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The Brontë Story

Tim Vicary



勃朗特一家的故事



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简 介

天资到底是什么？它从哪儿来？通常人们认为天资是上帝赋予的，只给那些幸运的人。事实上，我们并不清楚究竟那些人是否算得上幸运。天资似乎并不能使人们幸福，相反会使他们远离人群，因为天资是一种不能共享的东西。

然而勃朗特一家的情形表明，天资被赋予了一个家庭。因为天资，这个家庭的成员远离尘世；离开了家他们就得不到快乐。而在家中，作为一个家庭，他们的天资却得以成长。是谁教会他们写作的？是他们自己！而且几乎没有人比他们写得更出色。

这本书不是他们写的，而是关于他们的故事。这是他们的父亲未曾写却应该写下的：一个关于他们家庭的故事，虽然他只拥有了那么短时间的家庭。

这本书的作者蒂姆·维克瑞从事英语教学工作多年，现在在约克郡生活和工作。

1

Haworth

There was a cold wind this afternoon, but the sun shone for an hour or two. I walked out on the moors behind the house. The sheep were hiding from the wind under the stone walls, and there were grey clouds over the hills to the west. It is only November, but I could smell snow in the air.

It will be a cold winter, this year of 1855.

My name is Patrick Brontë, and I am seventy-eight years old. I am the rector of the village of Haworth. Haworth is a village of small, grey stone houses on the side of a hill in the north of England, and I live in a house at the top of the hill, next to the church and the graveyard.

I walked through the graveyard to the church this afternoon. All my family except Anne are buried there. The wind had blown some dead leaves through the door into the church, and I watched them dancing in the sunlight near the grave. Soon I shall be in that grave with my wife and children, under the cold grey stone and dancing leaves.

It is dark outside now, and it is very quiet in this house. Charlotte's husband, Mr Nicholls, is reading in his room, and our servant is cooking in the kitchen. Only the three of us live here now. It is very quiet. I can hear the sounds of the wood burning in the fire, and the big clock on the stairs.

There is another sound too — the sound of the wind



1 霍沃斯

尽管今天下午刮起一阵寒风,太阳还是出来了一两个小时。我漫步在屋后的荒野上,羊群躲在石墙下避风,乌云笼罩着山顶,向西而去。刚刚才11月份,空气中就已经可以嗅到雪的气息了。

今年——1855年的冬天将会很冷。

我叫帕特里克·勃朗特,已经78岁了。我在霍沃斯做乡村牧师。霍沃斯是英格兰北部一座小山边的一个村子,那儿有一些灰色石头砌成的小房子。我住在山顶的一栋房子里,隔壁是教堂和墓地。

今天下午,我步行穿过墓地去教堂。除了安妮,我的一家都葬在这里。冷风卷起了一些枯叶,把它们从教堂的大门吹了进来,我注视着它们在墓地旁的阳光中上下飞舞。要不了多久我也会躺在这个墓地中,在这冰冷的灰色石头和纷飞的落叶下,同我的妻子和孩子们长眠在一起。

这时外面黑了下來,整幢房子非常安静。夏洛蒂的丈夫尼科尔斯先生,正在自己的房间里看书,我们的用人正在厨房做饭。这儿只有我们三个人,真是太安静了!我能听见木柴在炉火中燃烧的声音和楼梯上大钟的嘀哒声。

还有另一种声音——那就是屋外风的吼叫。风有着各种各样的声音,它总是整宿

moor n. open, uncultivated land. 荒野。rector n. priest. 牧师。

outside. The wind has many voices. It sings and laughs and shouts to itself all night long. Last night it cried like a little child, and I got out of bed and went to the window to listen.

There was no child, of course. Only the wind and the grave-stones, cold in the pale moonlight. But I decided then that I would write the story of my children, today, before it is too late. Charlotte's friend, Mrs Gaskell, is writing a book about her, and perhaps she will want to read my story.

It is a fine story. It began in April 1820, when we came to Haworth for the first time . . .

There was a strong wind blowing that day too, out of a dark, cloudy sky. We could see snow on the moors. The road to Haworth goes up a hill, and there was ice on the stones of the road. Maria, my wife, was afraid to ride up the hill in the carts.

