

新英语故事丛书 4
NEW ENGLISH STORIES

公路猎物

Road Kill

付瑛 何红梅 吉荣 编

西安电子科技大学出版社

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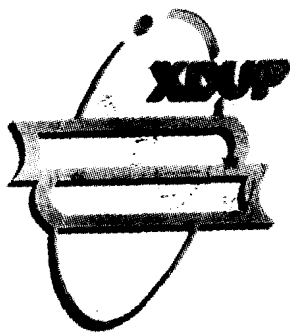
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内容简介

骗了还要捣乱的小兔子，偷听了别人谈话就去按图索骥的傻小子，落入死而复生的猎物之口的猎人，怪事不断的旧房子，弄丢了北京猿人头骨的考古学家，和人一样聪明的狗，步入高潮而又骤然降温的恋人，与狗为伴逍遥自在的单身汉，守着妈妈的孤苦伶仃的小女孩，退不掉的错投的邮件，……34个闻所未闻的新奇故事，吸引您忘掉学英语的苦恼，而陶醉在使用英语的快乐之中。



序

提起学英语，许多人是一肚子的苦水。学校里毕了业的，少的五六年，多的十几年，人人都在英语的学习上花了大量的精力和时间。好像哪门课程也没费这么大的劲，但是，好像哪门课程也没像英语这样差不多是白忙活了一场。

显然，一种语言作敲门砖用时，学起来肯定很累，很枯燥，也很难学得好。听说一位著名的语文专家答某一年的高考语文试卷，成绩几乎是不及格。英语考试的出题水平不会比语文差吧？只是这样一来，语文、英语也就学不成了。

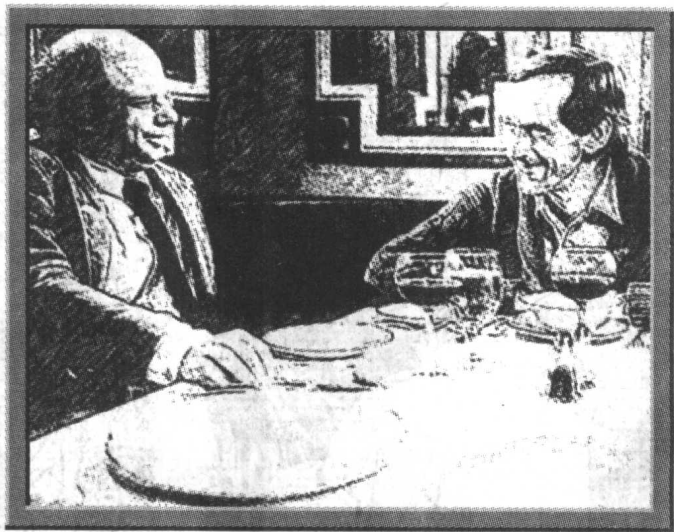
事实上，没有人是把所有的字都认识了才去读书，每个人都有自己不懂的东西。正是在这懂与不懂之间，我们的语言能力提高了。我们读书看报的时候，不是为了提高阅读技能；我们与人交谈，也不是为了练习会话：我们只是在做我们想做的事情，语言只是我们不经意间使用的工具。就像用筷子是要吃饭，而吃饭并不是为了练习用筷子一样。

使用是最好的学习。我的女儿两岁半了，不光言辞清楚，还时不时地绕着弯儿和我打嘴仗。能用一种语言斗嘴，这应当算是进入了语言学习的高级阶段，可她连幼儿园的学历都还没有呢。

如果时光倒流 20 年，我会对自己说：想掌握英语吗？直接去用就是了。

编者

1998 年 6 月



“我想，按照你的说法我用得不对吧？”他笑着问。

——摘自“无所谓”

文匯報簡訊 自瀛——



“你觉得那样子不可爱吗？”维吉妮娅问他。

他心不在焉地点点头。她没看见那个牌子上的字吗？她肯定看见了，他们刚好从那儿路过。她不知道禁止人到池塘里去吗？那两个人怎么搞到那条小船的？他们到处乱跑，一点儿也不尊章守纪。这种事情他很讨厌。

