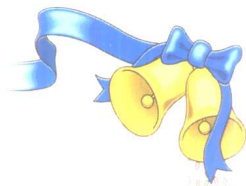


大学英语阶梯阅读系列教程

Band 3

郭浩儒 朱国振 主编



Sweet Stories

温馨的故事

附注释、练习、答案



朱国振 田飞洋 选编



北京航空航天大学出版社

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内 容 简 介

《温馨的故事》共收入了 15 个短篇小说,讲述了一个个诸如父子情、夫妻情、同志情等人间真情的故事,体现了人们对自身和他人的信任,对生命的热爱和克服困难的勇气等积极的人生态度。

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前 言

在进入新世纪的时候,大学生们无不在通过各种途径提高英语水平,以使自己拥有一个得心应手的交际工具,在激烈的人才竞争中占据有利位置。强烈的学习欲望应该令人称道,但也容易出现饥不择食、把别人成功的方法不加分析地照搬过来,或是人云亦云,受一些商业广告的诱惑,尝试那些似乎是有效的作法。这样做,其学习成效之低犹如寒流到来,学习愿望也会一下子降到零度。这的确令人十分遗憾。究其原因,恐怕是浮躁的学习心态使然。

语言知识的学习是一个认知过程,语言技能的掌握是一个在大量实践活动中一点一滴积累的过程。指导学习活动的方法只有符合了语言能力形成的规律才会发生作用。既然语言能力的形成是个相对漫长的过程,因而不能将提高英语水平寄希望于什么“捷径”或“速成”上。学好一种语言,非得下苦功不可,学好英语除了要多听、多说外,还要大量阅读。在阅读中,可以巩固课堂里学过的知识;可以扩大眼界;可以实践各种各样的阅读技巧;可以熟悉了解西方文化、社会习俗、风土人情、最新科技动态;可以了解英语各种文体的写作方法……一句话,你可以在轻松自然的状态下吸收语言,获得乐趣。何乐而不为!

在大学阶段,教师的主导作用逐渐转化为指导作用,语言环境和学习材料的重要性相对上升,学习者的能动性将发挥很大的作用。英语教学将从单纯课堂教学的模式,转化为大学英语课堂教学与学生课外自主学习相结合的双渠道模式。北京航空航天大学面向 21 世纪,在双渠道教学模式方面进行了探索和实践,要求学生每月读一本外语书,并且以不同方式进行检查。实践证明这不仅可行,而且得到学生的认同。

基于上述认识,我们组织编写了这套阶梯阅读系列教程。由学生根据个人兴趣爱好选读。由于不是指令性阅读,在很大程度上

上要靠阅读材料本身能够吸引学生。因此每一级读物有若干本,使学生有选择余地。在每一级读物中,有经典名著的简写本,有英美短篇小说选,有介绍最新科技的科技荟萃,有汇集西方社会热门话题的时文选读。此外,由于课外阅读的目的是巩固扩展语言知识,实践阅读技巧,熟悉了解西方文化,因此我们每四五千字设计了一个练习。练习分为内容理解和语言知识两部分,以主观题为主,题型多样。在适当的时候,有的书还要配上磁带,把文字阅读和有声阅读结合起来。

编 者

1999年6月于北京航空航天大学

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1. Long Journey Home

by Suzanne Chazin

"A LETTER ARRIVED from your father," my friend Tomoko said, the thin air-mail envelope crackling¹ like rice paper in her hands. I nodded, but didn't move. "Perhaps you'll read it later," she offered.

I had arrived in Japan after finishing college. The trip was my father's graduation present, and he had talked excitedly about my returning home, but two months later I wrote that I might remain to teach English. I knew my letter would pain him, and I dreaded his response.

As I sat in the sparsely² furnished³ room, I recalled tales of my father's youth, riding the rails during the Great Depression⁴. He had been a hobo⁵ then, as full of wanderlust⁶ as I was now. If I had vagabond⁷ blood in my veins⁸, I'd gotten it from him.

I thought about the gift that got my father to quit his wandering. It was my favorite story of his life on the road — and I could practically recite it by heart. In fact, I could almost hear his Brooklyn-edged voice telling it now:

HE WAS 20, traveling in a freight car across the western foothills of the Rocky Mountains. The other men in the car were scattered along the walls, their dusty faces as empty as their pockets. Their hands callused⁹ from hard work. Each stared silently out the open doors as if he had some particular destination in mind. They were heading east, but they were all going nowhere.

