



企鹅英语简易读物精选

卡斯特桥市长

THE MAYOR
of
CASTERBRIDGE

Thomas Hardy

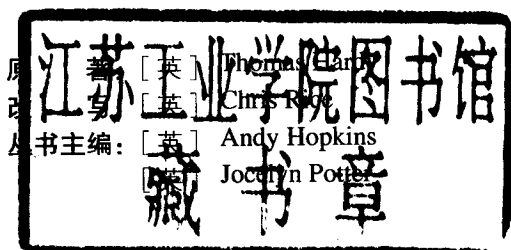
世界图书出版公司



企鹅英语简易读物精选 (大二学生)

The Mayor of Casterbridge

卡斯特桥市长



(2300 - 3000 词)

世界图书出版公司



图书在版编目 (CIP) 数据

卡斯特桥市长/[英]哈代 (Hardy, T.) 著; [英]赖斯 (Rice, C.) 改写. —北京: 世界图书出版公司北京公司, 2006.8

(企鹅英语简易读物精选·大二学生)

ISBN 7-5062-8534-7

I. 卡… II. ①哈… ②赖… III. 英语—语言读物 IV. H319.4

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字 (2006) 第 103180 号

This edition of *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, First Edition is published by arrangement with Pearson Education Limited and Penguin Books Limited.

Text copyright © Penguin Books 2003

企鹅英语简易读物精选 (大二学生)

卡斯特桥市长

原著者: Thomas Hardy

改写者: Chris Rice

责任编辑: 张颖颖 王志宇

出版: 世界图书出版公司北京公司

发行: 世界图书出版公司北京公司

(地址: 北京朝内大街 137 号 邮编: 100010 电话: 64077922)

销售: 各地新华书店和外文书店

印刷: 北京朝阳印刷厂有限责任公司

开本: 889×1194 1/32

印张: 3

版次: 2006 年 8 月第 1 版 2006 年 8 月第 1 次印刷

版权登记: 图字 01 - 2006 - 5073

ISBN 7-5062-8534-7/H.944

版权所有 翻印必究

大量阅读简易读物 打好英语基础（代序）

北京外国语大学英语系历来都十分重视简易读物的阅读。我们要求学生在一、二年级至少要阅读几十本经过改写的、适合自己水平的英语读物。教学实践证明，凡是大量阅读了简易读物的学生，基础一般都打得比较扎实，英语实践能力都比较强，过渡到阅读英文原著困难也都比较小。这是我们几十年来屡试不爽的一条经验。

为什么强调在阅读英文原著之前必须阅读大量的简易读物呢？原因之一是简易读物词汇量有控制，内容比较浅易，而原著一般来说词汇量大，内容比较艰深。在打基础阶段，学生的词汇量比较小，阅读原著会遇到许多困难。在这种情况下，要保证足够的阅读量只能要求学生阅读简易读物。其次，简易读物使用的是常用词汇、短语和语法结构，大量阅读这类读物可以反复接触这些基本词语和语法，有助于他们打好基础，培养他们的英语语感。第三，简易读物大部分是文学名著改写而成，尽管情节和人物都大为简化，但依旧保留了文学名著的部分精华，仍不失为优秀读物。大量阅读这些读物对于拓宽学生视野、提高他们的人文素养大有帮助。

在这里我们还可以援引美国教学法家克拉申（Stephen Krashen）的一个著名观点。他认为，学生吸收外语有一个前提，即语言材料只能稍稍高于他们的语言理解水平，如果提供的语言材料难度大大超过学生的水平，就会劳而无功。这是克拉申关于外语学习的一个总的看法，但我们不妨把这个道理运用到阅读上。若要阅读有成效，必须严格控制阅读材料的难易度。目前学生阅读的英语材料往往过于艰深，词汇量过大，学生花了很多时间，而阅读量却仍然很小，进展缓慢，其结果是扼杀了学生的阅读兴趣，影响了他们的自信心。解决这个问题的关键是向学生提供适合他们水平的、词汇量有控制的、能够引起他们兴趣的英语读物。“企鹅英语简易读物精选”是专门为初、中级学习者编写的简易读物。这是一套充分考虑到学生的水平和需要，为他们设计的有梯度的读物，学生可以循序渐进，逐步提高阅读难度和扩大阅读量，从而提高自己的英语水平。

