slowly to and fro or to sit and think.

By twelve o'clock of this particular night he was asleep, however, and by two had waked again. The moon by this time had shifted to a position on the western side of the 10 house, and it now shone in through the windows of the living-room and those of the kitchen beyond. A certain combination of furniture—a chair near a table, with his coat on it, the half-open kitchen door casting a shadow, and the position of lamp near a paper—gave him an exact repre- 15 sentation of Phœbe leaning over the table as he had often seen her do in life. It gave him a great start. Could it be she—or her ghost? He had scarcely ever believed in spirits; and still— He looked at her fixedly in the feeble half-light, his old hair tingling oddly at the roots, and then sat up. The 20 figure did not move. He put his thin legs out of the bed and sat looking at her, wondering if this could really be Phœbe. They had talked of ghosts often in their lifetime, of apparitions and omens; but they had never agreed that such things could be. It had never been a part of his wife's creed that 25 she could have a spirit that could return to walk the earth. Her after-world was quite a different affair, a vague heaven, no less, from which the righteous did not trouble to return. Yet here she was now, bending over the table in her black

skirt and gray shawl, her pale profile outlined against the moonlight.

“Phœbe,” he called, thrilling from head to toe and putting out one bony hand, “have yuh come back?”

5 The figure did not stir, and he arose and walked uncertainly to the door, looking at it fixedly the while. As he drew near, however, the apparition resolved itself into its primal content—his old coat over the high-backed chair, the lamp by the paper, the half-open door.

10 “Well,” he said to himself, his mouth open, “I thought shore I saw her.” And he ran his hand strangely and vaguely through his hair, the while his nervous tension relaxed. Vanished as it had, it gave him the idea that she might return.

15 Another night, because of this first illusion, and because his mind was now constantly on her and he was old, he looked out of the window that was nearest his bed and commanded a hen-coop and pig-pen and a part of the wagon-shed, and there, a faint mist exuding from the damp of the
20 ground, he thought he saw her again. It was one of those little wisps of mist, one of those faint exhalations of the earth that rise in a cool night after a warm day, and flicker like small white cypresses of fog before they disappear. In life it had been a custom of hers to cross this lot from her
25 kitchen door to the pig-pen to throw in any scrap that was left from her cooking, and here she was again. He sat up and watched it strangely, doubtfully, because of his previous experience, but inclined, because of the nervous titillation that passed over his body, to believe that spirits really were,

and that Phoebe, who would be concerned because of his lonely state, must be thinking about him, and hence returning. What other way would she have ? How otherwise could she express herself ? It would be within the province of her charity so to do, and like her loving interest in him. He quivered and watched it eagerly; but, a faint breath of air stirring, it wound away toward the fence and disappeared. 5

A third night, as he was actually dreaming, some ten days later, she came to his bedside and put her hand on his head.

“Poor Henry!” she said. “It’s too bad,” 10

He roused out of his sleep, actually to see her, he thought, moving from his bed-room into the one living-room, her figure a shadowy mass of black. The weak straining of his eyes caused little points of light to flicker about the outlines of her form. He arose, greatly astonished, walked the floor in the cool room, convinced that Phoebe was coming back to him. If he only thought sufficiently, if he made it perfectly clear by his feeling that he needed her greatly, she would come back, this kindly wife, and tell him what to do. She would perhaps be with him much of the time, in the night, anyhow; and that would make him less lonely, this state more endurable. 15 20

In age and with the feeble it is not such a far cry from the subtleties of illusion to actual hallucination, and in due time this transition was made for Henry. Night after night he waited, expecting her return. Once in his weird mood he thought he saw a pale light moving about the room, and another time he thought he saw her walking in the orchard after dark. It was one morning when the details of his lonely 25

state were virtually unendurable that he woke with the thought that she was not dead. How he had arrived at this conclusion it is hard to say. His mind had gone. In its place was a fixed illusion. He and Phœbe had had a senseless
5 quarrel. He had reproached her for not leaving his pipe where he was accustomed to find it, and she had left. It was an aberrated fulfillment of her old jesting threat that if he did not behave himself she would leave him.

