



李颂 孟洁◎编译
欧美最新流行美文



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Zhejiang Gongshang University Press

warm
English

温馨
英文

It's just a small, white envelope stuck among the branches of our Christmas tree.
No name, no identification, no inscription. It has peeked through the branches of our tree for the past 10 years or so.
那是一只小小的插在我家圣诞树枝条间的白色信封。
没抬头，没落款，没题字。在过去十几年间，它就这么在枝条间若隐若现。



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窗外的风景

From the window of my room, I could see a tall cotton-rose hibiscus. In spring, when green foliage was half hidden by mist, the tree looked very enchanting dotted with red blossom. This inspiring neighbor of mine often set my mind working. I gradually regarded it as my best friend.

从我房间的窗户望出去，是一棵高大的木棉树。春天，绿色的叶子半掩在薄雾之下，红花点点，看上去非常迷人。这个引人入胜的邻居常令我陷入思考。我慢慢把它看成我最好的朋友。



Santa Grandma

· Anonymous ·

I remember my first Christmas adventure with Grandma. I was just a kid. I remember tearing across town on my bike to visit her on the day my big sister dropped the bomb: “There is no Santa Claus,” she jeered. “Even dummies know that!”

My Grandma was not the gushy kind, never had been. I fled to her that day because I knew she would be straight with me. I knew Grandma always told the truth, and I knew that the truth always went down a whole lot easier when swallowed with one of her “world-famous” cinnamon buns. I knew they were world-famous, because Grandma said so. It had to be true.

Grandma was home, and the buns were still warm. Between bites, I told her everything. She was ready for me. “No Santa Claus?” she snorted, “Ridiculous! Don’t believe it. That rumor has been going around for years, and it makes me mad, plain mad. Now, put on your coat, and let’s go.” “Go? Go where, Grandma?” I asked. I hadn’t even finished my second world-famous cinnamon bun.

“Where” turned out to be Kerby’s General Store, the one store in town that had a little bit of just about everything. As we walked through its doors, Grandma handed me ten dollars. That

was a bundle in those days. “Take this money,” she said, “and buy something for someone who needs it. I’ll wait for you in the car.” Then she turned and walked out of Kerby’s. I was only eight years old. I’d often gone shopping with my mother, but never had I shopped for anything all by myself.

The store seemed big and crowded, full of people scrambling to finish their Christmas shopping. For a few moments I just stood there, confused, clutching that ten-dollar bill, wondering what to buy, and who on earth to buy it for. I thought of everybody I knew: my family, my friends, my neighbors, the kids at school, the people who went to my church. I was just about thought out, when I suddenly thought of Bobby Decker. He was a kid with bad breath and messy hair, and he sat right behind me in Mrs. Pollock’s grade-two class. Bobby Decker didn’t have a coat. I knew that because he never went out to recess during the winter. His mother always wrote a note, telling the teacher that he had a cough, but all the kids knew that Bobby Decker didn’t have a cough; he had no coat. I fingered the ten-dollar bill with growing excitement. I would buy Bobby Decker a coat!

I settled on a red corduroy one that had a hood to it. It looked really warm, and he would like that. “Is this a Christmas present for someone?” The lady behind the counter asked kindly, as I laid my ten dollars down. “Yes, ma’am,” I replied shyly, “It’s for Bobby.” The nice lady smiled at me. I



didn't get any change, but she put the coat in a bag and wished me a Merry Christmas.

That evening, Grandma helped me wrap the coat in Christmas paper and ribbons (a little tag fell out of the coat, and Grandma tucked it in her Bible) and wrote, "To Bobby, From Santa Claus" on it. Grandma said that Santa always insisted on secrecy. Then she drove me over to Bobby Decker's house, explaining as we went that I was now and forever officially one of Santa's helpers. Grandma parked down the street from Bobby's house, and she and I crept noiselessly and hid in the bushes by his front walk.

Then Grandma gave me a nudge. "All right, Santa Claus," she whispered, "get going." I took a deep breath, dashed for his front door, threw the present down on his step, pounded his doorbell and flew back to the safety of the bushes and Grandma. Together we waited breathlessly in the darkness for the front door to open. Finally it did, and there stood Bobby. Fifty years haven't dimmed the thrill of those moments spent shivering, beside my Grandma, in Bobby Decker's bushes. That night, I realized that those awful rumors about Santa Claus were just what Grandma said they were: ridiculous. Santa was alive and well, and we were on his team. I still have the Bible, with the tag tucked inside: \$ 19.95.

