

第二册

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高等学校试用教材

JICHU YING YU JIFANDUJIAOCAI

基础英语泛读教材

天津人民出版社

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王蕴茹 管 勤 编

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前 言

《基础英语泛读教材》是为适应大学英语本科基础课教学的需要而编写的一部泛读教材。它的使用对象是大学英语专业一年级学生，兼及社会上具有同等水平的一般读者。

泛读是英语学习基础阶段不可或缺的重要课程。它对学生开阔视野、扩大词汇、巩固语法、提高理解力以及培养学生良好的阅读习惯都具有重要的作用。泛读课做为我国大学英语专业的必修课程，多年来缺乏比较系统的教材，因而在教学中存在着“东鳞西爪”、“饥肠辘辘”的现象。教师由于经常忙于选材，而无暇核定内容的深浅，难以保证授课的系统性和科学性。多年的教学实践证明，编写英语专业学生需要、具有由浅入深的梯度、并且有助于学生文化素养积累的泛读教材是加强基础课教学的重要环节之一。

我们根据国家教委英语教材编审计划，在编写这套《泛读教材》时，认真学习和研究了教学大纲的有关要求，在选材及安排难易梯度方面，努力达到一定程度的科学性和系统性，力求做到体裁与题材的多样化，语言的规范化，在内容方面力求覆盖面广，思想性强，做到知识性和趣味性相结合。我们选入了一些文学名著，以英美作家为主，少数篇目选自其他国家的名著的英译本。同时也编选了历史、文化、社会、科普、宗教、管理等方面的名篇佳作。每篇包括教材本文、生词与短语表、注释及问答练习。本书对某些著名作家做了较详细的介绍，目的在于扩展学生

的知识面。作者介绍及注释等部分用中文写出，语言力求简洁、明了，对学生的阅读和理解起到辅助作用。我们希望《泛读教材》能够提高学生广泛阅读的兴趣，增强他们在书的世界里驰骋的勇气，从而不仅为较高年级的专业课和选修课打下一个良好基础，而且有助于提高他们的治学能力。

本教材共分两学期讲授。以每周二学时为一单元计，每学期由18单元组成。每篇平均约20页左右，进度可由教师视实际情况灵活掌握。通过泛读课的课内教学，每学期学生词汇量约增加1500字左右。

在本教材的编选过程中，南开大学外文系师生给予我们很大的支持。在选材和课文注释等方面，常耀信教授提出了宝贵的建议，并审校了全部初稿。对此，我们在此表示衷心的感谢。

我们虽然力求一丝不苟，但限于水平，难免出现谬误之处，希望广大读者和专家不吝斧正。

编者

1988年1月于天津

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FOOTFALLS

by Wilbur Daniel Steele

THERE IS A TOWN on the Northeast coast of America, one of those old New England⁽¹⁾ sea towns, where so many Portuguese are now living that it has become almost like an outpost, a colony, of the Portuguese Islands.

The man of this story was a Portuguese from St. Michael, in the Western Islands, and his name was Boaz Negro. He was a cobbler, a maker and repairer of shoes. He was blind.

He was also happy. Nothing could destroy the happiness in him, the joy he took in life. When he arose in the morning he made vast and uncontrollable movements with his strong arms. He came into his shop singing. His voice, as strong and deep as the chest from which it came, rolled out through the doorway and along the street, and the fishermen, done with their morning work⁽²⁾ and talking and smoking along the seafront, said, "Boaz is to work already."⁽³⁾

Then they came to sit in his shop.

In that town a cobbler's shop is like a club. In the half light inside it one can always see, through the tobacco smoke, the forms of men sitting. They sit for hours watching the cobbler at his work and they talk about everything.

A cobbler is known by the company he keeps.⁽⁴⁾ Boaz Negro kept young company. He would have nothing to do with the old.⁽⁵⁾ On his own head the thick hair was gray, and he himself had a grown son. But the seats around his shop were only for the strong and the daring,⁽⁶⁾ for young men who could spend half the night drinking and then at three o'clock in the morning go out in the rain and dark to their boats and start working. And while they worked they sang songs, playing all the while with one another among the slippery fish in the boat's bottom and making loud jokes about the things that people have talked and laughed and cried about ever since there were people—things like love, birth, and death.