——摘自“稀里糊涂的爱”



所以，看到一个门外汉对他的工作真地很感兴趣，而且很敬重，哈维非常高兴。我留神听着哈维谈论他自己和他的工作，这是我惯用的与人交往的一种手腕儿。这时候，哈维变得健谈起来。

——摘自“搞清楚”



天呀，我记得那个晚上。当时，我和琼儿·马伦斯基，丽莎·格林从街上看电影回来，在迷宫一样的小巷子里，我们选了一条莫名其妙的路线。你肯定知道，那种地方是最容易让人迷路的。我们走进了一条长长的巷子，里面黑咕隆冬的，两边时不时有几扇窗户。这倒霉的路越走越窄，好像是一条死胡同。就在你这样想的时候，一堵墙挡在了面前。

——摘自“脏臭老头”

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小兔子罗宾

The Price of Rabbits Is Eternal Vigilance

但凡什么事情，一旦上了心，问题就比较严重。以前，家家都是一窝孩子，父母没费太大劲儿，也都长成了。眼下，只一个，九牛二虎的劲儿使了出来，养呀，教呀，还是问题多多，头疼不已。就此看来，给 John 两口子添事儿的小兔子罗宾，不就是他们找来的独生子吗？话又说回来了，付出爱心，是很能给人带来幸福感的，对有钱有闲的人来说，尤其是这样。

The story so far: John and Kelly, after discovering that rabbits don't get their dander up in the same way as dogs or cats, decide that a rabbit would be an ideal alternative to Kelly living the rest of her life in an antihistamine stupor. Egged on by the House Rabbit Society homepage, they proceed to find out all about bunnies and being collecting all the paraphernalia that accompanies them. They acquire a large cage, some wicker mats, a litter box or two, chew toys (some of which are rawhide and completely inappropriate for small vegetarian rodent), old toilet paper tubes, rabbit feed, and Timothy Hay.

“If you build it, they will come”.

The cage is brought home and installed, the litter box prepared, the water bottle watered. But no bun. Kelly and John nervously tour pet stores and SPCA dealerships. Friends ask-“Where’s the bunny?” when they come over. John and Kelly offer blank stares in response.

Eventually, it happens. While walking in the park at Amleside, they stumble across the richest SPCA in Canada ... the West Vancouver branch. Peering in at the diamond -encrusted dogs and gold chiffon cats, they inquire humbly if there are any rabbits. Sure enough, there is one little fellow, who had been brought in only the day before.

They bring him out, wrapped in a towel that reminds one of the baby Jesus laying in the manger. A tough kid, new off the streets, from a battered home. He trusts no one. But he seems to bond with Kelly quickly enough. With encouragement from a friend who is leaving the country forever in three weeks (hmmmm), they decide to adopt the rabbit. Looking sheepishly at the opulence of the West Van SPCA, they cough up a whopping \$ 20 donation and take the little guy home.

He arrives, and all seems well. Oh sure, he poops all over the apartment, but then, he’s not been litter trained. And besides, he’s an un-neutered male, and so he’s just being territorial. Calm in their knowledge that all is right with the world, John and Kelly and the yet-unnamed rabbit turn in for the night.

As the week progresses, things become somewhat more stressful. As John and Kelly stand around the apartment shouting various names at the rabbit (to see which one sticks), they notice that there is a pattern developing in his litter place-

ment. By the front door, and on the couch. They notice that he becomes rather agitated if they try to sweep up the cute little brown pellets.

Eventually, the inevitable occurs; a name sticks. Robin. Robin Bunny. As opposed to Robin Rabbit; Kelly doesn't think much of those cutesy alliterative pet names. And the other inevitability occurs, he pees on the couch. Well, it is HIS couch, right? Kelly grabs the bottle of white vinegar and doses the puddle. One million years of territorial instinct take over and Robin lays into Kelly with very well-honed teeth. John and Kelly think they've learned something.