My father had left New York a year and a half earlier. It had

been easy to abandon the concrete stoops¹⁰ and corner stores of his neighborhood. There, young men worked odd jobs in factories, when they could find work at all. And old men — mostly Russian immigrants like my grandfather — whiled away their time talking about the motherland.

In Russia, my grandfather had been an engineer who spoke four languages. In America, he was a house painter. His friends were counts¹¹ who now waited tables, and captains who now opened doors and hailed cabs. Late at night, they would talk of the armies they'd led and the banquets¹² they'd attended decades before. They were men who walked in their own shadows.

Their threadbare¹³ stories filled my father with anger and embarrassment¹⁴. How could they keep nursing one another's empty dreams. My father had bigger ambitions. He wanted to build bridges, rope cattle, sail the Pacific. California beckoned¹⁵ his city-boy imagination. There, certainly, people would see him as more than just a Russian house painter's son. He would return a success, he vowed¹⁶, or he wouldn't return at all.

As the sun set and the train climbed into the Rockies, an icy chill stole into the car. My father wrapped his tattered¹⁷ peacoat around him and stared at his shoes.

They were made of rough brown leather and laced above the ankle. They had seen him through branding¹⁸ cattle in Northern California, cutting lumber in Oregon, hauling¹⁹ tuna²⁰ out of San Pedro. They had hopped²¹ on many a boxcar²² from New York to California, and had paced the deck of a freighter as he sailed through the Panama Canal. Now the paper-thin soles²³ flapped²⁴ open — the leather as worn out as his dreams.

Another hobo approached him. "There's a man in a town up ahead who leaves his cellar door open for people like us." Dad nodded

and followed the others as they jumped off the train. Plunging into the spring snow, he felt the icy crunch²⁵ under his toes. Soon his wool socks were soaked and his toes numb.

A full moon lit the ground like white linen as the men trudged²⁶ down the hillside to a small frame house. Inside the cellar my father found a corner to curl up in, but his feet were so cold he couldn't sleep. He tried massaging²⁷ his toes; they refused to yield to his warm hands.

"What's the matter?" drawled a soft voice beside him. He turned to see a lanky²⁸ man in his late 20s.

"My toes are frozen," Dad said gruffly, then pointed to his shoes. "These leak."

He was in no mood to talk to this stranger. Too many months on the road had chipped away his trust in people. Bosses promised to pay wages that never came. Men fought over spare change or a warm shirt, and sometimes stole them.

"Name's Earl," the stranger said. "I'm from Wichita, Kansas," he added, extending a long, bony hand.

"I'm Sol, from New York," my father mumbled²⁹, cautiously meeting his grip.

Earl began to tell my father about his life. His family had been wheat farmers for generations. But small-town living made him restless. Surely, he decided, there was more to life than working the land from sunup to sundown, marrying the girl you've known since grade school, and going to church suppers on weekends. Gradually, as Earl spoke, my father drifted into a deep sleep.

In the morning, they hopped the next train toward Kansas. By late that day, they were riding past the mountains and into the prairies³⁰. The weather turned even colder, and soon my father was stamping his feet to keep the blood going.

"Hurting bad, are they?" Earl asked gently.

"I'm okay," Dad replied tersely³¹. This, too, he had learned: never show fear or discomfort — someone might take advantage of it.

"You got family?"

Dad nodded, surprised by the question. "A sister and a father and a couple of uncles," he answered. "Not much."

"Any family's family," Earl said, looking at my father closely. "You know," he continued, "I figured if I could just leave the farm behind I'd leave the farm boy behind. But that boy's still in here," he said, pointing to his heart. "I've had enough of the road. At least in Wichita I'm a farm boy with roots."

"Well, I don't come from a farm," said Dad, shrugging³².

"Why don't you come home with me, Sol? My sister's a great cook." It had been a long time since anyone had called Dad by name. "Thanks," he replied. "But I can't go to my own home — much less to yours."

"Why not?" Earl asked.

My father looked down at his fraying jacket and worn-out shoes. How could the boy who swore to his father that he could do better come home after doing worse? "Because I left New York to be somebody, and I can't go back until I am," my father answered. He stared out the boxcar. It was evening now, and stars glittered like marcasite³³ in a brocaded³⁴ sky. Growing up by street light, he'd never seen such darkness. It made him feel alone. "One of these days, I'll go home," he muttered. "When I get together some money and shoes I can walk home in."

Moments later, he felt a heavy object hit the back of his heel. He turned to find one of Earl's thick-soled brown shoes lying on the floor beside him.

