



大学生英语分级阅读（二年级）

A READER'S GUIDE TO
30 ENGLISH SHORT STORIES

英语短篇小说品鉴（上）

（英汉对照）

林六辰 姚乃强 主编

 上海外语教育出版社
外教社 SHANGHAI FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION PRESS
www.sflep.com



外教社◎大学生英语分级阅读（二年级）

英语短篇小说品鉴 (上)

(英汉对照)

A READER'S GUIDE TO
30 ENGLISH SHORT STORIES

林六辰 姚乃强 主编

图书在版编目(CIP)数据

英语短篇小说品鉴. 上: 英汉对照 / 林六辰, 姚乃强编著.
—上海: 上海外语教育出版社, 2011
(外教社大学生英语分级阅读)
ISBN 978 - 7 - 5446 - 2374 - 2

I. ①英… II. ①林… ②姚… III. ①英语—汉语—对照读物
②小说—文学欣赏—世界 IV. ①H319.4: I

中国版本图书馆CIP数据核字(2011)第118044号

出版发行: **上海外语教育出版社**

(上海外国语大学内) 邮编: 200083

电 话: 021-65425300 (总机)

电子邮箱: bookinfo@sflep.com.cn

网 址: <http://www.sflep.com.cn> <http://www.sflep.com>

责任编辑: 曹 娟

印 刷: 上海叶大印务发展有限公司
开 本: 787×965 1/16 印张 16.5 字数 360千字
版 次: 2012年2月第1版 2012年2月第1次印刷
印 数: 5 000 册

书 号: ISBN 978-7-5446-2374-2 / I · 0188

定 价: 38.00 元

本版图书如有印装质量问题, 可向本社调换

编者的话

英语短篇小说历史悠久，最早可以追溯到14世纪乔叟的《坎特伯雷故事集》，现代意义上的短篇小说则出现于19世纪初。被誉为美国短篇小说之父的华盛顿·欧文于1820年出版的《见闻札记》，成为美国小说史上重要的里程碑。19世纪60年代前后短篇小说在欧美各国文坛得到了长足的发展，成为风靡一时的文学体裁。到了19世纪末，短篇小说作为一种独立的文学体裁更趋完善。美国作家埃德加·爱伦·坡第一个为短篇小说做出了明确的界定，说它是“短小精悍的叙事文学，要让读者能在半个小时内，或至多一到两个小时内读完”，还提出必须通过对事件删繁就简的选择和精心严格的打造，使之产生“单一的效果”。这个时期，美、英、法、俄等国涌现出一大批短篇小说家，如俄国的契诃夫、屠格涅夫，法国的莫泊桑、福楼拜，英国的托马斯·哈代、约翰·高尔斯华绥和美国的马克·吐温、亨利·詹姆斯、欧·亨利等，他们的创作对短篇小说的发展和繁荣做出了重要贡献，在世界文坛上叱咤风云，独领风骚。进入20世纪，用英语写作的爱尔兰作家弗兰克·奥康纳、加拿大的莫利·卡拉汉、澳大利亚的帕特里克·怀特、新西兰的凯瑟琳·曼斯菲尔德等与英美的威廉·福克纳、厄内斯特·海明威、杰克·伦敦、约瑟夫·康拉德等一起再次将英语短篇小说的创作推上新的高峰，使世界文学百花园更加精彩纷呈，绚丽多姿。

文学即人学，这是当今人们普遍的共识。美国作家兼文学评论家亨利·詹姆斯说得好，“小说从广义上讲就是个人对生活的直接印象”（《小说艺术》）。短篇小说与长篇小说相比具有故事人物少、时间跨度小、情节单一、主题鲜明等优势 and 特点，因而更有利于作家表达他们对生活的体验和感受。在《英语短篇小说品鉴》中，我们本着“以人为本”的指导思想，以小说中主人公的年龄为线索，按照青少年、中老年这人生的两大年龄段，分上、下两集选编了英语国家30名不同作家具有代表性的英语短篇小说，旨在使读者阅读时不仅能提高英语理解和欣赏能力，同时也帮助读者体味人生不同阶段所面临的问题，如生老病死，悲欢离合，世态炎凉等，从而感悟人生。






