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铁路边的孩子们

THE RAILWAY
CHILDREN

【英】伊迪丝·内斯比特◎著
黄旭 陶国霞◎译



《哈里·波特》作者 J.K. 罗琳
最喜爱的英美经典文学名著

中国书籍出版社



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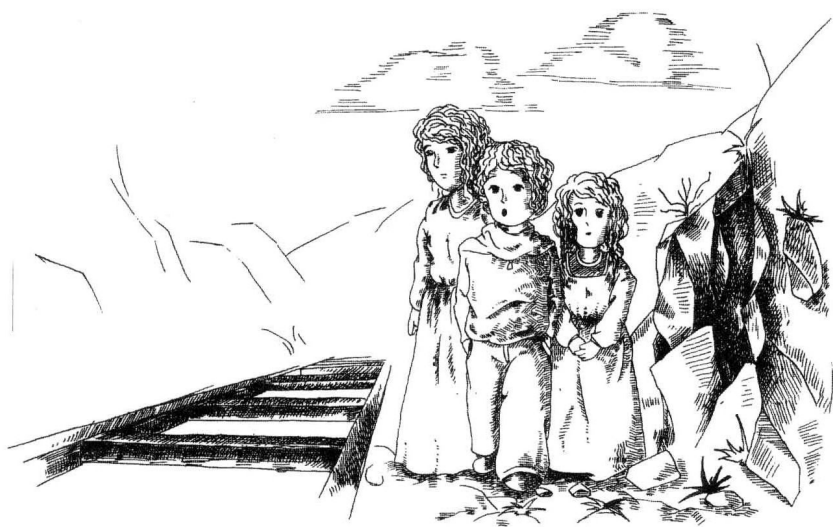
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Chapter 1 The beginning of things

They were not railway children to begin with. I don't suppose they had ever thought about railways except as a means of getting to Maskelyne and Cook's, the Pantomime, Zoological Gardens, and Madame Tussaud's. They were just ordinary suburban children, and they lived with their Father and Mother in an **ordinary** red-brick-fronted villa, with coloured glass in the front door, a **tiled** passage that was called a hall, a bath-room with hot and cold water, electric bells, French windows, and a good deal of white paint, and 'every modern **convenience**', as the **house-agents** say.

There were three of them. Roberta was the eldest. Of course, Mothers never have favourites, but if their Mother had had a favourite, it might have been Roberta. Next came Peter, who wished to be an Engineer when he grew up; and the youngest was Phyllis, who meant extremely well.

Mother did not spend all her time in paying dull calls to dull ladies, and sitting dully at home waiting for dull ladies to pay calls to her. She was almost always there, ready to play with the children, and read to them, and help them to do their home-lessons. Besides this she used to write stories for them while they were at school, and read them aloud after tea, and she always made up funny pieces of **poetry** for their birthdays and for other great **occasions**, such

第一章 故事的开端

一开始的时候，这些孩子和铁路并没有多少关系。除了知道铁路能把他们带到马斯基林天文台、库克哑剧院、童话剧场、动物园、杜莎夫人蜡像馆这些好地方外，我觉得，孩子们压根儿就没多想过。他们只是几个普普通通的孩子，和爸爸妈妈一起住在市郊。他们的家是那种随处可见的红砖墙城郊小屋，前门装有彩色的玻璃，屋里铺着瓷砖的过道就叫做门厅，浴室里有冷水也有热水，小屋还配有电铃和落地窗，屋里大部分墙壁都漆成了白色。拿房产经纪人的话来说，这间房子是“现代设备一应俱全”。

家里一共三个孩子。罗伯塔是老大。自然，当妈妈的绝不会在自己的孩子中有所偏心。不过如果说他们的妈妈对谁偏爱一些，那兴许就属罗伯塔了。彼得排行老二，他梦想着长大后能当个工程师。菲丽丝最小，可她的心地却是出奇得好。

