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Companion Reader

COLLEGE ENGLISH

现代大学英语

● 总主编：杨立民

● 阅读 **2**

● 主 编：李又文

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侯毅凌

龚 雁

外语教学与研究出版社

FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING AND RESEARCH PRESS

现代大学英语
Contemporary College English

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编者说明

在国内英语专业的学生成长久以来一直有一门专业必修课就是泛读。这是一门相对于精读课而言的阅读课程。“泛”之对于“精”，显然前者侧重于量多、面广，求理解而非精细分析；而后者则强调量少而精，求细致透彻的研读，词、句、章节的推敲揣摩。泛读通常被认为是精读的一种补充，是在精读“美文”的基础上泛泛而读各式各样的“杂文”。其实，这种定义上的泛读在人们日常阅读习惯中所占的比例是极大的。

精读课对学好英语的重要性毋庸赘言。但是精读的量毕竟有限，从精读课本上学到的词语、句型、语法等众多的语言现象都需要在泛读中得到巩固。泛读量大、面广的特色还决定了泛读过程中能吸收大量的语言知识和文化知识，从而为听、说、写、译等各种语言技能的全面训练奠定基础。由此可见，泛读对学好英语的作用是举足轻重的。

然而，读什么，怎样读才能达到泛读的目的呢？编者认为：首先，泛读的题材、体裁要尽可能多样，文章的语言地道、漂亮，揭示的主题耐人寻味，更主要的是文章本身要能激发读者的阅读兴趣，令读者爱不释手，每每想起还会反复阅读。以上这种要求也正是我们选编本书的原则。如何读才能事半功倍涉及到培养良好的阅读习惯的问题。首先阅读需要长期坚持，需要读够一定量，经常读；其次，泛读的方法应有别于精读，阅读过程中应尽可能避免不必要的中断，不要养成一碰到生词就查字典的习惯，而应逐渐培养根据上下文猜测词义的能力，以求连贯地、快速地、大量地阅读。所以，好的阅读教材应能够在阅读材料的难点部分为读者提供帮助，排除一些最主要的理解障碍，帮助学习者养成良好的阅读习惯。

本套书共四册，是英语专业系列教材中的一个系列，与精读教材配合使用。本书为四册中的第二册，可供大学英语一、二年级和相当水平的英语自学者，作为精读课本的配套阅读教材使用。本册书在选材过程中，注意遵守了题材多样性的原则，同时还充分照顾到了文章的趣味性和可读性。本册书所选取的文章中，既不乏名家名篇，如：Earnest Hemingway 的 *A Clean, Well-lighted Place*, Roald Dahl 的 *Lamb to the Slaughter*, William S. Maugham 的 *Mr. Know-All*, Guy De Maupassant 的 *The Jewels*, Mark Twain 的 *The Income-Tax Man*, Frank O'Connor 的 *My Oedipus Complex* 等等；同时也有一些短小精悍的小品文和故事，对现代人的生活方式和价值观，以及科技进步对社会发展和人际关系的影响，进行了反思，如：*Assumed Identities*, *Attitude Is Everything*, *Technology in Reverse*, *Just So Much and No More*, 和 *Chez Moi* 等等。本册书中每篇文章都配有适当的注释，对文中的难点做出了详细的解释，并对一些微妙之处加以点睛阐释，既帮助读者加深了对文章的理解，也增加了阅读的乐趣。相信每个读者都会有所收获。

因本册书中所选文章篇幅不一，学习者可根据自己的程度决定阅读进度。学习者在阅读欣赏之余，可以对其中一些经典之作或自己喜爱的篇章仔细揣摩，学习遣词造句的方法，既有助于提高阅读能力，也有助于写作能力的提高。本册书也可以根据不同需要选做为泛读课的教材，教师可以配合阅读技巧的讲解，设计一些练习和问题，以帮助提高学生阅读理解能力。也可就篇章中学生感兴趣的话题展开课堂讨论，引导学生进行更进一步的阅读。

本册书在注释编辑中，得到了 Helen Wylie 女士的热心帮助，作者在此向她表示衷心的感谢。

我们希望通过本书为英语学习者提供一批经过认真挑选的精品读物，使学习者在轻松愉快

的阅读之中扩大阅读面，养成良好的阅读习惯，增强阅读兴趣，为不断提高英语水平，打下坚实的基础。

编写者虽然都是有相当教龄的专业英语教师，但书中难免有错，敬请赐教。

编 者

2002年5月12日

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I'll Never Understand My Wife

by Steven James

I'll never understand my wife.