"Try it on," said Earl.

"Why?"

"You just said you'd go home if you had decent shoes. Well, mine aren't new, but they don't have holes in them either."

Earl dismissed his protest. "Just try them on, Sol. They'll keep your feet warm for now."

Dad slipped a cold foot into one shoe. It was a perfect fit. "I can't accept this," Dad said finally.

"Wear them for a little bit," Earl urged, "I'll let you know when I want them back." He tossed over the other shoe, then put on Dad's. My father laced them up and felt his toes tingle³⁵ and grow warm as circulation returned. He had forgotten how good warm feet could feel. He drifted off to the rhythmic rumbles³⁶ of the train.

Dad awoke at dawn. There were a couple of other hobos in the boxcar now, but no Earl. Panic-stricken³⁷, he asked the men if they'd seen him. "The tall guy?" said one. "He jumped the train at Wichita."

"But his shoes," my father said. "I have his shoes."

"He told me to say he's never been to New York, but he hopes his shoes get there."

Dad shook his head in disbelief. Among poor men, there is no greater sacrifice than to give up your shoes so another can walk. He had never seen anything like it before.

Or had he? My father thought about his old neighborhood. Mrs. Stoll, the landlady, took care of the sick, and Mrs. Roy, a neighbor, brought food to families when the breadwinner lost his job.

Certainly, they knew about hardship and loss. But they also knew about generosity — not giving what you have, but giving

what someone else needs. It was an idea he had completely forgotten.

Now, as my father stared at the Kansas wheat fields clicking by, he realized that Earl hadn't just given him a pair of shoes. He had given him back his faith in people.

That afternoon, Dad hopped a freight car bound for New York. When he arrived home, my grandfather, though not a demonstrative man, embraced his son warmly. And that evening, as he spoke of his days on the road, Dad caught the slightest glimmer of relief on the old man's face. My father sensed he had been waiting, fearful that his child would never return.

I OPENED the airmail envelope and pulled out a short letter. My father spoke of events, not feelings — he wrote about the sprinkler³⁸ system he was building, my mother's new curtains, the dog's visit to the vet.

Then, near the end, he added: "My darling, stay in Japan as long as your heart desires. I want your happiness, and if that's where it lies, I understand. But you should also know that no matter how far your journey, no matter how rough the road, you can always come home."

Dad's words were a gift, as precious to me as Earl's shoes had been to him. They spoke the same language of sacrifice and generosity.

Things did not quite work out the way I had planned. The job I expected did not materialize, and my fascination with Japan waned³⁹.

So I returned home — not as a child obeying the blind tug⁴⁰ of a parent's wishes, but as an adult, drawn by my own heart and the legacy⁴¹ of a gift from a hobo I will never know.

Vocabulary

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. crackle (使)噼啪地响 | 21. hop 跳 |
| 2. sparsely 稀少地 | 22. boxcar 货车 |
| 3. furnish 配备, (用家具)布置 | 23. sole 鞋底 |
| 4. the Great Depression 经济大萧条 | 24. flap 拍打 |
| 5. hobo 流浪汉 | 25. crunch 发出嘎吱声 |
| 6. wanderlust 漫游癖 | 26. trudge 步履艰难地走 |
| 7. vagabond 流浪者 | 27. massage 按摩 |
| 8. vein 血管 | 28. lanky 过分瘦长的 |
| 9. callus 皮肤硬化;长茧 | 29. mumble 咕哝 |
| 10. stoop 门廊 | 30. prairies 大草原 |
| 11. count 伯爵 | 31. tersely 简洁地 |
| 12. banquet 宴会 | 32. shrug 耸耸肩 |
| 13. threadbare 乏味的 | 33. marcasite 白铁矿 |
| 14. embarrassment 窘迫 | 34. brocaded 织锦的 |
| 15. beckon 引诱 | 35. tingle 刺痛 |
| 16. vow 发誓 | 36. rumble 隆隆声 |
| 17. tattered 破烂的 | 37. panic-stricken 惊慌失措的 |
| 18. brand 打烙印 | 38. sprinkler 喷洒器 |
| 19. haul 拖 | 39. wane 衰减 |
| 20. tuna 金枪鱼 | 40. tug 强大的拉力 |
| | 41. legacy 遗赠 |

Exercise 1

Part One Understanding

I. Decide whether the following statements are true or false.

1. The author thought his wanderlust was somewhat inherited from his father.
2. The author's father and his Russian fellowmen immigrated to the United States and lived a more decent life than before.
3. They returned from California unsuccessful because they did not work hard enough.
4. Earl and Father often talked at length since they met because they had the same hope and same experience.
5. Earl sent his own shoes to Father so that he could come home decently.
6. Earl was the first person Father ever saw to help the people in need.
7. Immediately after receiving Father's letter, the author returned to his home in New York.
8. Both Earl's shoes and his Father's letter made the author understand that intimacy among people was more important than money, success or anything.