应该如何做才能取得最佳效果呢？首先，要选择难易度适当的读物。如果一页书上生词过多，读起来很吃力，进展十分缓慢，很可能选的材料太难了。不妨换一本容易些的。总的原则是宁易毋难。一般来说，学生选择的材料往往偏难，而不是过于浅易。其次，要尽可能读得快一些，不要一句一句地分析，更不要逐句翻译。读故事要尽快读进去，进入故事的情节，就像阅读中文小说一样。不必担心是否记住了新词语。阅读量，阅读速度适当，就会自然而然地记住一些词语。这是自然吸收语言的过程。再次，阅读时可以做些笔记，但不必做太多的笔记；可以做一些配合阅读的练习，但不要在练习上花过多时间。主要任务还是阅读。好的读物不妨再读一遍，甚至再读两遍。你会发现在读第二遍时有一种如鱼得水的感觉。

青年朋友们，赶快开始你们的阅读之旅吧！它会把你带进一个奇妙的世界，在那里你们可以获得一种全新的感受，观察世界也会有一种新的眼光。与此同时，你们的英语水平也会随之迅速提高。

Introduction

'I married when I was eighteen,' he shouted drunkenly. 'I was a fool. If I were a free man again, I'd be able to earn much more money. A man should be able to get rid of a wife if he wants to. If a farmer can sell a horse, why can't a husband sell his wife? I'd sell mine this minute if anybody wanted to buy her.'

Michael Henchard – a young, penniless, homeless hay-cutter – is talking to a crowd of strangers in a small village where he has come to look for work. By the end of the evening, he has sold his wife and child to a sailor for five guineas and is free to live his life without the worry of responsibility.

Eighteen years later, Henchard has become a respected member of Casterbridge society. He is not only the town's richest businessman – he is also its mayor. But in his heart he is not a happy man. He feels ashamed of his past actions, and he is also worried: What will happen if the people of Casterbridge ever discover his terrible secret? Then, one day, a woman arrives in Casterbridge with her daughter, looking for her husband – a man who sold her to a sailor eighteen years ago for five guineas . . .

In the late nineteenth century, before psychology was a recognized science, people were becoming interested in the dark, secret forces that existed in their minds and hearts – that governed their behaviour and were powerful enough to destroy their lives. Stories about people whose lives were ruined by these strange, mysterious forces became very popular. One of the most famous stories from this time was Robert Louis Stevenson's *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (1886).

Thomas Hardy's *The Mayor of Casterbridge* came out in the same year. On one level it is a story about human relationships

during a period of great social and economic change in the English countryside in the middle of the nineteenth century. On another level, however, it is the story of one man, Michael Henchard, and his struggle to succeed in life while fighting a losing battle with himself. Like *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, Henchard has two completely different sides to his personality. Although he is in many ways a strong, generous, kind man, there is a dark, dangerous side to his character which eventually destroys his life. The message of the story is as true today as it was a hundred and twenty years ago – if a man cannot understand or control his own thoughts and emotions, all his plans, hopes and dreams for a better world become worthless.

Thomas Hardy, one of England's best-known and greatest writers, was born in Dorset, in the south of England, in 1840. His father was a builder and his family did not have much money, so Hardy left school when he was sixteen and began work as an architect's assistant. He worked as an architect for fifteen years, and won prizes for his work. He started writing poetry and novels when he was in his twenties, and his first novel, *Desperate Remedies*, came out in 1871. In the same year, he met and fell in love with a woman called Emma Gifford.