“I guess I could find yuh ag’in,” he had always said. But
10 her cackling threat had always been:

“Yuh’ll not find me if I ever leave yuh. I guess I kin git some place where yuh can’t find me.”

This morning when he arose he did not think to build the fire in the customary way or to grind his coffee and cut his
15 bread, as was his wont, but solely to meditate as to where he should search for her and how he should induce her to come back. Recently the one horse had been dispensed with because he found it cumbersome and beyond his needs. He took down his soft crush hat after he had dressed himself, a
20 new glint of interest and determination in his eye, and taking his black crook cane from behind the door, where he had always placed it, started out briskly to look for her among the nearest neighbors. His old shoes clumped soundly in the dust as he walked, and his gray-black locks, now grown
25 rather long, straggled out in a dramatic fringe or halo from under his hat. His short coat stirred busily as he walked, and his hands and face were peaked and pale.

“Why, hello, Henry! Where’re yuh goin’ this mornin’ ?” inquired Farmer Dodge, who, hauling a load of wheat to

market, encountered him on the public road. He had not seen the aged farmer in months, not since his wife's death, and he wondered now, seeing him looking so spry.

"Yuh ain't seen Phœbe, have yuh?" inquired the old man, looking up quizzically. 5

"Phœbe who?" inquired Farmer Dodge, not for the moment connecting the name with Henry's dead wife.

"Why, my wife Phœbe, o' course. Who do yuh s'pose I mean?" He stared up with a pathetic sharpness of glance from under his shaggy, gray eyebrows. 10

"Wall, I'll swan, Henry, yuh ain't jokin', are yuh?" said the solid Dodge, a pursy man, with a smooth, hard, red face. "It can't be your wife yuh're talkin' about. She's dead."

"Dead! Shucks!" retorted the demented Reifsneider. "She left me early this mornin', while I was sleepin'. She allus got up to build the fire, but she's gone now. We had a little spat last night, an' I guess that's the reason. But I guess I kin find her. She's gone over to Matilda Race's; that's where she's gone." 15

He started briskly up the road, leaving the amazed Dodge to stare in wonder after him. 20

"Well, I'll be switched!" he said aloud to himself. "He's clean out'n his head. That poor old feller's been livin' down there till he's gone outen his mind. I'll have to notify the authorities." And he flicked his whip with great enthusiasm. 25
"Geddap!" he said, and was off.

Reifsneider met no one else in this poorly populated region until he reached the whitewashed fence of Matilda Race and her husband three miles away. He had passed several other

houses en route, but these not being within the range of his illusion were not considered. His wife, who had known Matilda well, must be here. He opened the picket-gate which guarded the walk, and stamped briskly up to the door.

5 "Why, Mr. Reifsneider," exclaimed old Matilda herself, a stout woman, looking out of the door in answer to his knock, "what brings yuh here this mornin'?"

"Is Phœbe here?" he demanded eagerly.

"Phœbe who? What Phœbe?" replied Mrs. Race, curious
10 as to this sudden development of energy on his part.

"Why, my Phœbe, o' course. My wife Phœbe. Who do yuh s'pose? Ain't she here now?"

"Lawsy me!" exclaimed Mrs. Race, opening her mouth.
"Yuh pore man! So you're clean out'n your mind now. Yuh
15 come right in and sit down. I'll git yuh a cup o' coffee. O' course your wife ain't here; but yuh come in an' sit down. I'll find her fer yuh after a while. I know where she is."

The old farmer's eyes softened, and he entered. He was so thin and pale a specimen, pantalooned and patriarchal, that
20 he aroused Mrs. Race's extremest sympathy as he took off his hat and laid it on his knees quite softly and mildly.

"We had a quarrel last night, an' she left me," he said.