II. Answer the following questions briefly.

1. Why did the author go to Japan?
2. Why did the author dare not to open his father's letter at first?
3. Why did the author's father leave home for California eagerly when he was young?
4. What was the life of the Russian immigrants like when they were in their own country?
5. Why did the author's father reluctant to go home although he was on the freighter car bound for the east?

6. What did Earl's shoes bring to the author's father?

III. Translate the following sentences from English into Chinese.

1. I know my letter would pain him, and I dreaded his response.
2. These Russian immigrants whiled away their time talking about the motherland; they were men who walked in their own shadows.
3. Surely, he decided, there was more to life than working the land from sunup to sundown, marrying the girl you've known since grade school, and going to church suppers on weekends.
4. I've had enough of the road. At least in Wichita I'm a farm boy with roots.
5. "Because I left New York to be somebody, and I can't go back until I am."
6. Things did not quite work out the way I had planned. The job I expected did not materialize, and my fascination with Japan waned.
7. So I returned home — not as a child obeying the blind tug of a parent's wishes, but as an adult, drawn by my own heart and the legacy of a gift from a hobo I will never know.

Part Two Vocabulary and Structure

I. Fill in the blanks with the following words or phrases in their proper forms.

plunge trudge callus wanderlust furnish beckon
embarrassment banquet hobo tersely rhythmic legacy

1. Books are the _____ that a great genius leaves to mankind.
2. The story on the voyage across the Pacific aroused the young man's _____.
3. He had to _____ for 20 miles to get home.
4. The best way to start a swim is to _____ in.

5. When cornered by the press, he muttered "no comment" _____.
6. At the moment, I can hear the _____ beating of my own heart.
7. His experience as a _____ wandering from state to state at last ended as he settled down in West Virginia.
8. When abroad, I hired a _____ room for \$ 30 a month.
9. On the first day to Vienna as an ambassador, he was entertained with _____ as a warm welcome.
10. The romance of the sea _____ the old sailor.

II. Translate the following sentences from Chinese into English.

1. 他年轻的时候肯定也像我现在那样雄心勃勃。(as ambitious as)
2. 他的脸像他的口袋一样空乏。他凝视着前方,好像要去一个地方,但其实他心中毫无目标。(as empty as; go somewhere)
3. 我没有心情听他那乏味的故事,单调的乡村生活也使我感到十分不安,所以我决定到外面的世界去碰碰运气。(have no mood to; try one's fortune)
4. 优越的生活消磨了他的意志,削弱了他的雄心。(chip away; weaken)
5. 我试穿了一下那双鞋,正好合适。(try... on; a perfect fit)
6. 我从未看到比在危难时刻挺身而出,把生的希望留给别人更高尚的行为。(stand out; leave the hope for)

2. Sealed in a Safe

by Keith Monroe

The child thought it was a place to play ... not a place to die.

AS USUAL, the staff at Shepherd of the Hills Church in Chatsworth, Calif, was busy. It was Monday, March 18, 1991, and the offering¹ from the Sunday service had been counted and bagged in the workroom.

But one thing was different. Bookkeeper Darlene West was at home, recovering from surgery. So when church elders removed the cash from the safe for deposit, no one twirled² the dial³, as she always did, to lock the empty safe for the week.

THE SAFE WAS OPEN when Kim Fales, the wife of one of the associate ministers, arrived to paste up the weekly bulletin⁴, her two children in tow⁵. That's odd⁶, she thought. Making a mental note to mention the safe to Gordon Freitas, who managed the church office, she hurried to finish her afternoon's work. Her watch showed that it was 3:15.

"You guys better leave the safe alone," she told her children when she saw them playing near it, and headed to the upstairs copier machine. "I'll get this done in a minute, then we'll go home." She stopped in the glass-walled office to greet her husband, Richard. "Give me five minutes more," she said.

Downstairs, Rochelle, 11, and John, 10, scanned the open safe's square, silvery interior. "Let's pretend we're money bags," Rochelle said, squeezing into the three-by-two-foot vault⁷. Tucking her knees to her chin, she pulled the door shut.