Listening to them talking about their experiences of work and love, their hopes and dreams, the cobbler breathed harder and his heart beat faster. He was a large, full-blooded fellow, himself built to do great deeds,⁽⁷⁾ even to hear of them made the flame of life burn more brightly in his darkness.

There seemed little reason for a man like Boaz Negro to be so happy, so joyful, so full of life and energy. First he had lost his eyesight; then his wife, whom he had loved so dearly, had died. He had had four sons. Three, one after another, had been removed, leaving only Manuel, the youngest. Recovering slowly, with great pain and sorrow, from each of these blows of Fate,⁽⁸⁾ that joyous spirit in him which could not be defeated was born again, came to life again, began to grow again.

And there was another thing quite as extraordinary. He had never done anything in his life but work, and when Fate strikes out at people who live to work rather than work to live, they sel-

dom have the power to pick themselves up again. "Why continue working?" they ask weakly—and stop. But Boaz Negro never stopped working.

Work in the dark! Work. work, work! Work without success, and without apparent end. No rich food, no servants, no fine house.

How he had worked—especially in those early years. Not only in the day time, but also, sometimes, when there were many shoe repairs to do, far into the night. It was a strange experience for anyone, passing along that quiet street at midnight, to hear coming from Boaz Negro's shop the steady blows of hammer on nail, hammer on leather, again and again and again. Knowing that he was blind...

Nor was that sound the only one that came from the shop,⁽⁹⁾ no man in town could get far past that shop, at any hour of the night, unobserved by that blind man. No more than a dozen steps, a dozen footfalls, and from the darkness Boaz's voice would roll out,⁽¹⁰⁾ loud and friendly, "Good night, Antone!" "Good night to you, Caleb Snow."

To Boaz Negro, hearing the footfalls, it was still broad day.⁽¹¹⁾ He knew everybody by their footfalls.

Now, because of all this work, Boaz Negro was what might be called a man of property. He owned his shop opening on the sidewalk and behind it the house in which he lived.

And there was always something for his last son, Manuel, a "piece-for-the-pocket," a dollar, or a five, or even a ten-dollar bill if Manuel had "got to have it." Manuel was "a good boy." Boaz not only said this; he was certain of it.

It is strange that Boaz, who in spite of his blindness could "see" his neighbors and their children, with all their faults and failings, so much more clearly than they could see themselves, was so utterly unable to see his own son as he really was. For to most people Manuel was anything but a good boy.⁽¹²⁾ In fact they thought he was a very bad boy.

Boaz Negro's simple explanation for his son Manuel's apparent unwillingness to work was that he "was not very strong." To others he said this, and to himself. Actually Manuel was not very strong. Why should he be strong when he never did anything to make himself strong. Why should he work, when all the necessities of existence were provided for, and when there was always that "piece-for-the-pocket"? Even a ten-dollar bill on a Saturday night!

The men who came to visit the cobbler, though they argued about everyone and everything else, never argued with the cobbler's explanation of his son's idleness. Boaz was blind. They were his guests. These strong and daring young fellows respected and loved him. Whatever they might think about Manuel they said nothing.⁽¹³⁾ If Boaz thought he was "a good boy" then he was a "a good boy."

This did not prevent them, later, after the bad thing had happened, from saying that Boaz was himself largely to be blamed for it.

"He was too soft with the boy," they said. "He should have forced him to work." He should have said to Manuel, 'If you want a dollar, go earn it first.'

Actually, only one man, before the bad thing happened, ever gave Boaz that advice direct. That was Campbell Wood, and

Campbell Wood was one man who never sat in that shop.

In every small American town there seems to be one young man who is spoken of as "rising," who will "go far,"⁽¹⁴⁾ who will be a great success. Very often he is not someone who was born in the town, but "from away." He is always hard-working, always careful of his dress and appearance, always regarded as a model of what a good and rising young man should be.

In this town that man was Campbell Wood. He had come from another part of the state to work at the bank. He lived in the upper part of Boaz Negro's house, for the lower part was now more than enough for Boaz, with only Manuel left of his family.