孩子们的妈妈不会无所事事地整天去找那些无聊的太太们串门，也不会在家里无所事事地坐等那些无聊的太太们来串门。她终日留守家中，喜欢陪孩子们嬉闹，给他们读书，辅导孩子们做功课。当孩子们上学去的时候，她还常常给他们写故事。等孩子们回到家，喝完下午茶后，她再把自己的作品大声地读给他们听。每逢

ordinary *adj.* 寻常的,普通的,平凡的 tiled *adj.* 铺有瓷砖或瓦片的
convenience *n.* 方便;设施 house-agent *n.* 房屋经纪人 poetry *n.* 诗歌
occasion *n.* 时候,场合



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as the **christening** of the new kittens, or the refurnishing of the doll's house, or the time when they were getting over the **mumps**.

These three lucky children always had everything they needed: pretty clothes, good fires, a lovely **nursery** with heaps of toys, and a Mother Goose wall-paper. They had a kind and merry nursemaid, and a dog who was called James, and who was their very own. They also had a Father who was just perfect—never **cross**, never unjust, and always ready for a game—at least, if at any time he was not ready, he always had an excellent reason for it, and explained the reason to the children so interestingly and funnily that they felt sure he couldn't help himself.

You will think that they ought to have been very happy. And so they were, but they did not know how happy till the pretty life in the Red Villa was over and done with, and they had to live a very different life indeed.

The **dreadful** change came quite suddenly.

Peter had a birthday—his tenth. Among his other presents was a model engine more perfect than you could ever have dreamed of. The other presents were full of charm, but the Engine was fuller of charm than any of the others were.

Its charm lasted in its full perfection for exactly three days. Then, owing either to Peter's inexperience or Phyllis's good intentions, which had been rather pressing, or to some other cause, the Engine suddenly went off with a **bang**. James was so frightened that he went out and did not come back all day. All the Noah's Ark people who were in the tender were broken to bits, but



孩子们过生日或是其他一些重要的日子，比方说给刚出生的小动物取名啦，给这个小家重新装修啦，或者孩子们腮腺炎痊愈啦，妈妈还经常写一些有趣的小诗助兴。

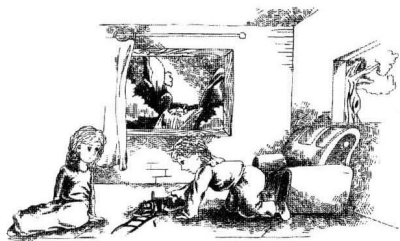
这三个幸运儿拥有他们需要的一切：漂亮的衣服，考究的暖炉，玩具堆成山的儿童房，印有鹅妈妈的墙纸。他们有一位和蔼又开朗的保姆，有一条名叫詹姆斯的狗，那可是他们独有的宝贝。他们还有一个称得上完美无缺的爸爸，他从来不发火，为人公道，而且愿意陪孩子们玩游戏，如果他实在顾不上，起码他会想出一个绝妙的理由，然后绘声绘色地把这个理由解释给孩子们听，这样的话孩子们就会深信他们的爸爸是身不由己。

你一定会觉得生在这样一个家庭里的孩子应该非常的幸福。一点没错，他们很幸福。但是他们并没有意识到自己有多么幸福，直到有一天他们在“红屋子”的绚丽生活戛然而止，无奈地开始另一种迥然不同的生活。

可怕的变化猛然而至。

彼得刚过完一个生日——他的十岁生日。在彼得的生日礼物中有一个玩具火车头，完美程度远远超过你的想像。其他生日礼物也都非常可爱，但是相比之下这个火车头却是最最可爱的。

但是这个可爱的火车头只保持了三天的完好。不知是彼得缺乏经验，还是由于菲丽丝的好意太过急切，或者其他的原因，模型火车头突然砰的一声爆炸了。



christening *n.* 洗礼;命名 mumps *n.* 腮腺炎 nursery *n.* 婴儿房,儿童房
cross *adj.* 动怒的 dreadful *adj.* 使人震惊的,可怕的 bang *n.* 重击,突然巨响



The Railway Children

nothing else was hurt except the poor little engine and the feelings of Peter. The others said he cried over it—but of course boys of ten do not cry, however terrible the **tragedies** may be which **darken** their lot. He said that his eyes were red because he had a cold. This turned out to be true, though Peter did not know it was when he said it, the next day he had to go to bed and stay there. Mother began to be afraid that he might be sickening for measles, when suddenly he sat up in bed and said:

“I hate gruel—I hate barley water—I hate bread and milk. I want to get up and have something real to eat.”