The day she moved in with^① me, she started opening and closing my kitchen cabinets, gasping, "You don't have any shelf paper! We're going to have to get some shelf paper in here before I move my dishes in."

"But why?" I asked innocently.

"To keep the dishes clean," she answered matter-of-factly. I didn't understand how the dust would magically migrate off the dishes^② if they had sticky blue paper under them, but I knew when to be quiet.

Then came the day when I left the toilet seat up^③.

"We never left the toilet seat up in my family," she scolded, "It's impolite."

"It wasn't impolite in my family," I said sheepishly.

"Your family didn't have cats."^④

In addition to these lessons, I also learned how I was supposed to squeeze the toothpaste tube, which towel to use after a shower and where the spoons are supposed to go when I set the table. I had no idea I was so uneducated.

Nope, I'll never understand my wife.

She alphabetizes her spices^⑤, washes dishes before sending them through the dishwasher, and sorts laundry into different piles^⑥ before throwing it into the washing machine. Can you imagine?



① move in with: 搬进来和……一起居住

② 我不明白灰尘怎么就会魔法般地从盘子上离去。

③ 没有把抽水马桶盖放下来。

④ 这句话的意思是她家里有猫,把马桶盖放下来是为了怕猫掉进马桶。

⑤ 她把调味品按字母顺序排列好。

⑥ 把要洗的衣服分成不同的几堆。

① Sherlock Holmes: 福尔摩斯(名侦探)

② 到处背着一个小型货车一般大小的尿布包。

③ 意思是她讲话简洁干脆。

④ playpen: *n.* (供婴儿在内玩耍的)游戏围栏

⑤ oddity: *n.* 古怪的人。

⑥ snicker at: 对……窃笑

⑦ bumper sticker: 粘贴在汽车保险杠上的小标语

⑧ warranty registration card: 产品质量保证书的登记卡

⑨ check: *v.* 在……旁边打勾

She wears pajamas to bed. I didn't think anyone in North America still wore pajamas to bed. She has a coat that makes her look like Sherlock Holmes^①. "I could get you a new coat," I offered.

"No. This one was my grandmother's," she said, decisively ending the conversation.

Then, after we had kids, she acted even stranger. Wearing those pajamas all day long, eating breakfast at 1:00 P.M., carrying around a diaper bag the size of a minivan^②, talking in one-syllable paragraphs^③.

She carried our baby everywhere—on her back, on her front, in her arms, over her shoulder^④. She never set her down, even when other young mothers shook their heads as they set down the car seat with their baby in it, or peered down into their playpens^④. What an oddity^⑤ she was, clutching that child.

My wife also chose to nurse her even when her friends told her not to bother. She picked up the baby whenever she cried, even though people told her it was healthy to let her wail.

"It's good for her lungs to cry," they would say.

"It's better for her heart to smile," she'd answer.

One day a friend of mine snickered at^⑥ the bumper sticker^⑦ my wife had put on the back of our car: "Being a Stay-at-Home Mom Is a Work of Heart."

"My wife must have put that on there," I said.

"My wife works," he boasted.

"So does mine," I said, smiling.

Once, I was filling out one of those warranty registration cards^⑧ and I check^⑨ "homemaker" for my wife's occupation. Big mistake. She glanced over it and quickly corrected me. "I am not a homemaker. I am not a housewife. I am a mother."

"But there's no category for that," I stammered.

"Add one," she said.

I did.

And then one day, a few years later, she lay in bed smiling when I got up to go to work.

"What's wrong?" I asked.

"Nothing. Everything is wonderful. I didn't have to get up at all last night to calm the kids. And they didn't crawl in bed with us."

“Oh,” I said, still not understanding.