Under the Greenwood Tree (1872) was Hardy's next novel, but he did not have enough money to marry Emma until the great success of *Far from the Madding Crowd* (1874). After a short period in London, Hardy and his wife moved back to Dorset, where he wrote *The Return of the Native* (1878).

The Mayor of Casterbridge was Thomas Hardy's tenth novel. It marked the beginning of the most productive period in his twenty-five-year career as a novelist. It was the first of the novels that were set in the town of Dorchester, which he renamed 'Casterbridge'. The critics loved *The Mayor of Casterbridge* for its realistic descriptions and poetic style, but many thought that the

novel was too improbable and too shocking. These complaints were repeated when Hardy wrote his next novels, *The Woodlanders* (1887) and *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* (1891).

During this period, Hardy and his wife visited London together regularly, but they were always relieved to return to Dorset, where they felt most comfortable. However, Hardy and Emma were experiencing a lot of problems with their marriage, and were not very happy together. Hardy's last great novel, *Jude the Obscure* (1895), was an angry attack on marriage, which further damaged his relationship with Emma. Although some critics thought the book was a great work of literature, many others complained that it was too sad and shocking. Hardy was so upset by the reaction to *Jude the Obscure* that he decided to stop writing novels completely. He began a new thirty-year career as the twentieth century's first important English poet.

In 1905, Hardy began a relationship with his secretary, Florence Dugdale. Soon afterwards, he and Emma separated. After Emma's death in 1913, Hardy wrote some of his greatest love poetry, which upset Florence Dugdale. However, she married him in 1914. When Hardy died in 1928, his heart was buried in Emma's grave.

Contents

	page
Introduction	v
Chapter 1 Who Will Buy My Wife?	1
Chapter 2 A Lost Relative	7
Chapter 3 A Difficult Situation	16
Chapter 4 Jealousy	21
Chapter 5 The Woman in Black	30
Chapter 6 Love at First Sight	36
Chapter 7 Rivals in Business, Rivals in Love	42
Chapter 8 A Narrow Escape	49
Chapter 9 The New Master	54
Chapter 10 The Letters	61
Chapter 11 A Royal Visit	66
Chapter 12 The Skimmity-Ride	72
Chapter 13 The Sailor's Return	75
Chapter 14 No Flowers on My Grave	81
Activities	84

Chapter 1 Who Will Buy My Wife?

One September evening in the 1820s, a young man and woman were walking along a dusty country road. The man was carrying a large basket filled with knives and hay-cutting tools, and the woman had a baby in her arms. Although they were obviously husband and wife, they paid no attention to each other. The man was pretending to read a song-sheet, while his wife looked straight ahead with a strange, empty look in her eyes.

For a long time the unhappy-looking couple walked side by side without speaking. The baby slept, and only the occasional weak, tired song of a bird in the evening sky broke the silence.

At last, as the sun was going down, the couple approached the village of Weydon-Priors. Distant sounds of laughter reached their ears, and the man looked up from his song-sheet with a puzzled expression.

‘Is there any work here?’ he asked the first person they met – an old man with a gardening fork over his shoulder.

The old man noticed the basket of hay-cutting instruments and shook his head. ‘No work for hay-cutters. Not at this time of year.’

‘Is there a place for us to rent? Any new cottages that have just been built, perhaps?’

The old man shook his head again. ‘They don’t build houses in Weydon-Priors. They just pull them down.’

He turned to leave, but the young man stopped him with one final question. ‘What’s all that noise? Something’s happening in the village – I can hear it.’

‘It’s the fair, but it’s almost finished now,’ the man replied before continuing on his way.

The hay-cutter and his wife walked into the village until they

reached the fair. The old man had been right: the serious business had already finished, and most of the animals had been taken back to their farms. However, the field was still crowded with people who were enjoying the fun and games, having late picnics with their families on the grass, or standing outside beer-tents getting drunk.

'I need a drink,' the hay-cutter said to his wife, his first words to her for several hours.