“What would you like?” Mother asked.

“A **pigeon-pie**,” said Peter, eagerly, “a large pigeon-pie. A very large one.”

So Mother asked the Cook to make a large pigeon-pie. The pie was made. And when the pie was made, it was cooked. And when it was cooked, Peter ate some of it. After that his cold was better. Mother made a piece of poetry to amuse him while the pie was being made. It began by saying what an **unfortunate** but worthy boy Peter was, then it went on:

He had an engine that he loved

With all his heart and soul,

And if he had a wish on earth

It was to keep it whole.

One day—my friends, prepare your minds;



詹姆斯吓得逃出家去，一整天都没敢回来。“诺亚方舟”里所有的玩具小人都碎成了片，不过其他都没有坏，除了那个可怜的火车头还有彼得的心。其他孩子说，彼得为这件事哭了——可是，十岁的孩子是不会哭的，不管遇到了什么灾什么难。彼得说他是感冒才红了眼睛。他说这句话的时候可没想到他真的会感冒。第二天，他只好呆在床上休息。妈妈开始担心彼得染上了麻疹，正在这个时候，彼得突然在床上坐起来说：

“我讨厌喝粥……我讨厌大麦汤……我讨厌面包和牛奶。我要起床好好地吃些东西。”

“你想吃些什么呢？”妈妈问他。

“鸽肉馅饼，”彼得急切地说，“一个鸽肉大馅饼。一个非常大的鸽肉馅饼。”

于是，妈妈请厨师去做了一个鸽肉大馅饼。馅饼做好了，烤熟了。可是等馅饼烤好了，彼得却吃的很少，只吃了一点点。一吃过鸽肉馅饼，彼得的感冒可就好多了。鸽肉馅饼还在做的时候，妈妈作了一首诗逗他开心。这首诗的开头说彼得是一个倒霉透顶的好孩子，接下来是这样写的：

他有一辆火车头，
爱不释手，
要说他有什么愿望，
那就是让火车头永远完好无恙。

一天，我的朋友们，你们可听好，

tragedy *n.* 悲剧 darken *v.* (使)变黑；(使)阴郁
pigeon-pie *n.* 鸽肉馅饼 unfortunate *adj.* 不幸的



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I'm coming to the worst—
Quite suddenly a **screw** went mad,
And then the boiler burst!

With gloomy face he picked it up
And took it to his Mother,
Though even he could not suppose
That she could make another;

For those who **perished** on the line
He did not seem to care,
His engine being more to him
Than all the people there.

And now you see the reason why
Our Peter has been ill:
He soothes his soul with pigeon-pie
His gnawing grief to kill.

He **wraps** himself in blankets warm
And sleeps in bed till late,
Determined thus to overcome
His miserable fate.



最不幸的事情要来了。
突然，一颗螺丝发了疯，
接着，锅炉就炸开了。

他哭丧着脸捡起来，
拿着去给妈妈看，
虽然他也不指望，
妈妈能另外做一辆。

火车上死去的人，
他可一点不放心上，
比起上面坐着的所有的人，
他的火车头可是更加重要啊！

现在你该知道
我家彼得生病的原因了吧！
他痛不欲生啊！
可是一块鸽肉馅饼就让他心情舒畅啊。

他用毯子把自己裹得暖暖的，
睡在床上很晚才起来，
下决心用这样的方法
来战胜命运的凄惨。



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And if his eyes are rather red,
His cold must just excuse it:
Offer him pie; you may be sure
He never will refuse it.