"Laws! laws!" sighed Mrs. Race, there being no one present with whom to share her astonishment as she went to
25 her kitchen. "The pore man! Now somebody's just got to look after him. He can't be allowed to run around the country this way lookin' for his dead wife. It's turrible."

She boiled him a pot of coffee and brought in some of her new-baked bread and fresh butter. She set out some of her

best jam and put a couple of eggs to boil, lying wholeheartedly the while.

“Now yuh stay right there, Uncle Henry, till Jake comes in, an’ I’ll send him to look for Phœbe. I think it’s more’n likely she’s over to Swinnerton with some o’ her friends. 5 Anyhow, we’ll find out. Now yuh just drink this coffee an’ eat this bread. Yuh must be tired. Yuh’ve had a long walk this mornin’.” Her idea was to take counsel with Jake, “her man,” and perhaps have him notify the authorities.

She bustled about, meditating on the uncertainties of life, 10 while old Reifsneider thrummed on the rim of his hat with his pale fingers and later ate abstractedly of what she offered. His mind was on his wife, however, and since she was not here, or did not appear, it wandered vaguely away to a family by the name of Murray, miles away in another 15 direction. He decided after a time that he would not wait for Jake Race to hunt his wife but would seek her for himself. He must be on, and urge her to come back.

“Well, I’ll be goin’,” he said, getting up and looking strangely 20 ly about him. “I guess she didn’t come here after all. She went over to the Murrays’, I guess. I’ll not wait any longer, Mis’ Race. There’s a lot to do over to the house to-day.” And out he marched in the face of her protests taking to the dusty road again in the warm spring sun, his cane striking 25 the earth as he went.

It was two hours later that this pale figure of a man appeared in the Murrays’ doorway, dusty, perspiring, eager. He had tramped all of five miles, and it was noon. An amazed husband and wife of sixty heard his strange query,

and realized also that he was mad. They begged him to stay to dinner, intending to notify the authorities later and see what could be done; but though he stayed to partake of a little something, he did not stay long, and was off again to
5 another distant farmhouse, his idea of many things to do and his need of Phœbe impelling him. So it went for that day and the next and the next, the circle of his inquiry ever widening.

The process by which a character assumes the significance
10 of being peculiar, his antics weird, yet harmless, in such a community is often involute and pathetic. This day, as has been said, saw Reifsneider at other doors, eagerly asking his unnatural question, and leaving a trail of amazement, sympathy, and pity in his wake. Although the authorities were
15 informed—the county sheriff, no less—it was not deemed advisable to take him into custody; for when those who knew old Henry, and had for so long, reflected on the condition of the county insane asylum, a place which, because of the poverty of the district, was of staggering aberration and
20 sickening environment, it was decided to let him remain at large; for, strange to relate, it was found on investigation that at night he returned peaceably enough to his lonesome domicile there to discover whether his wife had returned, and to brood in loneliness until the morning. Who would lock up
25 a thin, eager, seeking old man with iron-gray hair and an attitude of kindly, innocent inquiry, particularly when he was well known for a past of only kindly servitude and reliability? Those who had known him best rather agreed that he should be allowed to roam at large. He could do no

NOTES

Theodore Dreiser

Dreiser は、中西部のインディアナ州のテレ・ホート (Terre Haute) という町に生まれた。父の John はドイツから移住してきた機織り職人であったが、狂信的なカトリック教徒で、生活力に乏しく、赤貧洗うがごとき生活だったので、Dreiser は 15 歳の時から働き、やがて新聞記者となって世間を見る眼を養った。若き日の Dreiser の眼に映ったのは、この世界がキリスト教で説かれているような美しい倫理、道徳で動いているのではないということだった。資本主義社会には冷酷な弱肉強食の掟が働いているのに、人々は美しい夢のような倫理をふりかざして、現実の姿には眼を背けた言動を繰り返しており、Dreiser はそこに虚偽を見ざるを得なかった。その疑問を解決してくれたのは、当時のアメリカに流行していた甘いロマンスやハッピーエンドの大衆小説ではなく、イギリスの進化論や決定論の書物であった。人間は崇高な存在ではなく、動物よりややましな存在に過ぎず、偶然や生物学的法則、経済学的法則に翻弄されるものであるという考えを身につけていった。そして社会の中の真実を描くことこそ重要なことだと信じるようになった。