基于上述目的，《英语短篇小说品鉴》的编选原则是：一、所选作品多以写实为主，或者说具有较强的现实主义倾向，即“按照生活的本来面貌描写生活”（普希金语）；二、所选作品具有较强的可读性，即语言要“赏心悦目，声生金石”（毛姆语）。前者是后者的前提。因为现实主义的作品更贴近生活，反映生活，读者易于理解，倍感亲切；同时，作品的语言力求朴实优美，引人入胜，使人一读就爱不释手。入选作品在时间上几乎跨越了整个20世纪，其中最早的短篇小说写于1908年，最晚的写于1989年，无论写作时间早晚，由于它们都来源于生活，剖析人性，今天的人们读来一样感到亲近；从入选作品作家的国度看，他们几乎覆盖了讲英语的主要国家，如美国、英国、爱尔兰、加拿大、澳大利亚、新西兰、南非等，他们就是在这样一个广阔的地域中使有着不同历史文化背景的白人、黑人、印第安人等不同人种和民族的生活状况跃然纸上；从小说中人物所从事的职业看，他们有农夫、雇工、职员、学生、士兵、警察、牧师、小业主，各行各业，应有尽有，他们从生活的不同侧面展示着人生的酸甜苦辣和人性的真善美；从他们所反映出的人生问题看，既有爱情、亲情、友情和乡情，又有青少年成长的烦恼、父母对子女的教育、恋爱与婚姻、夫妻关系、赡养老人、代沟矛盾，以及如何战胜疾病

与孤独等人生各个阶段所面临的不同问题，而且它们还涉及到科学进步、社会文明、种族歧视、宗教信仰、战争忧患，以及人与社会、人与自然等问题。所以我们说，《英语短篇小说品鉴》实际上就是人类大千社会的一个万花筒，读者通过它可以看到在世界这个大舞台上各种演员的不同造型、心理特征以及他们的精神风貌。最后，按照可读性原则，入选作品都经过了反复研究、比较和筛选，均为上乘之作，大多是脍炙人口的经典名篇，其中不少为国内外的选集和教科书所录用或推荐，适合英语学习者和文学爱好者使用。

在编写体例上，《英语短篇小说品鉴》分为上下两册，各15篇、共30篇。就每一篇而言，先是作家简介与导读，接着是小说原文与注释，以及与原文对应的参考译文。小说的原文基本上不作删节或改写，尽量保持原汁原味。至于注释，对于借助词典或普通工具书能解决的问题便不作注释，只是对一些背景知识、历史典故或有歧义的语言难点作必要的解释。这主要是考虑到改革开放以来，随着我国英语教学水平的普遍提高，愈来愈多的青年学生和读者具备阅读英文原著的能力。但是，为了帮助读者更好地理解与鉴赏作品，我们还是对每一位作家做了简要的介绍和启发性的导读，并附有参考译文。所附译文都是编者自行翻译的，当然也参考了某些现有译文，力求精当，瞄向“信、达、雅”，但以忠实原著为第一原则，帮助读者正确理解为主要目的。因此，我们认为这个选读本，除了可用作英语专业高年级学生及研究生的文学阅读教材或课外读物外，还可以供所有非英语专业的学生和广大英语文学爱好者使用。

《英语短篇小说品鉴》一书从酝酿到策划，从选材到编译，从注释到审订，前后经历了五个春秋，三次改变计划，多次易名，从原定的四册50篇压缩到两册30篇……期间的艰辛，一言难尽。如今看到它即将付印，犹如十月怀胎，分娩在即，喜悦之情，难以言表。在此我们要向对本书的出版给予帮助的朋友们表示衷心的感谢。这里要特别感谢的是北京大学的陶洁教授和上海外国语大学的虞建华教授，他们给予本书编者以热情的鼓励，并提出了许多中肯的建议。我们还要感谢上海外语教育出版社的领导和编辑们，没有他们的付出和支持，本书也难以与读者见面。本书的各项工作主要由林六辰完成，从立项、选材、翻译、注释，到打印校阅，均由他统筹安排，全盘负责。姚乃强参与了本书的策划、选材、审阅和部分导读的编写工作。时间是检验一个读本的试金石。我们衷心希望本书像所选的小说一样能长久地留在人们的记忆中，供您回味品鉴。

