



★ 课外英语
英语下午茶

Beautiful Essays 捕捉精彩短篇

天星 尘影 / 编



远方出版社

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The action was not right
To see a world in grain of sand
And heaven in a wild flower
Hold infinity in the palm of your hand
And eternity in an hour

NICE DAY

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捕捉精彩短篇

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前 言

某著名小说家曾经说过：“英语的独特之处就在于，它使得任何在十四岁就离开校园的人在他长大之后，不可能再学习另外一门外语。”他的说法虽然有点偏执，但同时也指出了英语的独特魅力以及其巨大的语言影响力。对英语的理解和掌握不只是一门科学，还是一种艺术。随着世界经济快速发展和各国人民之间交流的进一步加强，掌握好英语不再只是一种升学的基本要求，更重要的是，它已经成为我们赖以在这个竞争日益激烈的“地球村”上更好生存的本领。

— 对于我国英语学习者来说，中学无疑是学习英语的最佳时期。十几岁的孩子，机械记忆力依然强健，理解力与日俱增，对一切文化财富都充满了好奇，正是汲取知识的大好时机。我们都知道打好英语基本功尤其重要，而我们认为，英语水平的增进在更大的程度上主要取决于阅读，因为阅读可以提供从词汇、语法到社会文化的方方面面的知识，让学生在微笑中

领悟,在见闻中成长。为此,我们编写了这套取材广泛的《英语下午茶》。

这套丛书集故事性、趣味性于一体,从中学生的英语实际水平出发,让学生在巩固课本词汇和语法的同时,能够充分发挥自学能力,展开广泛阅读,探索英语知识与技能。

本丛书难免有纰漏之处,请广大读者与同行不吝指正。

编 者



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Not Poor, Just Broke

Dick Gregory

Like of lot of Negro kids, we never would have made it without our Momma. When there was no fatback to go with the beans, no socks to ho with the shoes, no hope to go with tomorrow, shesmile and say: "We are't poor, we're just broke," poor is a state of mind you never grow out of, but being broke is just a temporary condition. She always had a big smile, even when her legs and feet swelled from high blood pressure and she collapsed across the table with sugar diabetes. You have to smile twenty-four hours a day, Momma would say. If you walk through life showing the aggravation you've gone through, people will feel sorry for you, and they'll never respect you. She taught us that man has two ways out in life-laughing or crying. There'more hope in laughing. A man can fall down the stairs and lie there in such pain and horror that his own wife will collapse and faint at the sight. But if he can just hold back his pain for a

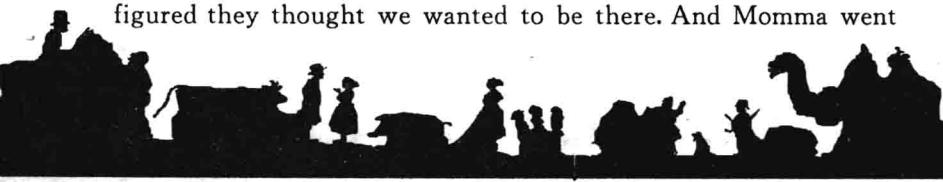




minute she might be able to collect herself and call the doctor. It might mean the difference between his living to laugh again or dying there on the spot.

So you laugh, so you smile. Once a month the big gray relief truck would pull up in front of our house and Momma would flash that big smile and stretch out her hands. "Who else you know in this neighborhood gets this kind of service?" And we could all feel proud when the neitghbors, folds who weren't on relief, folds who had Daddies in their houses, would come by the back porch for some of those hundred pounds of potatoes, for some sugar and flour and salty fish. We'd stand out there on the back porch and hand out the food like we were in charge of helping poor people, and then were in charge of helping poor people, and then we'd take the food they brought us in retrun.

And Momma came home one hot summerday and found we'd been evicted, thromn out into the streetcar zone wing all our orangecrate chairs and secondhand lamps. She flashed that big smile and dried our tears and bought some penny Kool-Aid, We stood out there and sold drinks to thirsty people coming off the street-car, and we thought nobody knew we were kicked out-figured they thought we wanted to be there. And Momma went





off to tald the landlord into letting us back in on credit.

But I wonder about my Momma sometimes, and all the other Negro mothers who got up at 6 A. M. to go to the white man's house with sacks over their shoes because it was so wet and cold, I wonder how they made it. They worked very hard for the man, they made his breakfast and they scrubbed his floors and they diapered his babies. They didn't have too much time for us

I wonder about my Momma, who walked out of a white woman's clean bouse at midnight and came back to her own where the ughts had been out for three months, and the pipes were frozen and the wind came in through the cracks. She'd have to make deals with the rats; leave some food out for them so they wouldn't gnaw on the doors or bite the babies. The roaches, they were just like part of the family.