勝者と敗者を対照的に描く処女作『シスター・キャリー』*Sister Carrie* (1900) は、大きな論議を巻き起し、Dreiser は一時ノイローゼになったが、やがて精力的な執筆を続け、主に大都会を舞台に、そこに展開される金と権力と性を重厚な筆致で描き、自然主義文学の大立物とみなされるようになった。皮肉な運命に踏みにじられる貧しく、弱い女性を描いた『ジェニー・ゲアハート』*Jennie Gerhardt* (1911)、権力と金と女をあくことなく追い求める超人的な実業家 Frank Algernon Cowperwood を主人公とし、「欲望三部作」(A Trilogy of Desire) と呼ばれる『資本家』*The Financier* (1912)、『巨人』*The Titan* (1914)、『克己の人』*The Stoic* (1947)、さらに、自伝的な『天才』*The "Genius"* (1915) があるが、「成功の夢」にとりつかれた平凡な青年の物語、『アメリカの悲劇』*An American Tragedy* (1925) が代表作とされている。

Dreiser の作品は、重々しい外面描写ばかりで、人間の複雑な心理が描かれていないと次の世代の批評家や作家から批判されているが、心理学や精神分析学を利用できるようになった時代においては、そのような批判は当然なことであろう。確かに、Dreiser にはそのような面があるが、彼の功績は、前世紀までタブーとされていた題材やテーマを取り上げて作品化したところにある。醜悪な日常の諸現実、人生の裏側にある性の様相は若い女性に知らせてはならず、茶の間に持ち込んでほならないとされていた風潮に敢然として反抗し、「美しい欺

瞞」を一掃したのが自然主義作家群であり、その最大の作家が Dreiser なのである。自然主義作家によって現代文学に「自由」が与えられたと言えるのである。

Dreiser には、長編小説のほかに、2 編の自叙伝、詩集、劇、評論、旅行記があり、多方面にわたっている。短編小説は 4 編あるが、“The Lost Phoebe” は最初の短編集 *Free and Other Stories* (1918) の中に入っている。

“The Lost Phoebe” は Dreiser としては珍らしく田園を舞台としている。しかしその農村はかつての開拓時代のような生き生きとした風景ではなく、人々が都会へ移動し始めた 19 世紀末のさびれていく田園である。主人公 Henry の 4 人の子供はすでに成人して出て行ってしまっているばかりか、彼の家は古くうす汚れていて、時代に取り残されたもの淋しい老夫婦の姿を伝えている。Henry は、48 年間生活を共にした妻 Phoebe に死なれてから気が狂い、月光の中に彼女の幻を見てからというもの、「おーい、フィービー」と呼びながらさ迷うのである。全体に哀調が漂い、ドライサーの作品中の異色と言えよう。この作品は、人間誰も味わわざるをえない老年の悲しい最期を伝えているが、また「失われた夢」を追う普遍的な人間の心情をも伝えている。Henry の前に最後に現れる亡妻 Phoebe は、恋人時代の華やかな嬌声を持った若い娘に変容しており、過去の美しい夢を回想する人間の心理を詩的に表現している。Henry の死顔に「安らぎと喜びの微笑」が読みとれるのは、死によって「失われた夢」を取り戻した幸福感の表われであろう。

