

Reader's Digest

**Bilingual
Selections**

讀者文摘
英漢
對照
選集

READER'S DIGEST BILINGUAL SELECTIONS

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The Boy Who Plunged Over Niagara

LAWRENCE ELLIOTT

JUST AFTER 8 a.m. on Saturday, July 9, 1960, James Honeycutt came off the night shift at a Niagara Falls hydroelectric project. Sleep, though, was not on his mind—not on a fine summer morning with a trim new outboard motorboat tied to the dock at Lynch's Trailer Court, where he resided.

Honeycutt was 40, an affable man who had had to leave his family in Raleigh, North Carolina, when he'd gone north to work. He found the weekends long and lonely. So, after breakfast, he drove to the home of Frank Woodward, a carpenter on his crew. Over coffee Honeycutt sprang his surprise: How would the Woodward youngsters, 17-year-old Deanne and her 7-year-old brother, Roger, like to go for a boat ride?

Deanne, awed by the tumultuous river, which she had seen only once, was reluctant. But with little Roger jumping with glee, and her mother urging her to go along—"You'll have a chance for a swim at Lynch's later"—Deanne changed into a bathing suit, and the three set out.

Soon Honeycutt was easing his green aluminum runabout away from the Lynch dock, his pride and inexperience both obvious in the cautious way he maneuvered clear of other boats. At midstream he turned the sleek 14-foot craft downriver and offered



怒瀑 餘生記

一 九六〇年七月九日，星期六，早上八時剛過，詹姆斯·亨尼卡從尼亞加拉瀑布的一處水力發電廠建築工程下了夜班。可是他全無睡意——這個夏天早晨天氣晴朗，何況還有一艘簇新漂亮的小汽艇停泊在他住的林赤拖車車場的碼頭旁等着他。

亨尼卡四十歲，和藹可親，隻身來北方工作，家人留在北加羅來納州拉萊市。他總覺得週末日子很長很寂寞。因此早餐後，他驅車到了富蘭克·伍德華家。富蘭克是他工作隊的木匠。喝咖啡時，想不到亨尼卡忽然問伍德華家的兩個孩子，十七歲的黛安和她七歲的弟弟羅吉，要不要坐他的汽艇去玩？

黛安只見過那條河一次，對那洶湧的河流有點胆戰心驚，因此不大想去。但小羅吉卻高興得手舞足蹈，她母親也慫恿她同去——「等會兒你們可以在林赤車場那裏游泳。」——她這才換上泳裝，三人一

the tiller to Roger. His face grinning above his brilliant orange life jacket, the boy took hold.

Deanne, in the bow, relaxed. If Mr. Honeycutt was confident enough to let Roger steer, what was *she* worried about? When they passed under the Grand Island Bridge, gateway to the American side of the falls, she waved gaily at the cars passing far overhead.

John R. Hayes, a trucker and special police officer on a holiday tour, had crossed the bridge an hour earlier. He and his wife had come to Niagara Falls for the weekend, and now, like the thousands of other tourists, were snapping pictures and marveling at the incredible power of the famous cataracts.

Past noon, they crossed the footbridge to Goat Island, which splits the Niagara into two sets of leaping rapids, its sheer northern end overlooking the awesome cleft into which both the American and the Horseshoe falls plunge. Downriver from the falls, so far below him that it looked like a toy in a bathtub, Hayes could see a vessel docked under the Canadian cliffs.

It was one of the two *Maids of the Mist*, ships that take turns cruising up into the "Shoe." There, within 150 feet of the wet black rocks at the very foot of the Horseshoe Falls, surrounded by wild flying spray and deafened by the roar of the torrent, tourists come face to face with one of nature's great extravagances.

The Niagara River is, in effect, an ever-narrowing trough, draining the North American mid-continent. Plunging north with the overflow from Lake Erie and the three Great Lakes to the west, it drops a precipitous 326 feet in its 36-mile length, flings 823,650 gallons of water a second over the 161-foot falls and swirls through the world's most treacherous rapids before spending its fury in the vastness of Lake Ontario.

