

《Our Cluttered Lives (From Gifts from the Sea)》

By Anne Morrow Lindbergh

One cannot collect all the beautiful shells on the beach. One can collect only a few, and they are beautiful if they are few. One moon shell is more impressive than three. There is only moon in the sky. One double-sunrise is an event; six are a succession, like a week of school -days. Gradually one discards and keeps just the perfect specimen; not necessarily a rare shell, but a perfect one of its kind. One sets it apart by itself, ringed around by space – like the island.

For it is only framed in space that only beauty blooms. Only in space are events and objects and people unique and significant – and therefore beautiful. A tree has significance if one sees it against the empty face of sky. A note in music gains significance from the silence on either side. A candle flowers in the space of night. Even small and casual things take on significance if they are washed in space, like a few autumn grasses in one corner of an Oriental painting, the rest of the page bare.

My life in Connecticut, I begin to realize, lacks this quality of significance and therefore of beauty, because there is so little empty space. The space is scribbled on; the time has been filled.

海的礼物 (摘译)

人不能蒐集盡沙灘上所有的貝殼的；你只要蒐集

一些便可以了。而且數目越少，越覺得它的漂亮。一

個螺殼比三個更顯眼。天上也只有一个月亮。一個蚌

殼是件大事，六個却是一串瑣事，就像學校裡一星期

的日子。漸次，你会把其他的扔掉，只留下這美的一个

，且也不必是罕見的，只要是同類中最完美的便行了

。你会把它獨自放在一處，只讓空間圍繞着——就像

一个小島一樣。

因為只有嵌在空間，美才會萌芽。只

有空間使人、事、物變得独一无二，飽有意義——因

此也變得美的。一棵樹有了空洞的天空襯托，才顯

得格外有意義。一首歌的音符有了前後寂靜的聲，才會

合意義。一柄蠟燭要在黑夜裡才會綻出光輝。即便細

小的偶然的事物，也會因為空間的烘托而別具意義；

就像東方畫裡一角的几抹秋草，餘下的畫由了些一物

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我於是悟到我在康涅狄格的生活便是欠缺了這種

意義，也就是欠缺了美，因為剩下的空間是近幾秒

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There are so few empty pages in my engagement pad, or empty hours in the day, or empty rooms in my life in which to stand alone and find myself. Too many activities, and people, and things. Too many worthy activities, valuable things, and interesting people. For it is not merely the trivial which clutters our lives but the important as well. We can have a surfeit of treasures – an excess of shells, where one or two would be significant.

會記錄簿上沒有多少頁是空的，一天裡沒有多少分鐘
是閒的，生活裡也沒有多少空隙可以讓我站下來看
自己。活動、人物、事情太多了。值得做的事情
，有價值的物件，有趣的人太多了。因為不單瑣事
滿填我們的生命，大事也一樣。要珍惜的東西實在太
多了——我們的收藏^{收藏}的貝殼太多了，但其實只有一兩個便
已足夠。