圣诞祖母

佚名

我还记得第一次和祖母一起度过的那次圣诞经历。那时,我还是个小孩子。我记得自己当时骑着自行车匆匆穿过小镇去祖母家,那天,我的大姐告诉我一个惊人消息:“根本没有圣诞老人,”她嘲讽地笑着说,“就连傻子都知道这个!”

祖母不是那种喜怒形于色的人,从来都不是。我那天逃向她是因为我知道她能给我一个说法。我知道祖母从不说假话,而且真相和她那“举世闻名”的肉桂饼混在一起总是令人食欲大增。我知道它们举世闻名,因为祖母是这样说的。那一定是真的。

祖母在家,饼也是热的。我一边吃,一边告诉她一切。她看上去一副胸有成竹的样子:“没有圣诞老人?”她哼哼着,“一派胡言!别信那个。这个谣言流传了好些年,真让我生气,气坏了。好了,穿上外套,我们走。”“走?去哪儿啊,奶奶?”我问道。我还没吃完我的第二块举世闻名的肉桂饼呢。

“哪儿”原来是科比商店,那是镇上一家麻雀虽小却五脏俱全的商店。当我们走进店门时,祖母递给我 10 美元。这在当时可是一大笔钱。“拿着这钱,”她说道,“给有需要的人买点东西。我在外面的车里等你。”说完她转身走出科

比商店。那年我只有8岁，经常跟妈妈一起采购，但还从来没有自己买过什么东西。

商店看起来那么大，又那么挤，挤来挤去的人们在忙着买过节的东西。有那么一会儿我怔怔地站在那儿不知所措，攥着我的10块钱，想不出要买什么，以及究竟给谁买。我把认识的人都想了一遍：家人，朋友，邻居，学校的同学，去教堂的人。就在快想完了的时候，我突然想起鲍比·戴克。那孩子嘴巴味道难闻，头发乱糟糟，在波洛克太太的二年级班上就坐在我身后。鲍比·戴克没有外套。我之所以知道这些是因为他冬天在课间从不到教室外面游戏。他妈妈老是写来假条，告诉老师说他咳嗽，可是所有孩子都知道鲍比·戴克不咳嗽；他只是没外套。我带着心中的狂喜捏着那10块钱，我要给鲍比·戴克买一件外套！

我看上了一件带帽子的灯芯绒外套。看上去很暖和，他肯定会很喜欢的。“是圣诞礼物吗？”我把10块钱放下的时候，柜台后的女售货员和蔼地问道。“是的，太太。”我害羞地回答，“给鲍比的。”好心的女售货员对我微笑着，没有找零，她把外套放进一个袋子，并祝我圣诞快乐。

那天晚上，祖母帮我外套用圣诞节礼品纸和丝带包好（一个小价签从衣服里滑出，祖母将它夹进了她的《圣经》）并写道：“给鲍比，来自圣诞老人。”祖母说圣诞老人总是很注重保密。然后她开车送我去鲍比·戴克家，路上她告诉我说，我现在并且永远地正式成为了圣诞老人的助手之一。祖母把车停在鲍比家街道的另一边，我们蹑手蹑脚地走过去，藏在他家屋前的灌木丛里。

祖母轻轻推了推我：“好啦，圣诞老人，”她轻声说，“开始行动。”我深吸一口气，冲到他家门前，将礼物扔到他家台阶上，按门铃，然后飞快跑回灌木丛里祖母藏的地方。我们一起屏住呼吸在黑暗中等待着前门打开。门终于开了，鲍比站在那里。五十年过去了，我至今依然清楚记得那一刻，我在祖母身旁，在鲍比·戴克家的灌木丛间激动地哆嗦着。那天晚上，我知道那些关于圣诞老人的谣言正如祖母说的那样：一派胡言。圣诞老人活得很好，我们就是他的一员。我仍然留着那本《圣经》，小价签也依然夹在其中：19.95美元。

White Envelopes

· Claire Guthrie ·

It's just a small, white envelope stuck among the branches of our Christmas tree. No name, no identification, no inscription. It has peeked through the branches of our tree for the past 10 years or so.