“It was the first time I’ve slept through the night in four years.” It was? Four years? That’s a long time. I hadn’t even noticed. Why hadn’t she ever complained? I would have.

One day, in one thoughtless moment, I said something that sent her fleeing to the bedroom in tears. I went in to apologize. She knew I meant it because by then I was crying, too.

“I forgive you,” she said. And you know what? She did. She never brought it up again. Not even when she got angry and could have hauled out the heavy artillery.^① She forgave, and she forgot.^②

Nope, I’ll never understand my wife. And you know what? Our daughter is acting more and more like her mother every day.

If she turns out to be anything like her mom, someday there’s going to be one more lucky guy in this world, thankful for the shelf paper in his cupboard.

① 字面意思是拖出重炮。这里是夸张和比喻的说法，意思是她可以翻旧账大闹一气，但却没有这样做。

② forgive and forget 是一个惯用词组，意思是不念旧恶，不记仇。这里拆开用，起到了强调的效果。

A New Millennium

by J. M. DeGross

① 81号州际高速公路

② Black Angus = Aberdeen Angus: 阿伯丁安格斯牛(苏格兰产黑色无角肉用牛); heifer: n. 小母牛

③ 它们是“圣经地带”常见的东西,我是说那些十字架。“圣经地带”指美国南部及中西部历史上基督教势力最强的地方。

④ wobbly: a. 不稳定的

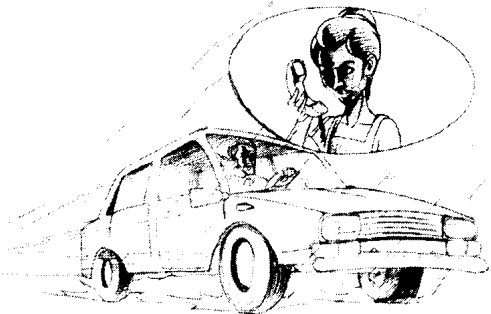
⑤ get it: 明白了。

⑥ on and off: 断断续续地

⑦ get it out: 消除紧张情绪

⑧ German Shepherd: 德国牧羊犬

⑨ 把放花炮的发射器装好。



I'm driving south on Interstate 81^①, returning home from a business trip. It's January. The rain is pouring down. I'm in northern Virginia and

I'm worried about freezing conditions. I see a small herd of Black Angus heifers^② walking along barbed wire, up a hill that has those three crosses on the top. They're a Bible belt thing—the crosses that is^③. And I'm thinking maybe Black Angus live an odd life, maybe they don't. Just then my cell phone rings.

It's my wife, but at first I can't understand her. Her voice is all wobbly^④ and the rain is noisy. Then I get it^⑤. She's crying—the words trying to get out between tears. My wife almost never cries. I remember one other time, when her aunt decided to tell her she wasn't her daddy's daughter. She cried on and off^⑥ for a couple of months back then.

Right away I think something has happened to her, or maybe one of the kids. "Honey, what's the matter?" I say.

"Wolf just killed the cat." She's barely able to get it out^⑦.

Wolf is our dog—a German Shepherd^⑧. He's usually sweet, but he's never liked the cat—the cat that showed up a couple of days before the new millennium. I was setting up for the fireworks display—putting the launchers in place for the airbursts I'd fire off^⑨ in celebration at midnight, when this little cat appeared. She purred and meowed and rubbed up against my arms, but she was a

mess—hair all tangled and matted^①, and she smelled awful.

Now I have to tell you, we live on a mountain in the middle of nowhere—no neighbors for miles. My wife saw the cat standing by me and she smiled. “I know that cat,” she said, “I’ve seen her in the woods. I’ll bet it was two or three months ago,” and she sounded proud.

“She looks hungry,” I said, and I don’t know why we both thought it was a she. We didn’t think she had claws, either, but she did. She just never showed them. And of course the dogs were barking at her—mostly, Wolf, who’s four and frisky^②. Blue, our other dog is a working Black Lab^③. He’s old and he’s seen a lot of dying. You could tell he only barked at the cat because when Wolf got started, he thought he was supposed to.