Although Campbell Wood never sat down in the shop he always, when walking through, had a nice word for the old cobbler—a cheerful "good morning," or "good afternoon" or "good night," or a remark about the weather and the possibility of rain.

Boaz's feelings about the young man were mixed. He respected him for his position at the bank, but because he held that position, there was something about him that Boaz did not like, did not trust. This was because Boaz was himself an uneducated man.

To uneducated people the idea of large-scale business and banking is as uncomfortable as the idea of the law. It must be said for Boaz that, since the young man Campbell Wood always conducted himself so well, he thought he had no right to have this feeling about him.

But this feeling of uneasiness returned to Boaz one evening when Mr. Wood, finding no one else in the shop on his way up-

stairs, stopped for a minute to give Boaz the bit of advice about Manuel we have already spoken of.

“Why did you not teach Manuel the cobbler’s trade?”

The old man was immediately ready to defend Manuel. Perhaps he had a kind of sixth sense that warned him that there was more behind the question than there might seem.

“Shoemaking,” said Boaz, “is good enough for a blind man.”

“Oh, I don’t know. at least it would be better for him than doing nothing at all.”

Boaz, holding his hammer in the air, stopped working. He sat silent, seemingly unmoving and unmoved. But inside he was filled with anger. So greatly was he shocked by Wood’s suggestion that his son was a good-for-nothing waster that for once he could not say his usual “Manuel is not too strong, you know.” Suddenly he found himself hating Wood. Now he was certain, a hundred times more certain, that he did not trust him. How dare this young fool say such a thing about his son, and in a place where Manuel himself might hear?

Might hear? Where Manuel had heard.⁽¹⁵⁾ Boaz, sitting in his darkness, had heard no sound, no footfall, no movement of a floorboard. Yet by this same strange sixth sense of the blind he knew that Manuel was standing outside the doorway which led from the shop to the house.

Boaz made a huge effort to control his feelings. The voice that came out of his throat—rough and bitter—was loud enough to have carried ten times the distance to his son’s ears.

“Manuel is a good boy!”

“Yes—hm—yes—I suppose so.”

Wood moved his weight from one foot to the other, but he seemed uncomfortable.

“ Well, I’ll be going. I—good heavens!”

Something was happening. Boaz, without understanding, had the impression that Wood was trying to prevent something from falling to the ground. But from the sound which followed it was evident he had not succeeded. Boaz heard the unmistakable sound of metal as it dropped on the floor. Boaz even heard that the metal was coins made of gold. Now he understood.

A bag of gold coins, held not quite carefully enough under Campbell Wood’s coat, had slipped and fallen.

And Manuel must have heard it fall too. That was certain!

Boaz sat frozen in sudden fear and terror. And surprise! Surprise at himself! He had never doubted that Manuel was a good boy. Manuel had to be a good boy, for was he not also the son of the woman, now dead, whom Boaz had loved so much? Why then should he wish, as now he wished with all his heart, that Manuel had not heard the sound of the falling gold?

There, shocking, soul-destroying, stood the undeniable fact.

There was no sign on the face of Boaz, or in his figure, of the wave of emotion which had passed over him. But so great was the shock of realizing that he did not trust his own Manuel that he hardly understood the sense of what Wood was saying. Only a word here and there...

“ Government money, you understand—for the new harbor being built—a lot of money —too many people know about it...here, everywhere—the money would not be safe in the box at the bank—only made of tin—give you my word— Heavens, no!”⁽¹⁶⁾

What it all came to was this⁽¹⁷⁾—it was government money, and Mr. Wood had thought it would be safer to take it home than leave it at the bank, where it might so easily be stolen. Who, out of all those who knew about its existence, would expect⁽¹⁸⁾ this young bank officer to assume the responsibility of carrying the money under his coat, in such an apparently careless manner to his room behind the cobbler shop of Boaz Negro? Was not that therefore the safest place for the gold?

He was sorry the money had fallen, he continued, not because he did not trust Boaz, but because he did not want anyone to have to share the responsibility of knowing about the secret hiding place of the gold. Not even Boaz. However, he was pleased that it was Boaz who knew about the money rather than another person. He was no more anxious about the safety of the gold now than before. One honest man knows another.