Its violence has always attracted daredevils. In steel drums or padded barrels, at least seven stunters have gone over the Horseshoe. Only four survived. Suicides find in the falls the savage end they crave. Scarcely a month passes that one isn't whisked over the brink. Dashed to the rocks below, thrust into wild eddies and currents, their broken bodies have almost

道出發。

亨尼卡把他那綠色的鋁質小汽艇緩緩駛離林赤碼頭，小心地避開其他遊艇，這可以明顯看出他既自鳴得意，又缺乏經驗。到了河中心，他把那十四呎多長的輕巧汽艇轉向下游，然後把舵柄交給羅吉。羅吉抓牢舵柄，鮮艷橘黃色救生衣上面那張小臉，笑容可掬。

黛安坐在船頭，也放心了。亨尼卡先生既然這樣有把握，居然把船舵交給羅吉來掌，她還有什麼可擔憂呢？他們穿過了大島橋，那是美國這一邊的瀑布入口，黛安愉快地遙向在她頭頂上駛過的汽車揮手。

約翰·赫斯是卡車司機兼特別警察，和太太同來尼亞加拉瀑布週末。一小時前，駕車過了橋。現在他們和其他無數遊客一樣，一面拍照，一面驚嘆這著名瀑布雷霆萬鈞的力量。

中午過後，他們夫婦跨過一座人行橋，到了山羊島。尼亞加拉河從這兒分成兩股奔騰的激流；島的北端，懸崖峭壁，可以俯瞰美國大瀑布與加拿大蹄鐵大瀑布兩股巨流沖聚的深壑，壑底景象，驚心動魄。瀑布下游遠處，他們遙望到加拿大那邊陡壁上停泊着一艘船，遠看有如澡盆中浮着的玩具。

那是兩艘「霧中少女」號遊艇中的一艘。這兩艘船輪流載客溯流而上，直入「蹄鐵」內圍。蹄鐵瀑布底部的一百五十呎之內，岩石溼潤黝黑，水花激濺，響聲震耳欲聾。遊客在此可以見到大自然的奇景。

事實上，尼亞加拉河是一條越來越窄的水道，為北美中部大陸的出水口。它挾着伊利湖與伊利湖以西的三大湖的溢水向北奔騰。三十六哩長的河道，地形陡降三百二十六呎，每秒鐘有八十二萬三千六百五十加侖的水量沖下一百六十一呎高的瀑布，然後在全世界最危險的湍流裏打旋翻騰，流入烟波浩翰的安大略湖後，水勢才轉緩和。

這激流湍急洶湧，總有玩命客來冒險。至少有過七個愛作驚人

invariably been cast to the surface at the *Maid of the Mist* landing exactly four days later.

Honeycutt, again at the tiller, seemed unconcerned as the little outboard, now four miles downstream from Lynch's and only a mile or so above the falls, came bouncing past the long breakwater that evens the river's flow. Deanne, though, was getting nervous. This was not the broad, friendly river they'd started out on. It was roiled, leaping turbulently along the pronounced downhill pitch, breaking white against glistening rocks. The thunder of pounding water grew louder in her ears.

About this time, a Goat Island sightseeing guide was telling a group of tourists that the control structure out on the river was the point beyond which nothing could keep from being swept over the falls. One tourist gestured at the little green boat and said, "What about that?" The guide ran for a telephone. But it was already too late.

With the runabout almost abreast of Goat Island, Honeycutt finally brought the bow around. For one tenuous moment, the 7½-horse-power motor beat against the remorseless current, barely making headway. Then, with a piercing whine, it began to race futilely; the propeller pin had sheared.

As the boat swept downstream stern-first, Honeycutt lunged for the oars. Though he pulled frantically, he hardly slowed the boat's backward rush. He yelled to Deanne. "Put on the life jacket!"

The girl's fingers were stiff as she laced tight the boat's only other jacket. In the stern, face suddenly turned white, Roger called, "Deedee, I'm scared." He began stumbling toward her.

"No!" she screamed, terrified that he would tip them over. "Stay there, Roger! We'll be swimming at Lynch's soon!"

"No, we're going to drown!" he cried. But he sat down and, clinging to the thwart, began to sob quietly. They were in full rapids now, the water solid white and bearing them toward the falls. Smashing off a rock, then caught by a vicious rip, the stern flew straight up.