You should have seen that cat, no bigger than a half-year old kitten, stand up to^④ those dogs. They were twenty times her size. She’d growl and hiss—I mean really growl, like a predator—a bobcat^⑤. She never backed off. She’d bat Wolf so fast and so hard on the nose that you could hear the contact-thump, and he’d back off and just look at her with his head cocked^⑥ to one side in confusion or something. I only saw her run from him once, and that was so she could get under a chair and then stand her ground. So, I never worried about him getting her. She was too fast and too tough, and she wanted to be with us. That’s what I thought. And I guess I thought Wolf wouldn’t kill another creature. I don’t know why.

We called her K. B. Millennium—Millie for short and the K. B. stood for “kick butt”^⑦. We came up with some other names, too. My wife suggested “Freedom”, “like in the song,” she said (she even sang the line: “Freedom’s just another word for nothing left to lose.”). And our five-year-old granddaughter wanted to call her Tabby, but we settled on Millie.^⑧

Millie had it rough^⑨, surviving in those woods with bears and coyotes^⑩. It was cold and I knew she wanted in the house because she’d try to follow me in, but we didn’t need a house cat. So we agreed, if she wanted to, she could hang around outside. We fed her plenty and we gave her an old insulated cooler for shelter^⑪. She seemed content.

Then at the millennium party somebody was a mean drunk^⑫—tossed the little thing off the deck^⑬ during the fireworks display.

① 身上的毛乱糟糟地缠结在一起。

② (冲着猫叫的)主要是 Wolf, 它 4 岁,好动爱闹。

③ Lab= Labrador; 拉布拉多猎狗

④ stand up to: 勇敢地对抗。

⑤ predator: n. 食肉动物; bobcat: n. 美洲野猫, 山猫之类

⑥ cocked: a. 竖起的

⑦ 简称就叫 Millie, K. B. 表示 “kick butt”(〈俚〉享受快活时光)。

⑧ 最后决定叫她 Millie。

⑨ Millie 受过不少罪。

⑩ coyote: n. 一种产于北美大草原的小狼; 山狗

⑪ 给她一个旧隔热柜栖身。

⑫ a mean drunk: 一个可恶的醉鬼

⑬ 把可怜的小东西(猫)扔下了露台。

- ① the First: 指新千年的第一天。
- ② piss blood: 尿血
- ③ verify: v. 查证
- ④ pelt: v. (雨)急落
- ⑤ have a time: 不方便,不自在
- ⑥ 我想那狗犯了糊涂。
- ⑦ 电话里有许多静电声,随后通话就断了。
- ⑧ blue: a. 忧郁的
- ⑨ delivery room: 产房
- ⑩ 他是好意。
- ⑪ 静止不动了。

It's forty feet down from the deck to the first treetops on the mountain. I didn't see it happen—didn't know about it till the next morning because I was too busy with the fireworks. One of our other guests said Millie hissed and cried out in the air and then they heard breaking branches and more cat-sounds as she crashed somewhere down in the dark—yes, just a mean drunk. I might have stopped it if I had known.

She wasn't around on the First^①, so we thought she had died from the fall. I left on the business trip feeling badly. But she showed up again a day or so later. My wife called to tell me (long distance service is free on the cell phone). That's when my wife noticed Millie was pissing blood^②, so she took her to the vet who verified^③ that Millie was a she, had claws, and serious internal injuries.

Now the rain is really pelting^④ the car, and my wife is saying that Wolf got her. "Millie didn't even try to run," she says. "It was awful. He grabbed her and shook her—I yelled to make him let go. Then I wrapped her in a towel and held her." My wife is really sobbing now. "She was lying on my lap with her little paws crossed and she was shaking and blood was coming out of her mouth and she just gasped and died." My wife gets it all out in one breath.