It all began because my husband Mike hated Christmas. Oh, not the true meaning of Christmas, but the commercial aspects of it, overspending, the frantic running around at the last minute to get a tie for Uncle Harry and the dusting powder for Grandma, the gifts given in desperation because you couldn't think of anything else.

Knowing he felt this way, I decided one year to bypass the usual shirts, sweaters, ties and so forth. I reached for something special just for Mike. The inspiration came in an unusual way. Our son, Kevin, who was 12 that year was wrestling at the junior level at the school he attended, and shortly before Christmas, there was a non-league match against a team sponsored by an inner-city church.

These youngsters, dressed in sneakers so ragged that shoe-strings seemed to be the only thing holding them together, presented a sharp contrast to our boys in the spiffy blue and gold

uniforms and sparkling new wrestling shoes. As the match began I was alarmed to see that the other team was wrestling without headgear, a kind of light helmet designed to protect a wrestler's ears. It was a luxury the ragtag team obviously could not afford. Well, we ended up walloping them. We took every weight class. And as each of their boys got up from the mat, he swaggered around in his tatters with false bravado, a kind of street pride that couldn't acknowledge defeat. Mike, seated beside me, shook his head sadly, "I wish one of them could have won," he said, "They have a lot of potential, but losing like this could take the heart right out of them." Mike loved kids, all kids, and he knew them, having coached little league football, baseball and lacrosse.

That's when the idea of his present came. That afternoon, I went to a local sporting goods store and bought an assortment of wrestling headgear and shoes and sent them anonymously to the inner-city church. On Christmas Eve, I placed the envelope on the tree, the note inside telling Mike what I had done and that this was his gift from me. His smile was the brightest thing about Christmas that year and in succeeding years. For each Christmas, I followed the tradition, one year sending a group of mentally handicapped youngsters to a hockey game, another year a check to a pair of elderly brothers whose home had burned to the ground the week before Christmas, and on and on. The envelope became the highlight of our Christmas. It was



always the last thing opened on Christmas morning and our children, ignoring their new toys, would stand with wide-eyed anticipation as their dad lifted the envelope from the tree to reveal its contents. As the children grew, the toys gave way to more practical presents, but the envelope never lost its allure. The story doesn't end there.

You see we lost Mike last year due to dreaded cancer. When Christmas rolled around, I was still so wrapped in grief that I barely got the tree up. But Christmas Eve found me placing an envelope on the tree, and in the morning, it was joined by three more.

Each of our children, unbeknownst to the others, had placed an envelope on the tree for their dad. The tradition has grown and someday will expand even further with our grandchildren standing around the tree with wide-eyed anticipation watching as their fathers take down the envelope. Mike's spirit, like the Christmas spirit, will always be with us.

白信封

克莱尔·古斯瑞

那是一只小小的插在我家圣诞树枝条间的白色信封。没抬头,没落款,没题字。在过去十几年间,它就那么在枝条间若隐若现。

这一切源于我的丈夫迈克痛恨圣诞节。噢,不是指原本意义的圣诞节,而是讨厌它的商业性,铺张浪费,临阵磨枪的疯狂采购:给叔叔买条领带,给奶奶买爽身粉……礼物买到黔驴技穷,直到你搜肠刮肚也想不出该另外买什么。

我深知他的心思,因此有一年决定略过那些司空见惯的衬衫、毛衣、领带等等不提,找到了一件特殊的礼物送给迈克。灵感降临的方式很不寻常。我们的儿子凯文,那时12岁,正参加学校的初级摔跤队训练,在临近圣诞节的时候,他们队和内城教堂赞助的另一个队有一场比赛。

这些年轻人都穿着破破烂烂的好像仅靠鞋带才勉强系在一起的球鞋,和我们那些穿着漂亮的蓝金相间制服和崭新摔跤鞋的孩子们形成了鲜明的对比。比赛开始,我震惊地发现那个队的孩子居然都不戴头饰,那是一种专为保护摔跤手耳朵而设计的轻型头盔,显然那是这个寒碜的运动队所承受不起的。嗯,我们最后轻取了他们,夺得了每一个重量级别的胜利。那些孩子从地毯上爬起时,每个人都装出大摇大摆满不在乎的架势,那是江湖上某种表示不认输的意思。迈克坐在