"Hang on!" Honeycutt cried out, but there was nothing to hang onto. He and Roger were thrown over Deanne's head. Then the water snatched at her. She grabbed for the overturned

表演的人曾蜷伏在鋼桶或鑲了軟墊的圓桶中滾下蹄鐵瀑布，只有四人沒死。到這兒自殺的，都能如願以償粉身碎骨而死。每月總有人在這裏墜下瀑布喪生。死者被水沖撞在下面亂岩上，再卷入漩渦激流中，殘缺不全的屍體幾乎總是在整整四天之後，在「霧中少女」號停靠的碼頭處浮出水面。

現在掌舵的是亨尼卡自己，他們的小艇從林赤車場順流下行四哩，距離瀑布不過一哩左右。小艇竄掠過緩和水流的長防波堤，亨尼卡似乎毫不在意。但黛安卻害怕起來了。這裏的河面不像他們剛才出發的地方那樣寬闊平靜。水流澎湃洶湧，沿着陡峭的地形沖下，白浪衝擊着岩石，雷鳴般的水聲越來越響。

這時山羊島上觀光嚮導正向一羣遊客說：河面上的管制閘是最後關口，過了這個關口，任何東西都不能倖免，準被狂流吞卷，墜入巨瀑深壑。一位遊客指着綠色小艇說：「可是那艘小艇呢？」嚮導連忙飛奔去打電話報警，但已來不及了。

小艇幾乎到了與山羊島平行的位置，亨尼卡才把船頭掉轉了過來。起初小艇那七匹半馬力的馬達與無情的激流搏鬥，還能勉強前移。忽然間一聲刺耳的哀鳴，小艇的馬達空轉，動力全失；螺旋槳軸針已經折斷了。

小艇尾部朝前，被激流沖往下游，亨尼卡一把抓起划槳，拚命猛划，可是緩不住小艇的疾速倒退。他向黛安急呼：「快穿上救生衣！」

黛安手指僵硬，勉強把艇上僅餘的一件救生衣綁好。船尾的羅吉，臉色突然變得慘白，狂叫：「姐姐，我怕！」一面踉踉跄跄地掙向船頭。

「別動！」黛安駭呼，生怕他把小艇弄翻。「在那兒坐好，羅吉，我們一會兒就要到林赤車場去游泳了。」

「不，我們一會兒就要淹死了！」他叫道。但他還是坐下去，抓牢了坐板，開始低聲哭泣。這時他們已經到了激流中心，滾滾白

hull, but it slid from beneath her fingers.

Honeycutt grabbed Roger's arm, fighting to hold the boy's head out of the water. But the furious currents tore them apart. The rapids wrenched Roger down, spun him around. Then all at once he was free, thrust out over the edge of the falls, dropping through space.

John Hayes saw the boat turn over. He and his wife had been walking toward Terrapin Point, the railed tip of Goat Island that looks out over the lip of the Horseshoe. "Look!" he shouted, racing for the river.

As he ran, he spied Deanne Woodward's vivid life jacket. He dashed upriver, past dozens of stunned tourists, trying to get closer to her. Above the roar of the cataract he heard her crying out for help. He leaned over the guardrail so she could see him.

"Here!" he called out. "Hey, girl! Swim over here!"

Deanne saw him, but shook her head hopelessly. She was unable to make any real progress.

"Try!" Hayes called. He ran downriver to get ahead of her, and leaned farther over the rail. "Try!"

The current was sweeping her inexorably closer to the falls' jagged rim. Hayes stretched his arm out, though the girl was still far beyond reach. Deanne was at the very edge of exhaustion. Her legs ached from being pounded against the rocks. "Help me!" she pleaded with Hayes, the thunder of death a bare 20 feet away. Quickly he climbed over the guardrail. He was only a foot above the rushing water, clinging to the rail with one hand. He cried out, "You got to try, hear? Try!"

The sharpness of his voice stirred a last, hidden resource in Deanne. Doggedly she buried her face in the water and pulled once more against its clutch. When she looked up again, Hayes was almost directly above her. Desperately she cast out as she went sweeping by—and caught his thumb. Hayes's hand closed around hers.