The Lost Phœbe

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- 1 4 **territory** = region.
- 6 **at odd seasons** 「時折、折にふれて」
- 7 **had been sown to....** 「…の種をまかれた」
timothy 「オオアワガエリ」(牧草)
- 8 **particular house** 「これから語られる家」 **particular** 「ほかならぬこの、今問題にしようという」
- 10 **slabs** 「厚板」
- 2 1 **what-not** 「こつとう、書籍などを載せるスタンド」
- 2 **fluted** 「縦みぞが彫ってある」
- 3 **four poster bed** 「四柱式寝台」カーテン、天蓋などを支えるために四すみに柱のあるベッド。
- 5 **an early Jacobean ancestor** 「イギリス国王 James 1 世 (1603—25) 時代の祖先、17 世紀初頭の祖先」
- 7 **rag carpet** 「布の敷物、じゅうたん」 **rag** 「小切れの布」

- 9 **affair** 「物」 (=thing or matter; anything made or existing.)
- 10 **Phœbe** [fi:bi] 「フィービー」ギリシア神話の月の女神。年老いたヘンリーを残して死んだフィービーの幻が、孤独な老人に初めて見えるときも、結末で若い華かな女で現れるのも月光の夜である。
- 12 **done**=woven.
- 14 **clothes-press** 「衣装だんす, 衣装箱」
Heaven knows how old 「どれくらい古いかだれも知らない」
 Heaven knows... 「…は神のみが知っている」→「…はだれも知らない」
- lime-stained bench** 「(農業用の) 石灰でよごれたベンチ」
- 16 **other decrepit factors of household utility** 「古くがたがたになった家財道具, 実用本位の世帯道具」
- 18 **broken-down** 「老朽化した」
- 19 **clothes-horse** 「干し物掛け, 衣桁」
cracked in two of its ribs 「肋材が2本ひび割れている」
- 22 **extension hat-rack** 「伸縮できる帽子かけ」
- 24 **long since outdone in its clumsy mechanism** 「不体裁な構造のためにずっと前に打ち負かされてしまった」
- 28 **lichens** 「地衣, こけ」
- 3 1 **outhouses**=outbuildings. (米)「(農家の) 離れ家(納家, 鳥小屋に使われる)」
- 2 **were covered with patches of moss** 「点々と苔でおおわれていた」
 patch 「小さい部分, 畑」
- 3 **had been free of paint** 「ペンキがはげていた」
- 5 **spongy**=moist and soft like a sponge full of water.
picket-fence 「(垂直に打ち込んだくいを互いに固定した) くい垣根」
- 6 **stake-and-rider**=a fence having a top bar supported by crossed stakes (*Webster*). (くい)
- 7 **run-down** 「荒廃した」 (=fallen into disrepair.)
- 9 **Reifsnieder** [râifsnaidər]
- 12 **well along in years** 「かなり年をとっていた」 along (米話)「(時間が) かなり進んで (=some way on.)」
- 20 **all told**=when all the children were told. tell=count.
- 21 **Kansas** [kænzəs] 中西部の州。
Sioux [su:] **Falls** South Dakota 州東南部の都市。
- 23 **Washington** 太平洋岸西北部の州。