His wife pointed towards a tent with the words *Good Furmity* Sold Here* on a sign outside its entrance. 'What about in here?' she said. 'I always liked furmity.'

The man, who wanted beer not soup, looked annoyed, but he was too tired to argue. He walked ahead of his wife into the tent, where people sat around two long, wooden tables, laughing and talking. In the corner, an ugly old woman was bending over a large, hot, metal pot. The hay-cutter bought two bowls of furmity from her and sat down with his wife at one of the tables. The food was good, but the man did not seem satisfied. The old woman, who had noticed the look on his face, caught his eye and gave him a secret smile. The man understood at once, and passed her his bowl of soup, into which she secretly poured some rum. That was much better! A feeling of warm contentment came over him.

His wife, who had noticed this happening, looked annoyed at first, but she agreed to have some rum in her soup too.

The man finished his meal and immediately ordered another bowl of furmity, this time with more rum in it. His wife watched him unhappily as he became more and more drunk, but was powerless to stop him.

'Michael, we need to find somewhere to sleep tonight,' she said, as he was drinking the contents of his third bowl.

* furmity: an old-fashioned country soup made with wheat boiled in milk

But her husband ignored her, and began talking to the other customers around the table. By the time he finished his fourth bowl, he was very drunk, and was complaining in a loud voice about the stupidity of getting married too young.

'I married when I was eighteen,' he shouted drunkenly. 'I was a fool. If I were a free man again, I'd be able to earn much more money. A man should be able to get rid of a wife if he wants to. If a farmer can sell an old horse, why can't a husband sell his wife? I'd sell mine this minute if anybody wanted to buy her.'

'She's a good-looking woman,' one man said, looking at the hay-cutter's wife with a smile.

There were sounds of agreement from around the table, and the hay-cutter seemed surprised. He had not expected his wife to be praised in this way. 'Well,' he said at last, 'I'm not joking. If there's a man here who will offer me enough money for my wife, he can have her.'

The other people around the table looked down at their drinks or smoked their pipes in embarrassed silence. They knew that the hay-cutter was drunk, and hoped that he would change the subject. But a quarter of an hour later, with more rum inside him, he was even more serious than before.

'I'm still waiting for an offer,' he said. 'The woman's no good to me. Who'll have her?'

There was nervous laughter from around the table, but still nobody replied.

'Come on, Michael,' his wife begged. 'It's getting dark and you're talking nonsense. If you don't come with me now, I'll go without you.'

She waited, but he did not move. He kept repeating that he wanted to sell her. In the end, his wife could listen to no more.

'I think I'd prefer a different husband,' she said angrily. 'I've had enough of this one. This one doesn't please me at all.'

'Nor you me,' her husband replied. 'I'm glad we agree about

something. Gentlemen, did you hear her? My wife agrees to be sold. She can take the child if she wants to. Now stand up, Susan, and show yourself.'

A woman sitting next to her whispered, 'Don't do it. Your husband's drunk. He doesn't know what he's saying.' But the young woman was so angry with her husband that she stood up.

'Who'll make an offer for this excellent creature?' the hay-cutter asked.

Nobody answered, and his wife looked at the ground.

'Two guineas?' the man suggested, but there were still no offers. 'Three guineas?' he said, angrily raising the price. 'Four? Come on, you're missing the chance of a real bargain. All right, I won't accept a penny less than five guineas for her. For the last time, or I'll have to keep her. Five guineas – yes or no?'

'Yes,' said a loud voice.

All eyes turned towards a young sailor who had been watching, unnoticed, for several minutes from the entrance to the tent.

'You say you do?' asked the husband, staring at him.

'I say so,' replied the sailor.

'Show me your money.'

The sailor walked towards the hay-cutter and threw the money on to the table in front of him.

Everyone watched the hay-cutter in shocked silence. Until this moment, they had all believed that he was only joking. The hay-cutter seemed equally unsure of himself, surprised by his own behaviour. Did he want to sell his wife, or had it all been a harmless joke? He stared at the money in front of him, unable to make up his mind.