CONTENTS 目录

- | | | | |
|---|-----|---|--|
|  | 7 | 1 My Oedipus Complex
我的俄狄浦斯情结 | Frank O'Connor (Irish)
弗兰克·奥康纳 (爱尔兰) |
|  | 27 | 2 Tell Us About the Turkey, Jo
乔,你还没说我被火鸡追赶那件事 | Alan Marshall (Australian)
艾伦·马歇尔 (澳大利亚) |
| | 37 | 3 Araby
初恋 | James Joyce (Irish)
詹姆斯·乔伊斯 (爱尔兰) |
|  | 49 | 4 The Grave
墓穴淘宝 | Katherine Anne Porter (American)
凯瑟琳·安妮·波特 (美国) |
| | 61 | 5 Two Kinds
乖女儿,还是倔女儿? | Amy Tan (American)
谭恩美 (美国) |
|  | 81 | 6 Salvation
得救 | Langston Hughes (American)
兰斯顿·休斯 (美国) |
| | 87 | 7 The Last Word Was Love
最后一个字是“爱” | William Saroyan (American)
威廉·萨洛扬 (美国) |
| | 97 | 8 How I Met My Husband
我是怎样遇上我丈夫的 | Alice Munro (Canadian)
艾丽丝·门罗 (加拿大) |
|  | 127 | 9 The Snob
势利眼 | Morley Callaghan (Canadian)
莫利·卡拉汉 (加拿大) |
| | 137 | 10 A & P
大西洋—太平洋食品超市 | John Updike (American)
约翰·厄普代克 (美国) |
| | 151 | 11 Everything That Rises
Must Converge
凡上升的必然汇合 | Flannery O'Connor (American)
弗兰纳里·奥康纳 (美国) |



177

12 The Bench
长椅上的较量

Richard Rive (South African)
理查德·里夫(南非)



189

13 A Horseman in the Sky
空中骑士

Ambrose Bierce (American)
安布罗斯·毕尔斯(美国)

201

14 Youth
青春

Joseph Conrad (British)
约瑟夫·康拉德(英国)

249

15 The Valentine Generation
爱情在变吗?

John Wain (British)
约翰·韦恩(英国)



作者简介与导读

弗兰克·奥康纳(Frank O'Connor, 1903–1966), 爱尔兰短篇小说家和文学批评家。原名迈克尔·奥多诺万(Michael O'Donovan), 出生于爱尔兰港口城市科尔。出身清寒, 未受过正规教育, 但在母亲明妮·奥康纳(Minnie O'Connor)的诱导和影响下, 发愤图强, 刻苦自学, 终于成名。为纪念其母, 他用母亲的姓氏作为自己笔名的姓。

奥康纳以其文笔诙谐、语言生动的短篇小说闻名于世, 一生创作了150多篇短篇小说。由于他对爱尔兰人民的生活观察细致入微, 又有亲身的经历, 所以作品充满爱尔兰民族的风土人情, 深受爱尔兰人民的喜爱。奥康纳对短篇小说创作有着自己独到的见解。他的文学批评著作《寂寞之声: 短篇小说研究》(*The Lonely Voice: A Study of the Short Story*, 1963), 充分阐明了他对短篇小说写作以及一些名家的看法。他的其他作品有: 自传《独生子》(*An Only Son*, 1961)、《我父亲的儿子》(*My Father's Son*, 1968)、《爱尔兰文学回顾》(*The Backward Look: A Survey of Irish Literature*, 1967)等。此外, 他还写过诗歌、剧本, 并将爱尔兰语作品翻译成英语。

奥康纳擅长写儿童题材的小说, 《我的俄狄浦斯情结》是其代表作之一。小说对于儿童的言语行为乃至心理活动作了形象逼真的描述, 并借用小孩之口讲述自己的故事, 即采用第一人称的叙事方法。与第三人称相比, 这样更能拉近读者和讲故事人的距离, 使读者或听众有亲临其境之感, 增强了故事的真实性。再加上故事的主人公是小孩, 讲述的又是小孩自己的事, 常言道“童言无忌”, 更加使得故事真实可信。由于小说是对童年的回忆, 作家实际上是以成人的思维用第三人称有限全知视角借小孩之口来讲述故事。在创作时, 作家还紧紧抓住儿童天真无邪、纯洁烂漫的特性, 巧妙地运用了戏剧性讽刺这一创作技巧, 即让小说中的人物对某一事物的认识在读者和其他人看来是狭隘片面的, 或者说是荒唐可笑的。总之, 作者将儿童的语言与成人的思维融合得浑然一体, 使小说写得鲜活生动、趣味盎然。