- 4 2 **simple natures** 「素朴な気質をもった人々」
- 3 **fasten themselves like lichens on...** 「…の上に地衣のようにしがみつく」
- 4 **weather their days to a crumbling conclusion** 「消失する終末にむかって日々を耐えて生きる」 weather 「風雪に耐えて生きる」
crumble 「しだいに崩壊する, 消滅する」 conclusion=end, close.
- 7 **measure the range of their human activities** 「かれらの人間としての活動の範囲である」 measure 「計り分ける」→「限定する」
- 8 **is headed** 「(小麦の穂が出て) 実を結ぶ」
- 9 **the corn is browned and frosted** 「トウモロコシが黄色くなり, 霜が枯らすようになる」
- 10 **shocked** 「(刈られたトウモロコシは) 束にして立てかけられ, 乾燥される」
- 11 **hauling** 「車で運ぶ」
- 23 **crotchety** 「気まぐれな, 気むずかしい」
- 25 **fishy** 「(目) どんよりした, 無表情な (expressionless)」
watery 「涙っぽい」
- 27 **angular**=lacking in smoothness.
baggy=bulging or hanging loosely.
standing out at the pockets 「ポケットのあたりはふくらんでいて」
- 5 1 **shapeless**=with no elegant curve.
a very umbrella of a woman 「(すぼめた) 雨傘のような体つきの女」 a very umbrella of は a woman を修飾する形容詞句。
- 5 **keep** 「飼育」
- 6 **porker** 「太らせた食用豚」
- 11 **a straggling memory of itself** 「まばらになって, わずかに昔をしのばせるだけの果樹園」
- 17 **only that ...** 「…がなければ, でなければ」 that の後には節がくる。
- 18 **unduly cranky**=excessively ill-tempered.
- 21 **corn-knife**=a long heavy knife used in chopping down Indian cornstalks in harvesting by hand (*Webster*).
You ain't never minded ... no more.=You have never minded leaving my things any more. 「近頃わしの持ち物を必配してくれなくなったじゃないか」 ain't=haven't. let alone=leave. 「かまわないでおく」 ain't, never, no more と否定語が連続しているが, 否定を強調しているだけである。

- 24 **yuh**=you.
- 25 **git up**=get up.
where would y' be? 「お前さんはどこへ行くだね?」
y'=ye (=you.)
- 26 **ain't got**=haven't got=don't have.
yuh just behave yourself 「文句を言うのをやめなさい」 Behave yourself 「お行儀よくしなさい」
- 28 **allus** [æləs] =always.
unless you've gone an' put it summers else 「どこかほかの場所に置いてくるような馬鹿なことをしたら話は違うけどね」 **an'**=and. go and(話) 「愚かにも…する」(=be so thoughtless or silly as to...)
summers else=somewhere else.
- 6 2 **That was the one leaving that he really feared** 「それこそ(フィービーの死) 彼がほんとうに恐れた唯一の別離であった」 **one**=only one.
- 4 **double-weighted** 「分銅が2つ付いた」
- 12 **yuh needn't roll so**=you needn't roll so much.
Yuh kin let me sleep. 「私を眠らせてくださいよ」 **kin**=can.
- 13 **somnolent ease** 「夢うつつの安心感」
- 14 **grumbling pleasure** ぶつぶつ文句は言っても、嬉しい気持ちになって、言われたとおりにする。
- 15 **he saw that....** 「…であるように気をつかった」 (see + that) clause: 「(…するように) 取り計らう, 配慮する, 気を配る」
- 18 **As the years had gone on** 「年月がたつにつれて」 **go on** 「(時) 過ぎていく, 過ぎ去る」
- 23 **even negotiate via others** 「ほかの人に頼んで書いてもらうことさえも」 **negotiate** 「処理する, 遂行する」 **via** [váia,víra] (米口) 「…によって (=by means of...)」
- 7 1 **took sick** (米) 「病気になった」 (=became ill.)
- 4 **procured a doctor**=procured the services of a doctor.
- 5 **was taken off his hands** 「彼の手から離れた」
- 11 **fixed**=(too much) settled here (to think of or do anything else).
- 12 **he come**=he should come.
- 18 **the care of him (was) offered** 「(老父の) 世話をしてもらって返事してきた」
- 20 **I kin make a shift for myself.** 「独りでなんとかやっつけていける」
make a shift 「どうにかやりくりする」