'Now,' said his wife, breaking the silence with her low, dry voice, 'listen to me, Michael. If you touch that money, I'll take our child and go with this man. This isn't a joke any more.'

'A joke?' her husband shouted. 'Who says it's a joke? I take

the money, the sailor takes you. It seems clear enough to me.'

'Only if the young woman agrees,' the sailor said.

'If she can take the child, she agrees. She said so herself.'

'Is that true?' The sailor turned to her.

The young woman looked at her husband's face and, seeing no sign of regret or pity in his eyes, said, 'It's true.'

'Good. Everything's agreed,' the hay-cutter said, taking the sailor's money. 'She can have the child, and the bargain's complete.'

'Come with me.' The sailor gave the woman a gentle smile. 'Bring the child with you.'

The woman hesitated for a moment, then she picked up the child and followed the sailor. As she reached the entrance, however, she looked back at her husband.

'Michael . . .' she began, but her husband did not look up. He was more interested in counting his money. She pulled the wedding ring from her finger and threw it across the room. It landed on the ground at her husband's feet.

The hay-cutter raised his eyes, but his wife and child had already gone. He seemed puzzled for a moment, and then a deep look of worry slowly filled his drunken face. He rose to his feet, walked unsteadily to the entrance of the tent and looked out into the lamp-lit darkness of the night.

'Where does the sailor live?' he heard a voice behind him ask.

'No one knows,' another voice replied. 'I've never seen him before. He's a stranger here.'

'I'm glad she's gone with the sailor,' said the woman who had been sitting next to Susan. 'He looked a kind man. If I'd been in her position, I would have done the same.'

'I'm not going to look for her!' the hay-cutter announced, returning angrily to his seat. 'Let her go. If she's stupid enough to believe I really wanted to sell her, she's too stupid for me!'

A short time later, the other customers began to leave. The

hay-cutter, too drunk and confused to move, rested his head on his arms and fell into a deep sleep. After tidying up her things, the furnity-woman tried to wake him, but without success. Finally, she decided to let him sleep where he was. She blew out the last candle, closed the tent door behind her, and left the foolish man alone with his drunken dreams.

The next morning, Michael woke up and slowly lifted his head. At first, he did not know where he was. He looked around him, confused by the empty tables, the smell of tobacco smoke, boiled milk and rum. Then he saw something shining on the ground next to his basket. Bending down to pick it up, he saw that it was his wife's ring, and he suddenly remembered everything. The sailor, the money on the table, the sale of his wife – he had not been dreaming. It had really happened!

'Oh God, what have I done?' he said to himself, rising to his feet and pulling the basket across his shoulder. 'I must find her.'

Moments later, he was standing outside in the bright sunlight of a beautiful September morning. The cool, fresh air cleared his head and filled him with energy. He knew what he had to do.

He walked through the empty village until he arrived at an old stone church. He went inside, fell to his knees in front of the cross, placed his right hand on the Bible and said, 'I, Michael Henchard, on this morning of the sixteenth of September, make a promise in the presence of God. I will not touch another drop of alcohol for twenty years, one year for every year that I have lived.'

With those words he kissed the Bible, left the church and began the search for his wife and child. As the days turned into weeks and weeks turned into months, he spent all the sailor's money on his search, but there was still no sign of them. Finally, in a western seaport, he heard that a woman and child fitting their description had left with a sailor and sailed for Canada.

Filled with shame, he decided to stop searching. The next day

he travelled towards the south and did not stop until he reached the town of Casterbridge, more than a hundred miles away.

Chapter 2 A Lost Relative

Exactly eighteen years later, two women dressed in black were walking hand in hand along the same road into Weydon-Priors. One of the women was about forty years old, and her name was Susan Henchard. The other woman was her eighteen-year-old daughter, Elizabeth-Jane.

'Why did we waste our time coming here?' Elizabeth-Jane said, as they approached a field filled with tents and people.