I wonder how she felt telling those white kids she tood-care of to brush their teeth after they ate, to wash their bands after they peed. She could nener tell her own kids because there wasn't soap or water back home.

I wonder how my Momma felt when we came bome from school with a list of vitamins and pills and cod liver oil the school nurse said we had to have. Momma would cry all night, and





捕殺野鳥

then go out and spend most of the rent money for pills. A week later, the white man would come for his eighteen dollars rent and Momma would plead with him to wait until tomorrow. She had lost her pocketbook. The relief check was coming. The white folks had some money for her. Tomorrow. I'd be hiding in the coal closet because there was only supposed to be two kids in the flat, and I could hear the rent man curse my Momma and call her a liar. And when he finally went away, Momma put the sacks on her shoes and went off to the rich white folks' house to dress the rich white kids so their mother could take them to a special baby doctor.

Momma had to take us to Homer G. Phillips, the free hospital, the city hospital for Negroes. We'd stand on line and wait for hours, smiling and Uncle Tomming every time a doctor or a nurse passed by. We'd feel good when one of them smiled back and didn't look at us as though we were dirty and had no right coming down there. All the doctors and nurses at Homer G. Phillips were Negroes, too.

I remember one time when a doctor in white walked up and said: "What's wrong with him?" as if he didn't believe that anything was .





Momma looked at me and looked at him and shook her head.

"I sure don't know, Doctor, but he cried all nitht long. Held his stomach."

"Bring him in and get his damned clothes off."

I was so mad the way he was talking to my Momma taht I bit down too hard on the thermometer. It broke in my mouth. The doctor slapped me scross my face.

"Both of you go stand in the back of the line and wait your turn."

My Momma had to say : "I'm sorry, Doctor," and to to the back of the line. She had five other kids at home and she never knew when she'd have to bring another down to the City Hospital.

And shose rich white folks Momma was so proud of. She'd sit around with the other women and they'd talk about how good their white folds were. They'd lie about how rich they were, what nice parties they gave, what good clothes they wore. And how they were going to be remembered in their white folks'wills. The next morning the white lady would say : "We're going on vacation for two months, Lucille, we won't be needing you until we get back." Damm. Two month vacation withort pay.



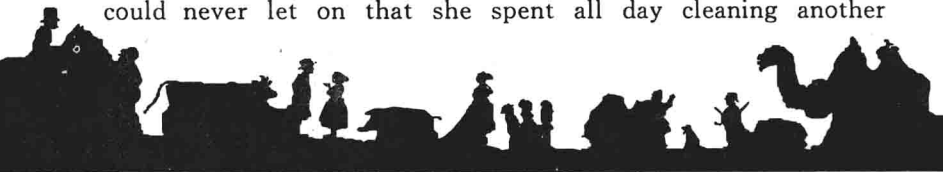


I wonder how my Momma stayed so good and beautiful in her soul when she worked seven days a week on swollen legs and feet, how she kept teaching us to smile and laugh when the house was dark and cold and she never knew when one of her hungry kids was going to ask about Daddy.

I wonder how she kept from teaching us hate when the social worker-came around. She was a nasty bitch with a pinched face who said: “ We have reason to suspect you are wovking, Miss Gregory, and you can be sure I’m going to check on you. We don’t stand for welfare cheaters.”

Momma, a welfare cheater. A criminal who couldn’t stand to see her kids go hungry, or grow up in slums and end up mugging people in dark corners. I gress the system didn’t want her to get off relief, the way it kept sending social workers around to be sure Momma wasn’t trying to made things better.

I remember how that social worker would poke around the house, wrinkling her nose at the coal dust on the chilly linoleum floor, shaking her head at the hugs crawling over the dirth dishes in the sink. My Momma would have to stand there and make like she was too lazy to keep her own house clean. She could never let on that she spent all day cleaning another





woman's house for two dollars and carfare. She would have to follow that nasty bitch around those drafty three rooms, keeping her fingers crossed that the telephone hidden in the closet wouldn't ring. Welfare cases weren't supposed to have telephones.

But Momma figured that some day the Gregory kids were going to get off North Taylor Street and into a world where they would have to compete with kids who grew up with telephones in their houses. She didn't want us to be at a disadvantage. She couldn't explain that to the social worker. And she couldn't explain that while she was out spoonfeeding somebody else's kids, she was worrying about her own kids, that she could rest her mind by picking up the telephone and calling us to find out if we had bread for our baloney or bcuoney for our bread, to see if and of us had gotten run over by the streetcar while we played in the gutter, to make sure the house hadn't burnt down from the papers and magazines we stuffed in the stove when the coal ran out.