Father had been away in the country for three or four days. All Peter's hopes for the curing of his afflicted Engine were now fixed on his Father, for Father was most wonderfully clever with his fingers. He could mend all sorts of things. He had often acted as veterinary **surgeon** to the wooden rocking-horse; once he had saved its life when all human aid was despaired of, and the poor creature was given up for lost, and even the carpenter said he didn't see his way to do anything. And it was Father who mended the doll's cradle when no one else could; and with a little glue and some bits of wood and a pen-knife made all the Noah's Ark beasts as strong on their pins as ever they were, if not stronger.

Peter, with heroic **unselfishness**, did not say anything about his Engine till after Father had had his dinner and his after-dinner **cigar**. The unselfishness was Mother's idea—but it was Peter who carried it out. And needed a good deal of patience, too.

At last Mother said to Father, "Now, dear, if you're quite rested, and quite comfy, we want to tell you about the great railway accident, and ask your advice."

"All right," said Father, "fire away! "

So then Peter told the sad tale, and fetched what was left of the Engine.

"Hum," said Father, when he had looked the Engine over very carefully.

The children held their breaths.

"Is there no hope?" said Peter, in a low, unsteady voice.



要是他的眼睛还很红，
感冒一定就是理由，
给他吃馅饼，我敢担保，
他一定不会说不要。

孩子们的爸爸离开家已经三四天了。彼得把修复火车头的希望都寄托在了爸爸身上，因为爸爸的手指巧着呢。他能够修理各种各样的东西。他常常可以像手术医生一样修理摇摆木马；曾经有一次，当所有的办法都不起作用，人们以为这个可怜的木马再也没希望了，甚至连木匠都认为没法子的时候，彼得的爸爸却把木马给修好了。也是爸爸修好了玩偶的摇篮，其他人可不行，用那么一点点胶水，一些木头，再加一把削笔刀，爸爸就能使“诺亚方舟”上所有的动物恢复原样，牢牢地待在它们的插座上——即使不比以前更牢固。

当爸爸还在用餐以及享用他的餐后雪茄的时候，彼得表现得很无私，绝口不提任何有关火车头的事。说要无私的人是妈妈，但履行这句话的人是彼得。要知道，那也是需要好多耐心的。

终于，妈妈对爸爸说，“嗯，亲爱的，如果你休息够了，而且很舒服，我们想告诉你一起严重的铁路事故，想听听你的意见。”

“好的，”爸爸说，“尽管说来给我听！”

于是彼得述说了那个令人难过的事故，拿出了那个玩具火车头剩下的部件。

“嗯。”爸爸仔细地查看这火车头之后，他说。

孩子们屏住了呼吸。

“没有办法修好了吗？”彼得低低地、不安地问道。



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“Hope? Rather! Tons of it,” said Father, cheerfully; “but it’ll want something besides hope—a bit of brazing say, or some solder, and a new valve. I think we’d better keep it for a rainy day. In other words, I’ll give up Saturday afternoon to it, and you shall all help me.”

“Can girls help to mend engines?” Peter asked doubtfully.

“Of course they can. Girls are just as clever as boys, and don’t you forget it! How would you like to be an engine-driver, Phil?”

“My face would be always dirty, wouldn’t it?” said Phyllis, in unenthusiastic tones, “and I expect I should break something.”

“I should just love it,” said Roberta—“do you think I could when I’m grown up, Daddy? Or even a stoker?”

“You mean a fireman,” said Daddy, pulling and twisting at the engine. “Well, if you still wish it, when you’re grown up, we’ll see about making you a fire-woman. I remember when I was a boy—”

Just then there was a knock at the front door.

“Who on earth! ” said Father. “An Englishman’s house is his **castle**, of course, but I do wish they built semi-detached villas with moats and **drawbridges**.”

Ruth—she was the parlour-maid and had red hair—came in and said that two gentlemen wanted to see the master.

“I’ve shown them into the Library, Sir,” said she.

“I expect it’s the subscription to the Vicar’s testimonial,” said Mother, “or else it’s the choir holiday fund. Get rid of them quickly, dear. It does break up an evening so, and it’s nearly the children’s bedtime.”