'This was the exact place where I first met Newson,' her mother explained.

'Yes,' the girl said quietly. 'You've told me before.' While her mother watched the people at the fair, the girl took a card from her pocket and looked at it with a sigh. 'In memory of Richard Newson,' she read. 'Sailor, drowned at sea, in the month of November 1846, aged forty-one years.'

Mrs Newson (as we must now call her) gave her daughter an anxious look and said, 'This is also the place where I last saw the relative we're looking for – Mr Michael Henchard.'

'Who is he exactly?' her daughter asked. 'You've never explained it to me.'

'He is, or was – because he may be dead – a relation by marriage,' her mother replied.

'Is he a close relative?'

Mrs Newson shook her head.

'I suppose he never knew me?' the girl innocently continued.

Mrs Newson paused for a moment, then answered uncertainly, 'Of course not, Elizabeth-Jane. But come this way.' She moved on to another part of the field.

'It's no good asking for news of him in a place like this,' her daughter complained. 'Nobody here will remember anything that happened eighteen years ago.'

But her mother was not listening – she had noticed an old woman standing by a tree, bending over a pot which hung above a small fire. There was something familiar about her. When the old woman raised her head and cried in a weak voice, broken with age, 'Good furmity sold here!', Mrs Newson remembered her clearly.

'Stay here, Elizabeth,' she said. 'I'm going to talk to that old woman.'

Despite her daughter's protests, she walked off and bought a bowl of furmity from the old woman. After a long conversation with her, she returned to her daughter.

'Let's move on,' Elizabeth-Jane begged her impatiently. 'I don't know why you wanted to buy soup from that horrible old woman.'

Mrs Newson smiled and quietly replied, 'But I've learnt something about our relative, Mr Henchard. The old woman remembers him. She told me she last saw him a few years ago, living in Casterbridge. It's a long way away, but I think that's where we ought to go.'

The next morning, the two women left Weydon-Priors and began the long journey to Casterbridge. As they walked, Mrs Newson thought about her life over the last eighteen years. After Henchard had sold her, Newson had taken her to Canada, where they had lived for several years. When Elizabeth-Jane was twelve years old, the three of them had returned to England, where Newson worked as a boat-repairer. Later, he became a fisherman and spent several months a year at sea. In her simple-minded way, she had always believed that Newson was her legal husband. Then, one day, a friend had told her that hers was not an official marriage, which had shocked her greatly. She was so upset that

she spoke to Newson about it as soon as he returned from sea. A period of sadness followed, after which Newson went back to sea and never returned. News reached her that he had drowned in a storm off the coast of Canada.

Mrs Newson did not want her daughter to grow up in poverty, so she decided to find Michael Henchard again. However, there was one problem which Mrs Newson did not know how to solve: her daughter still believed that Newson was her father. Should she tell her the truth about Mr Henchard? She finally decided that Michael could tell his daughter himself, if he was still alive. If not, then Elizabeth-Jane would never need to know the truth.

The first person they met as they finally reached Casterbridge was an old woman with a loaf of bread under her arm. Mrs Newson, realizing how hungry she and her daughter were, asked the old woman for directions to the nearest baker's.

'You won't find any good bread in Casterbridge,' the woman warned. 'It's the mayor's fault. He owns the biggest corn business in the area, but this year he's sold us very poor-quality grain. I've lived in Casterbridge all my life, and I've never known bread as bad as this. But you must be strangers here if you don't know that already.'

Mrs Newson thanked the woman for her help, and walked with her daughter to the town centre. There, they found crowds of people standing in the street outside a large hotel, the Golden Crown. A lot of noisy laughter could be heard coming from an upstairs window, and many townspeople had climbed steps on the opposite side of the road so that they could see what was happening in the hotel. Although she was hungry and exhausted by the long journey, Mrs Newson followed her daughter up the steps.

'What's going on?' Elizabeth-Jane asked an old man who was standing in front of her.