“ I trust you, Mr. Negro, as much as I would myself. As long as it is only you. I am going up to my room and I will just throw the bag under the bed. Good night! ”

Boaz ate no supper that night. For the first time in his life he could not eat. Always before, even when he was suffering from some blow or loss, he had eaten what was put before him. Tonight, over his untouched food, he watched Manuel with his sightless eyes, listening to the way he ate, the way he moved, the way he breathed, as though he hoped in this way to gather some sign of what was in the boy's mind.

Boaz made another great effort. “ Manuel, ” he said, “ you are a good boy! ”

It was as if in what he said there was a mixed quality of ap-

peal, of despair and of command.

"Manuel, maybe you need a little money. Look, what is this, a ten-dollar bill? Well, you take it. Go out and enjoy yourself."

The boy took the money, but even that gave Boaz no comfort. He went out into the shop, where it was already dark, arranged his tools, and having got all ready to work he found himself unable to work. He was listening. Soon he heard footfalls. The story of that night was written in footfalls.⁽¹⁹⁾

He heard them moving about the house, on the lower floor, going here, going there, stopping, starting again, going forward, then backward, then forward again. About this seemingly purposeless, endless walking around there was something to twist the nerves.

Boaz lifted himself from his chair. Something told him he should go and discover what was happening, that he should stop—by his presence, by his personality, by his goodness—anything from happening. But something else—maybe a desire to know what, without action on his part, would happen—held him back. He sank back again; his hands fell down.

He heard footfalls too on the upper floor. Then, for a while, nothing. Time passed. In his darkness it seemed to Boaz that hours must have passed. Then he heard Wood calling from the top of the stairs.

"What is wrong down there? Why don't you go to bed?"

After a moment came Manuel's voice. "I am not sleepy. I can't sleep."

"Neither can I. Would you like to play a game of cards with me for a while?"

"Yes."

The lower footfalls went up to join the footfalls on the upper floor. There was the sound of a door closing.

Boaz sat still. He ought to have run up the stairs as fast as he could and beaten with his hands on that door. But he seemed unable to move.

Once more, long after the town clock had struck twelve, he heard footfalls. He heard them coming around the corner of the shop from the house and then dying away in the distance, lost in the sound of the wind. All of Boaz's muscles tightened. He wanted to jump up, to throw open the door, to shout into the night, "What are you doing? Stop there! Say! What are you doing? Where are you going?"

But as before he could not. Something held him motionless. He did not move. And then those footfalls, on which all the next ten years of his life were to depend, were gone.⁽²⁰⁾

There was nothing to listen for now, yet he continued to listen, his strong hands resting on the unfinished work.

There was a high wind that night, blowing not toward the shop from the house but toward the house from the shop. That is how it happened that Boaz Negro, who like all blind people had such a strong sense of feeling and of smell, could sit waiting and listening to nothing in the shop and not know of the great evil that had happened to him until he heard shouts in the street outside.

"Fire!" he heard them shouting. "Fire! Fire!"

Only slowly did he understand that the fire was in his own house.

Half an hour after dawn the searchers found the body, if what was left of it might be called a body.⁽²¹⁾ The discovery came

as a shock. It seemed unbelievable that a man like Campbell Wood, so young and in such good health, should not have awakened and escaped before the fire reached the upper floor. Even if he had been asleep!

And he had not been asleep. In spite of what had been done by the fire it could still be seen that at the moment of his death he was fully dressed, down to the last detail, in the clothes that all the bank's customers knew so well. A man does not sleep with his clothes on. The head had been broken in, as if with some iron instrument.

Soon people began to ask. "Where is Manuel?"

Boaz Negro still sat in his shop, seemingly unmoving and unmoved, his thick hairy arms resting on his chair. Into his eyes no change could come.⁽²²⁾ He had lost his house. It seemed that he had lost his son. But he had also lost something much more valuable, something that no one can buy or sell—the joyous inner fire that had made life so dear to him.

"Where is Manuel?" they asked him.

When he spoke his voice was like the voice of a man already dead.

"Yes, where is Manuel?" He answered them with their own question.

"When were you last with him?"

"At supper."

"Tell us, Boaz: did you know about this gold?"

The cobbler nodded his head.

"And did Manuel?"

He might have asked them how he was to know what