But sometimes when she called there would be no answer. Home was a place to be only when all other places were closed.





不是穷，只是没有钱

迪克·格雷戈里

8

我们和其他许多黑人小孩一样，没有妈妈不行。到了吃豆子没有肥猪肉相配、有了鞋子没有袜子、对明天已经没有希望的时刻，她总是笑着说：“我们不是穷，只是没有一分钱。”穷是你永远摆脱不了的一种心理状态，但是没有钱只是一种暂时状态。她是满面笑容，即使由于患了高血压病她的腿脚都肿着，由于患了糖尿病她软瘫在桌子上，她也是这样。妈妈总是说你必须每天笑24小时。如果你过日子显出你的不高兴，人家就会为你难过，他们就不再尊重你了。她教导我们，一个人的生活中有两种出路——笑或是哭。在笑之中含有更多的希望。一个人可能从楼梯上跌下来，躺在那里既疼痛又害怕，连她的妻子看到也会晕倒。但是如果他能够忍住一时的疼痛，她也可以使自己镇定下来去请医生。这就意味着他活着站起来继续笑，还是当场死去的区别。

因此你要大笑，因此你要微笑。每月一次灰色的救济大卡车开到我家门前，妈妈就露出那满脸笑容，伸出双手：“你们知道





这一带有哪些人能得到这种服务呢？”这时我们都感到很骄傲。因为邻居们，那些未得到救济的人们，那些家里有爸爸的人们，都从后门进去，从上百磅的马铃薯里拿走一些，再拿去一些食糖、面粉和咸鱼。我们站在后门口把东西递给他们，就好像我们是负责帮助穷人的，然后我们接下他们回送的食物。

有一个炎热的夏天，妈妈回家时发现我们被赶出了家门，连同我们所有用装柑橘的板条箱钉成的椅子和从旧货店里买来的灯一起被扔到电车停车区。她露出满面笑容，擦干我们的眼泪，买了一些冷饮。我们站在那里把冷饮卖给下电车的口渴的乘客。我们想没有人会知道我们是被踢出门的——猜想我们会以为我们是乐意站在那里的。妈妈走开去找房东，要求让我们暂时欠着房租住回去。

但是有时我感到很奇怪，妈妈，还有其他所有黑人妈妈都是早上6点起床，往鞋子上套上麻袋上白人家里去，因为天气是那样的寒冷潮湿。我不知道她是怎样对付过去的。她们为人家辛勤劳动，烧早饭、擦地板、替孩子换尿布，她们没有多少时间来照料我们。

我对妈妈感到奇怪。她半夜是从一家白人女人干净的房屋中走出来回到自己的家，家里已经3个月电灯不亮了，水管子也冻住了，风从墙缝中钻进来。她不得不和老鼠打交道，留点食品给它们，免得它们啃房门甚至咬小孩。还有蟑螂，就像家庭中的成员一样。





我不知道她有什么感想。她告诉她所照管的白人小孩饭后要刷牙，小便后要洗手。她回到家里不能对自己的孩子说这些，因为没有肥皂和水。

我不知道她有什么感想。我们从学校带回一个维生素丸和鱼肝油的单子，是学校的护士告诉我们必须服用的。妈妈哭了一整夜，然后出门用准备交房租的大部分钱去买丸药。一个星期后白人要来收他的 18 元房租。妈妈就央求他推迟到明天。她把钱袋丢失了。救济金支票就要来了。白人要给她一些钱的。第二天我得躲在堆煤的小屋中，因为这套房子里只能有两个小孩。我听到收房租的人咒骂我妈妈，管她叫骗子。他终于走了。妈妈把麻袋套在鞋子上到有钱的白人家里为有钱的白人小孩穿衣服，他们的母亲要带他们去看特约的儿科医生。

妈妈不得不带我们去荷马·G·菲利普免费医院，那是市里为黑人开设的医院。我们要站队等待好几个小时，每次有医生或护士走过时我们还要装出笑脸，温顺得像汤姆大叔那样。如果他们之中有人向我们回笑一下，并不认为我们太脏，没有权利到这里来，我们就感到很高兴了。荷马·G·菲利普医院里所有的医生、护士也都是黑人。

我记得有一次有一个穿白工作服的医生走过来说，“他有什么毛病？”就好像他不相信我有病似的。

妈妈看看我，又看看他，摇摇头：“我确实不清楚，医生，