'We'll walk, children,' she said. 'If one of those horses falls down, there'll be a terrible accident. Come on, let's go and see our new house.'

She was a small woman, my wife, and not very strong. But she carried the baby, Anne, up the hill in her arms. I carried Emily — she was one and a half years old then. The others walked. My two-year-old son, Patrick Branwell, walked with me, and Charlotte, who was nearly four, walked with her mother. The two oldest children — Elizabeth and Maria — ran on in front. They were very excited, and laughed and talked all the way.

整宿地笑呀，哭呀，喊呀。而昨夜它呜咽得像个孩子。我下了床，走近窗边侧耳细听。

当然不会有孩子，只有风和苍白月光下冰冷的墓碑。然而我还是决定就在今天，趁还没有太晚，写写我的孩子们的故事。夏洛蒂的朋友盖斯凯尔夫人正在写一部关于夏洛蒂的书，也许她会愿意读读我的故事。

这是一个很好的故事，它始于1820年4月，我们第一次来到霍沃斯的时候……

那天，昏暗多云的天空一整天都刮着强劲的风。我们可以看到旷野上覆盖的雪。去霍沃斯的路沿着山坡向上而去，一路上的石头都结了冰。玛丽亚，我的妻子怕坐马车上山。

“我们走上去吧，孩子们，”她说。“要是那些马有一匹滚下去，都会是一场可怕的灾难。走吧，让我们走着去看我们的新房子。”

我的妻子个子不高，身体也不好，可她还是抱着小女儿安妮往山上爬。我抱着一岁半的爱米丽，其他人都步行。两岁的儿子帕特里克·布兰韦尔和我走在一起；快四岁的夏洛蒂跟着妈妈；两个最大的孩子，伊丽莎白和小玛丽亚跑在前面。她们非常兴奋，一路上又说又笑。

accident *n.* something unexpected. 意外事故。 **in front in the foremost**. 在…前面。

The people of Haworth came out to watch us. Some of them helped, but most of them just stood in their doorways and watched. They are very poor people, in this village. I was their new rector.

We had seven carts to carry our furniture up that icy hill, but it was hard work for the horses. When we reached our house, the wind was blowing hard in our faces. My wife hurried inside, and began to light fires.

‘Do you like it, my dear?’ I asked her that night, when the children were in bed. She looked pale and tired. I thought it was because of the long journey, and the children. Perhaps it was.

She held out her hands to the fire, and said: ‘Of course, Patrick. It’s a fine house. I do hope it will be a good home for you, and the children.’

I was a little surprised by that. ‘And for you, Maria,’ I said. ‘Don’t forget yourself. You are the most important person in the world, to me.’

She smiled then — a lovely smile. ‘Thank you, Patrick,’ she said. She was a very small woman, and she was often tired because of the children. But when she smiled at me like that, I thought she was the most beautiful woman in England.

A year and a half later, she was dead.

She did not die quickly. She was in bed for seven long months, in awful pain. The doctor came often, and her sister Elizabeth came too, to help. The children were ill, as well. It

霍沃斯的人们出来看我们,有的上来帮忙,但大多数人只是站在门前观望。这个村子里的人都很穷。我是他们的新牧师。

7 辆马车帮我们把家具拉上冰冻的山顶。对马来说这不是件容易的事。我们到家时,冷风猛吹着脸颊。我妻子急忙跑进屋里生起火。

“你喜欢这房子吗,亲爱的?”孩子们都入睡后我问她。她看上去脸色苍白,非常疲倦,我想是长途跋涉和孩子们拖累的缘故。也许是吧。

她把手伸到炉边烤着,说:“当然喜欢,帕特里克。这是幢好房子。我真希望它是你和孩子们的一个好家。”

她的话让我觉得有点惊讶。“这也是你的家呀,玛丽亚。”我说,“别忘了你自己。对我来说,你是这个世界上最重要的人。”

她听后笑了——多么可爱的微笑。“谢谢你,帕特里克。”她说。她是一个很瘦小的女人,孩子们时常令她疲倦不堪。但是每当她那样对我微笑时,我会觉得她是全英国最美的女人。

一年半以后,她死了。

她去得并不快。在极度的痛苦中她在病榻上捱了7个月之久。医生常来看她,她姐姐伊丽莎白也来帮忙。孩子们也病了。那真是段可怕的日子。

doorway *n.* opening into
which a door fits. 门口。

was a terrible time.