His foot wedged behind the rail, the weight of the girl and the awful force of the rapids tearing on his fingers, Hayes thought they would both go over. He called for help. A man broke out of the cluster of spellbound sightseers. Vaulting the rail, John A. Quattrochi, another tourist, leaned down and

浪把他們朝着瀑布推去。小艇撞上一塊岩石，跟着又被交叉水流激起的浪頭一擊，船尾朝天豎起。

「趕快抓牢！」亨尼卡大聲喊。可是已沒有東西可抓，他和羅吉被凌空拋起，從黛安頭上跌出去。水向黛安沖來，她伸手去抓傾覆的船，但卻抓不住，船身從她手中滑開了。

亨尼卡抓着羅吉的手臂，拚命把孩子的頭托出水面。可是狂流把他們沖散了。羅吉被卷向下游，一路在水裏打轉。突然他脫離了湍流。水流把他沖出了瀑布的頂端，凌空下墜。

赫斯在岸上看着小艇傾覆。當時他和太太正朝泥龜角走去，那是山羊島的頂端，圍着欄杆，可以看到俯瞰瀑布口。「你看！」他驚喊起來，向河邊奔去。

他跑的時候，看見了黛安顏色鮮明的救生衣。於是便朝上游飛奔去救她，從十幾個嚇呆了的遊客眼前掠過。在瀑布的怒吼聲中，他聽到她呼救的聲音。他把身子探到護欄外，讓她看見。

「這兒！」他大喊，「喂，姑娘！快游過來！」

黛安看到了他，但卻絕望地向他搖頭，她游不過來。

「用力！」他大聲喊，同時向下游跑，搶到她前面，上身從欄杆向外探出更遠，「來呀！」

湍流無情地把她沖向岩石狹窄的瀑布口。赫斯伸長手臂，但離那女孩還很遠。黛安已經筋疲力竭，兩條腿被岩石撞得疼痛難當。「救救我！」她向赫斯哀號求援。二十呎外，死神在怒吼雷鳴。赫斯迅速地翻至欄外，一隻手抓住欄杆，身子距離湍急的水面只有一呎，嘴裏喊道：「你一定要努力，聽到了沒有？努力！」

他有力的呼聲激發了黛安體內的最後潛能。她把頭埋到水裏，逆着水流奮力游過來，再抬起頭時，已差不多到了赫斯的正下方。在激流的猛沖下，拚命向上一抓，抓到了赫斯的拇指，赫斯立刻抓緊了她的手。

赫斯一隻腳鉤住欄杆，黛安的體重和激流的巨大沖力扯着他的

grabbed Deanne's wrist. For a long moment the three hung on, straining. Then the two men pulled the girl from the rushing water and lifted her over the guardrail.

Deanne Woodward had been just ten feet from the falls, closer than anyone had ever come before being plucked to safety. As she lay on the ground, she gasped, "My brother! My brother's still in there. Please save him!"

But Quattrochi had seen Roger go over the falls. Softly he said, "Say a prayer for your brother."

Maid of the Mist II, its decks heaving, drenched by spray and surrounded by thunder, was almost to its turning point just below Horseshoe Falls. At the wheel, Capt. Clifford Keech peered into the chaos of white water. When, at 12:52, he spotted a bobbing orange object dead ahead, he craned forward in amazement. He barked into his ship-to-shore phone: "This is Keech. There's a kid in a life jacket floating around up here and—maybe I'm crazy, but I think he's alive!"

Though Roger Woodward was indeed alive—the first human being to survive a drop over Niagara Falls without elaborate protection—his peril was not yet past. He was drifting close to the huge port of an Ontario hydro plant and might yet be dragged into the opening.

The *Maid* came about and bore down on the boy from upstream, using the full reverse power of both engines to hold a position against the driving current. From the starboard bow, Mate Murray Hartling and deckhand Jack Hopkins threw a life preserver toward the tiny figure in the water. It fell short. They hauled it in and threw again. On the third try the life preserver bobbed to within an arm's length of the thrashing boy. He crawled up onto it. A moment later, Roger Woodward lay on the deck of the *Maid*, shivering under the blankets piled on him. "Please find my sister," he said. "She and Mr. Honeycutt fell in the water, too."

An emergency launch, responding to Keech's call, searched the swirling caldron for half an hour, but found only the auxiliary gas tank, all that was ever recovered of the boat.

Meanwhile, high up on Goat Island, hundreds had seen the boy in the orange life jacket pulled aboard the *Maid of the Mist*.