- 22 **it don't take much more'n... to satisfy me** 「わしはほんのすこしのコーヒーとパンで満足だ」 don't=doesn't, much more'n=much. an'=and. mornin's=mornings.
- 24 **Yuh just let me be.**=Leave me alone.
- 8 2 **of an evening** 「夕方に」 of は特定の時を示す名詞を伴って「...に」の意。 of a morning 「午前中に」、 of a Sunday afternoon 「日曜日の午後に」
- 5 **read in** 「読みふけていた」
- 6 **a Bible** 「一冊の聖書」
- 10 **made a great business of...** 「とても骨をおって...した」
- 14 **immedicable** 「いやすことのできない」 (=not to be healed.)
- 20 **not so much to sleep as to think** 「眠るというよりはむしろ考えるために」
- 23 **was a silvery affair** 「銀色に光ってみえた」 affair に関しては *か*, 2, *l*, 9 の注参照。
- 26 **stand out** 「浮かびあがる」 (見える)
- 29 **the poor shift** 「哀れなやりくり」
- 9 2 **made a wretched shift of washing** 「じつにへたな洗たくしかなかった」
- 6 **exert himself** 「一生けんめい努力する, 奮闘する」
- 18 **and still—** 「(彼は靈魂というものの存在を信じていなかったが) それでもなお(わが眼を疑わずにはいられなかった)」 老ヘンリーの驚きをあらわしている。
- 19 **his old hair tingling... then sat up** 「彼の白髪は毛根のところが奇妙にうずいたが, やがてびんと立った」 sit up 「起き上がる」→「毛がさか立つ」
- 27 **a vague heaven, no less, from which the righteous... return** 「(死後の世界は)薄暗い別の世界ではあるが, そこからこの世で罪を犯さなかった人間が(この世へ)戻ってこれるような場所ではなかった」 no less=nevertheless. 「それにもかかわらず」
- 10 1 (with) **her pale profile outlined against the moonlight** 「彼女の蒼ざめた横顔を月光を背景にして浮かびあがらせて」
- 6 **the while**=all through the moment. 「その間ずっと」
- 7 **the apparition resolved... its primal content** 「その姿は消えて, はじめの(なにも見えぬ)状態へもどっていった」 resolve itself into... 「消えて(溶解して)…になる」 primal content はフィービーの幻が現れなかった状態。

- 11 **shore**=surely, certainly 「確かに」
- 12 **the while**=while.
- 19 **a faint mist exuding** この句の前にwithを補う。「かすかな霧がしみ出てきて」 with+目的語+形容詞相当語句の構文。 exuding は現在分詞で形容詞の働きをする。
- 23 **small white cypresses of fog** 「小さな白い糸杉のような霧」 small white cypresses of は fog にかかる形容詞句。 cypress は細く、上へ渦巻くように伸びる常緑樹。
- 11 1 **concerned**=anxious, uneasy.
- 3 **How otherwise could she express herself?** 「いったいぜんたいほかのどんな方法で自分を表現できるだろうか?」
- 12 **her figure a shadowy mass of black** 「彼女の姿はもうろうとした黒いかげにみえたけれど」 (=although her figure seemed a shadowy mass of black.)
- 21 **this state (would be) more endurable** 「こんな状態ももっとしのぎやすく(なるだろう)」
- 27 **a pale light** 「(色が)薄い, 淡い光」
- 12 6 **It was an aberrated fulfillment of her old jesting threat** 「生前彼女がよく冗談を言っていたことが奇妙にも実現したのである」 aberrated (過去分詞) <aberration=act of wandering away or of going astray (*Webster*).
- 9 **ag'in**=again.
- 15 **as was his wont** 「いつものように, 習慣どおりに」 to meditate は l. 13 の he arose に続く。
- 17 **the one horse had been dispensed with** 「1頭の馬はいらないということで処分されていた」 老人にとって活動的な, たくましい馬は不要と思われたのである。
- 19 **crush hat** 「クラッシュハット」 たたんでも形がくずれない帽子。
a new glint of interest and determination with a new glint の前に補う。
- 21 **crook cane** 握りのところが曲っているステッキ。
- 23 **clumped soundly** 「ズシリ, ズシリと重い足音を響かせた」
- 27 **were peaked and pale** 「やつれて, 蒼ざめていた」 peaked=sickly, emaciated. 「やせた」
- 13 2 **in months** 「この何ヶ月かのあいだに」
- 4 **ain't seen**=haven't seen.
- 8 **o' course**=of course.