My wife Maria died in September, 1821. She was thirty-eight. It was my job to bury her in the church. Our six young children stood and watched quietly.

Afterwards, we went back to the house. I called them into this room and spoke to them.

I said: 'You must not cry too much, my dears. Your mother is with God now. She is happy. One day you will all die, and if you are good, you will go to God too.'

'But why?' Maria asked. 'Why did she die now, father? We need her.'

'This world is a hard place, children, and we cannot understand everything that God does. But God loves us, never forget that. Your mother loved you, and perhaps she can see you now. We must all try to work hard, learn as much as possible, and be kind to each other. Will you do that?'

'Yes, father.'

They all looked so sad, I remember, and they listened so carefully. Little Emily said: 'Who will be our mother now?'

'Maria is the oldest, so she will help me. You must all listen to her, and do what she says. And your Aunt Elizabeth is here, too. Perhaps she will stay for a while.'

Elizabeth did stay. She was older than my wife, and she wasn't married. We called her Aunt Branwell. She came from Penzance in Cornwall, a warm, sunny place by the sea in the south — west of England. It is often cold on the moors behind

我妻子玛丽亚死于 1821 年,享年 38 岁,是我为她在教堂主持的葬礼,我们的 6 个孩子站在一旁默默地看着。

然后我们回家了。我把他们叫进房间谈话。

我说:“你们不必太悲伤,亲爱的孩子们。你们的妈妈现在和上帝在一起。她很快乐,有一天你们也都会死,如果你们是好 人,也会去上帝那儿的。”

“可是为什么?”小玛丽亚问道,“为什么她现在就死了?爸爸,我们需要她呀!”

“这个世界是个苦难的地方,孩子们,我们无法理解上帝所作的每一件事。但是上帝爱我们,永远不要忘记这一点。你们的妈妈爱你们,也许她现在还可以看见你们。我们大家都应努力工作,努力学习更多的知识,并且彼此友爱。你们能做到吗?”

“是的,爸爸。”

我记得他们看上去非常难过,却都那么仔细地听着。小爱米丽说:“现在谁当妈妈呢?”

“玛丽亚最大,她将协助我。你们都得听她的,按她说的去做。你们的伊丽莎白姨妈也在这儿。也许她会住一阵子。”

伊丽莎白真的住下了。她比我妻子年长,一直未婚。我们叫她布兰韦尔姨妈。她来自英格兰西南部康沃尔的一个叫潘赞斯的靠海的地方,那里温暖而且充满阳光。但霍沃斯后面的荒野经常很冷,整个冬天都

bury v. perform the burial service. 举行葬礼。

Haworth, and the winds blow all winter. Aunt Branwell hated Haworth, but she stayed here all her life, to help me with her sister's children. She was a good, kind woman.

I was very proud of my little Maria. She was only eight years old, but she worked all day like an adult. She helped the little ones to get washed and dressed; she helped them to play and draw and read. She was like a little mother to them.

She could read very well herself. We always had books and newspapers in the house, and I talked to the children about them every day. I talked to them about adult things: the Duke of Wellington, and the important things that he was doing in London. The children listened carefully, and tried hard to understand. Maria often read to the others from the newspaper, and asked me questions about it. She understood it better than most men.

I was sure my children were very clever. But I did not have time to talk to them all day; I had my work to do. So, in 1824, I sent them to school.