"I'm so sorry, Darling," I say. And I wish I could say something more meaningful, but with the rain and all, I'm having a time^⑤. "I guess the dog didn't know any better,^⑥" I say. Then there's a lot of static and we lose our connection.^⑦

Now I'm terribly sad, too, thinking about that little cat—such a hard life—and I can't see with all the rain. But it gets worse because this idea hits me out of nowhere—she only had a borrowed life. Borrowed things have to be returned, I'm thinking. And I don't know why, but something borrowed and something blue^⑧ runs through my head. Maybe that's all she had—nothing old or new. Then a memory of our little daughter who died ten or fifteen minutes after she was born oozes out. She didn't come with all her parts and when the doctor saw what she looked like, he tossed her onto the stainless steel sink in the delivery room^⑨. I suppose he meant well^⑩, but I remember her gasps and her trembling—then she was still^⑪ (and I remember how normal her tiny hands

looked). My wife didn't see—she was doped up^①. But I did. And then there was my sister who died from hate and alcohol—no old and no new in her life, only defeat—maybe like Black Angus. These thoughts are flying by in forms resembling shadows at warp^② speed.

The phone rings again. "I don't know what happened," I say.

My wife apologizes for the tears.

"No, it's okay, it's very sad," I say, "It's like Millie had a borrowed life." And I hear the tears get started on the other end, again. I have to pull off the road for a few minutes. I can't believe we're so sad over a stray cat^③.

It stops raining and I can just make out^④ the sun because it's going down behind the mountains. And then I'm thinking, maybe Millie let Wolf get her—wanted him to, like the hate and alcohol got to my sister. The line is quiet. "Honey, are you there?" I say.

"I'm still here," she says.

I start to drive. Before I know it, I'm doing eighty^⑤ and we're both crying. What's left of the sun creates odd long shadows and the static starts again.

"I wish I could have been there for you," I say. I'm shouting into the phone.

"I know," she says.

The phone goes dead again and I have this really bad feeling because it's getting dark fast, and colder, too. Then I see a herd of dairy cattle—black and white ones. They're all huddled together in a barnyard. I figure they're waiting to be let into the barn—to be milked and fed and for some reason this makes me feel better. After a while I slow down, and I start watching road signs, looking for a place to eat and rest. And I'm hoping they'll have a payphone so I can call my wife back. I'm thinking, maybe we'll do better with a payphone, maybe not.

① 被全身麻醉了。

② warp: *n.* (科幻小说中的) 翘曲飞行

③ stray cat: 走失的猫

④ make out: 辨认出

⑤ 把车开到 80 迈 (即时速 80 英里, 美国的州际高速公路限速一般为 75 迈)。

Assumed Identities^①

by Timothy David

① 虚拟身份。

② 为了一个笨头笨脑的啦啦队队长而甩了我。dump: *v.* 〈非正式〉抛弃; airheaded: *a.* 俚愚蠢的; 另: 在美国, 中学和大学的啦啦队长一般都是女孩子。

③ senior year: 这里指高中的最后一年。

④ 他没胆量告诉我。have the guts: 〈俚〉有胆量。

⑤ 他的那些一块儿赛车的朋友。

⑥ relate: *v.* 讲, 告诉

⑦ to say the least: [插入语] 至少可以这样说。

⑧ reek of: 发出……的臭味

⑨ algae: *n.* 藻类, 海藻

⑩ stampede: *v.* 飞跑, 十分冲动地跑

⑪ no way: 不, 决不

⑫ swivel chair: 转椅

I came home from school yesterday afternoon feeling sad and sorry for myself. My boyfriend of nearly two years had dumped me for an airheaded cheerleader^②. That wasn't supposed to happen. Our senior year^③ is supposed to be special. Actually, he didn't have the guts^④. Three of his jockey friends^⑤ were more than happy to relate^⑥ the news to me. I hate all of them.

My heart was broken to say the least^⑦. There was nothing I hated more than being lonely. I walked home slowly from school on an old dirt road that paralleled a shallow canal. It reeked of^⑧ dying fish and dried up algae^⑨. The sun had been unrelenting for weeks. I stopped in front of the doorstep of my family's house, wiping my feet carefully on the welcome mat and brushing the dust off my clothes.

"Why are you home from school so late young lady?" came the first thing out of my father's mouth when I opened the door. It wasn't a question. It was more like an accusation.

I walked by him without saying a word. I wasn't ready to deal with this.