They haven't. As the week draws to a close, they practice a policy of appeasement with Robin, never sweeping up or cleaning his puddles until after he's safe in his cage. Robin, of course, becomes the dominant animal in the apartment.

On the weekend, John and Kelly notice a different pattern in bunny behaviour. Robin no longer litters hundreds of pellets around the apartment. He now seems to just go where and when he pleases. In addition, he has begun to herd John and Kelly around like a sheepdog does sheep. Kelly develops many small scars and bruises where various parts of her body have come into conflict with small sharp teeth.

John throws a towel on top of a particularly big puddle on the couch, and the next thing he knows, there's four pounds of wild animal hanging from his butt, teeth firmly clenched into the flesh. That's enough, says John.

Egged on by the House Rabbit Society homepage, they make the appointment. Robin will go in on Monday, and come home a changed man, er, whatever. They spend the rest of the weekend in quiet deference to King Bun.

Robin goes to the vet Monday morning, after a traumatic struggle to get him into his traveling box. Robin comes home Monday night pissed off, a little wobbly from the anaesthetic, but noticeable subdued. He charges around after John and Kelly a little, but his effectiveness is somewhat diminished. “Poor rabbit,” they think. “It’s for the best,” says everyone else in the entire world. “Poor rabbit,” they think.

Tuesday morning, and Robin’s out of his cage. He’s, shall we say, mellower. He’s still a little snarky if he feels his personal space has been threatened. He poops maybe 15 pellets, in his usual places. He doesn’t pee anywhere. But he’s been dozing beside my desk for the past hour. Did you know rabbits can sleep with their eyes open? I wondered when he slept!

“Good things come to those who wait.”

A week and a half later, Robin has mellowed substantially. Neither of us has been bitten in a week, he’s stopped pelleting and spraying, and he even lets us sit on his couch! Watch this space for photo documentation of these developments.

Robin’s Bunny Facts

Rabbits are very fussy about the quality of their food. Robin eats Timothy Hay, pellet-style rabbit feed, parsley, carrots, spinach, and dandelion greens. Let the spinach sit in the fridge for more than about three days, and he doesn’t like it anymore.

Rabbits are absolutely litter-trainable. To our surprise, Robin started using his two litter boxes (one in his cage, one out) almost exclusively once he got over his testosterone rage.

Male rabbits make better pets if they’ve been neutered.

Our experience with Robin is that he was absolutely ODing on testosterone, unable to do much other than defend his territory. Since his neuter, he's become friendlier, more curious, more relaxed, and of course, neater!

Rabbits will chew on whatever they're curious about, including electrical cords. This is dangerous, obviously, and so you need to protect your cables. There is a product called Spiral Cable Wrap that you can get in Radio Shack in the United States. It is not sold in Canada, no matter what grumpy customs agents may tell you.

Rabbits are much smarter than you might expect. Robin is very difficult to spoof or fool, especially with sounds. He knows exactly where sound is coming from, unless it's from outside somewhere, in which case he becomes very alert.

Notes

vigilance n. 失眠, 警觉
 dander n. 怒气
 antihistamine n. 抗组胺剂
 stupor n. 麻木
 egg v. 挑唆
 paraphernalia n. 随身用具
 cage n. 笼
 wicker a. 柳条制的
 rawhide a. 生牛皮的
 vegetarian a. 素食的
 rodent n. 啮齿动物
 bun n. 兔子
 SPCA Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals n. 动

物保护协会
 dealership n. 代理商
 blank a. 痴情的
 stumble across 偶然发现
 humbly ad. 低声下气地
 manger n. 马槽
 sheepishly ad. 懦弱地
 opulence n. 丰富
 cough up 勉强说出
 vinegar n. 醋
 butt n. 头顶
 vet n. 兽医
 traumatic a. 外伤的
 anaesthetic n. 麻醉剂

poop v. 拉屎

pee v. 撒尿

fussy a. 挑剔

testosterone n. 睾丸激素

ODing a. 用药过量

grumpy a. 脾气暴躁的