刮着寒风。布兰韦尔姨妈讨厌霍沃斯,但她后来一直住在这儿,帮我照料她妹妹的孩子们。她真是心地善良的女人。

我为我的小玛丽亚非常自豪。她只有 8 岁,但她像个大人那样整天忙着。她帮弟弟妹妹洗澡、穿衣服;她带他们玩耍、画画、读书。她就是他们的小妈妈。

她自己能读书而且读得很好。我们家里总是有书和报纸,而我每天和孩子们谈论这些书报。我给他们讲大人的事情:惠灵顿公爵及他在伦敦所做的重大事情。孩子们仔细倾听并试着去理解。玛丽亚经常给别人念报纸,还问我些问题。她理解得比大多数成年人还好。

我知道我的孩子们非常聪明。但我常常整天都没有时间和她们谈话,我有自己的工作要做。于是在 1824 年,我把他们送进了学校。

hate *v.* have a strong dislike of or for sth./sb. 憎恨。**adult** *n.* a grown person. 成人。

2

Cowan Bridge School

I was born in a small house in Ireland. There were only two rooms in our house, and I had nine brothers and sisters. My parents were very poor. We had no money, and only a small farm. But we did have a church near us, and that church had a school.

That school gave me my one chance of success. I worked very hard there, and when I was sixteen, I became a teacher. Then I went to St John's College, Cambridge, to study some more. I became a curate. When I married, I was able to get a good job and a house for my family. I got all that because I worked so hard at school.

I wanted my children to go to the best school that I could find. Cowan Bridge School was a school for the daughters of churchmen. It belonged to a churchman — Mr Wilson. He was a good man, I thought. I liked the school, and it was not too expensive. So, in July 1824, I took Maria and Elizabeth there. In September, I took Charlotte and, in November, Emily as well. Emily was just six then, and Charlotte was eight.

I remember how quiet the house was that autumn. In the evenings I taught my son, Branwell, and my wife's sister looked after the youngest child, Anne. I often thought about the girls. My eldest, Maria, was a good, clever girl — I thought she must be the best pupil in the school. I waited for her

2 考恩桥学校



我生于爱尔兰的一座小房子里。家里只有两个房间,我有9个兄弟姐妹。父亲很穷,我们没有钱,只有一个小农场。附近有个教堂,那个教堂有一所学校。

这所学校赋予了我一个成功的机会。我非常努力,16岁时,我成了一名教师,后来我去剑桥的圣约翰学院深造。我成了副牧师。等到我成家的时候,我得到了一份好工作和一座房子。这一切得益于我在学校的努力。

我要我的孩子上我能找到的最好的学校。考恩桥学校是专为牧师的女儿们开办的。它属于一个牧师——威尔逊先生。我认为他是个好人。我喜欢这所学校,而且它也不太贵。在1842年7月,我把玛丽亚和伊丽莎白送到了那里。9月份,我又把夏洛蒂送到那儿。11月份又送去了爱米丽。爱米丽当时只有6岁,夏洛蒂8岁。

我记得那年秋天,家里变得非常安静。晚上我教儿子布兰韦尔念书;我妻子的姐姐照料最小的孩子安妮。我时常惦记我的女儿们。我的大女儿玛丽亚是个善良聪明的女孩,我相信她一定是学校中最好的学生。

curate n. person who helps
a parish priest. 副牧师。

letters, and wondered what new things she was learning.

She did tell me some things in her letters, but not enough. She told me she liked the schoolwork, and I was pleased. But she did not tell me about the food, or the cold, or the unkind teachers. Charlotte told me those things, much later. I know Maria did not tell me that the food was often burnt and uneatable, or that they could not sleep because the beds were too cold. She did not tell me that the poor hungry children had to wash with ice in the morning, and walk through wet snow to sit for two hours with icy feet in a cold church on Sundays. She did not tell me that many of the children at the school were ill.

You didn't tell me that, did you, Maria? Did you? Or did you try to write something, and stop because you were afraid of the teachers? You were a good, brave child, and I was so proud of you, so pleased because you were at school. I wanted you to learn everything; I didn't want you to be poor like my sisters. God help me, I thought you were happy at Cowan Bridge School!

There were no Christmas holidays at the school, and it was too difficult to travel over the cold, windy hills to visit my little girls. So I sat at home here in Haworth, with Aunt Branwell, my son, and the little girl, Anne. Outside, the wind blew snow over the gravestones, and there was ice on our windows.

On Christmas Day little Anne looked lonely. She asked me about her sisters.

'Don't worry, my dear,' I said. 'They are happy, with the