"Don't you walk away from me! You are nothing but trouble, you know that? Go to your room right now."

I gave him a "wish you were dead" look and stampeded^⑩ straight to my room. Good, that's where I wanted to be anyway. My father had been so mean and discriminating for many months now. I really couldn't stand the sight of him anymore. I hated him at that moment too. I hated all men.

My bedroom door slammed shut and was locked right away. No way^⑪ I was letting anyone in. I turned my computer on and took off my shoes as it connected to the internet. I needed to talk to someone, anyone who would listen.

Making myself comfortable in a small swivel chair^⑫, I searched for a chat room for people locally. I found one easily and

clicked on the romance section. I needed to feel loved at that moment, even if it was all phony^①. When asked to enter a log-on name^② I typed in Lonely Heart, for that's what I was. There's no way I would ever give out^③ my real name on the internet. Too many crazy people out there.

"Hello Lonely, what brings you here this afternoon?" came a message on my screen.

I looked closer for the name of this guy. Loneliness.

"Well I see we have something in common. I just came to find someone to talk to," I typed back in my slow hunt-and-peck method^④.

"Same here," came his quick reply.

"What do you want to talk about?"

Then on the spur of the moment^⑤ I just told him everything bad about my day and my life. The words came out freely and I really didn't expect him to understand my feelings. Men never understand.

"Just a minute," he answered. "I need to do something really quick but I'll be right back." He wasn't coming back. I didn't blame him. Should have known better than to think a man would listen to me.^⑥

There was a pounding on my bedroom door at that moment. I jumped up in my chair half-startled. "Tatiana?" came my father's all too well known accusing voice. "There's leftovers in the refrigerator for supper when you get hungry. I'll be in my study room if you need me." And then he was gone. Good riddance.^⑦

"I know how you feel," magically appeared on my screen a few seconds later. I couldn't believe it. He really did come back. "I feel much the same way as you do. My family hates me. I have no friends. They will never understand how much I really love them," he typed quickly.



① phony: a. 不真实的

② 在键盘上输入(进聊天室的)网上用名。

③ give out: 公开

④ hunt-and-peck: (美口)看着键盘打字

⑤ on the spur of the moment: 一时冲动

⑥ (我)早就应该明白不要指望一个男人来听我说这些。know better than: 很明白(而不至于……), 不应该蠢到……(这句中用了虚拟语气)

⑦ 谢天谢地! 正好是个摆脱!(这里表现了女主人公讨厌其父亲的情绪)

“Why don't you just tell them?” I asked.

“I can't.”

I decided not to push him any further about it. We made small talk about our feelings and what we wanted from life. This man did understand me. This conversation was a blessing to me.

“Lonely, I'm dying.”

I didn't quite understand. “What do you mean?” I asked eagerly.

“What I said. I'm dying and I'm scared.” There were no words exchanged for a minute or two. I knew what he was saying. I just didn't want to believe it.

“How so?” I responded after an eternity.

“I went to doctor a few months ago. I have cancer. He said I might live for thirty days or thirty years. There's just no way to tell.”

My heart suddenly dropped. Somehow I felt a special bond with this man. He was like an old friend. He couldn't be dying. It just wasn't fair.

“I don't know what to say,” I answered back honestly.

“Don't say anything. I haven't told anyone yet. I am so scared and worried of what will become of my family. I love them so much.” Another silence. “And they don't even know it.”

There was an intolerable silence now. I glanced quickly at my watch. Somehow time had slipped by for morning had already arrived. Suddenly I knew what I needed to do. I needed to meet this man in person to let him know that someone does care. His family was selfish to leave him feeling such despair.

“Loneliness?” I typed.

“Yes?”

“I have enjoyed this so much but I have to leave soon. I feel silly for asking this. Is there any way we can meet in person later today or this week?”

There was no hesitation this time. “I would like that very much. You do live in Sanderson right? Maybe we can meet at the coffee shop downtown?” he asked.

“Sure. Four o'clock this afternoon if you can make it.” I looked at my watch again. Nearly eight in the morning.

“Okay, it's a date then,” came the seemingly cheerful reply.