🎧 My Oedipus Complex¹ Frank O'Connor (Irish)

Father was in the army all through the war — the first war, I mean — so, up to the age of five, I never saw much of him, and what I saw did not worry me. Sometimes I woke and there was a big figure in khaki peering down at me in the candlelight. Sometimes in the early morning I heard the slamming of the front door and the clatter of nailed boots down the cobbles of the lane. These were Father's entrances and exits. Like Santa Claus² he came and went mysteriously.

In fact, I rather liked his visits, though it was an uncomfortable squeeze between mother and him when I got into the big bed in the early morning. He smoked, which gave him a pleasant musty smell, and shaved, an operation of astounding interest. Each time he left a trail of souvenirs — model tanks and Gurkha knives³ with handles made of bullet cases, and German helmets and cap badges and button-sticks, all sorts of military equipment — carefully stowed away in a long box on top of the wardrobe, in case they ever came in handy. There was a bit of the magpie about Father; he expected everything to come in handy. When his back was turned, Mother let me get a chair and rummage through his treasures. She didn't seem to think so highly of them as he did.

The war was the most peaceful period of my life. The window of my attic faced southeast. My mother had curtained it, but that had small effect. I always woke with the first light and, with all the responsibilities of the previous day melted, feeling myself rather like the sun, ready to illuminate and rejoice. Life never seemed so simple and clear and full of possibilities as then. I put my feet out from under the clothes — I called them Mrs. Left and Mrs. Right — and invented dramatic situations for them in which they discussed the problems of the day. At least Mrs. Right did; she was very demonstrative, but I hadn't the same control of Mrs. Left, so she mostly contented herself with nodding agreement.

They discussed what Mother and I should do during the day, what Santa Claus should give a fellow for Christmas, and what steps should be taken to brighten the home. There was that little matter of the baby, for instance. Mother and I could never agree about that. Ours was the only house in the terrace without a new baby, and Mother said we couldn't afford one till Father came back from the war because they cost seventeen and six.

1 Oedipus complex: 俄狄浦斯情结, 也说恋母情结。俄狄浦斯出自希腊神话, 是底比斯国王拉伊俄斯的儿子。因有神预言他将杀父娶母, 出生后就被父亲弃在山崖, 但却被牧人所救, 由科林斯国王收养。长大后, 想逃避杀父娶母的命运, 却在无意中杀死生父。后因道破斯芬克司的谜底, 被底比斯人拥戴为新王, 并娶前王之妻即其生母伊厄卡斯塔为妻, 生育子女四人。后来全国瘟疫流行, 神谕须除去杀死前王的罪人才能消灾。他追究原因, 始知自己实已杀父娶母。伊厄卡斯塔闻讯自缢, 俄狄浦斯也在悲愤中刺瞎双目, 流浪而死。现常用来比喻无法摆脱的命运悲剧。俄狄浦斯情结, 是精神分析学派的一个概念。心理学家弗洛伊德认为俄狄浦斯情结是男孩从2~3岁就具有的一种无意识欲望, 其内容是对母亲的强烈的爱和占有欲, 对父亲的嫉妒、恐惧与敌视, 到5~6岁时男孩便加强与父亲的认同, 抑制反对父亲的欲望。小说中的主人公就处在这个时期。

我的俄狄浦斯情结 弗兰克·奥康纳(爱尔兰)

战争时期父亲一直在军中服役，我指的是第一次世界大战。因此直到5岁时，我都很少见到他，而且看到他还不觉心烦。有时晚上醒来，会发现一个身穿黄咔叽制服的大汉在烛光下俯视我。有时一大早，我会听到大门“砰”的一声关上了，然后便是长筒靴鞋钉踩在鹅卵石小径上的咔嚓声。父亲就是这样来无影去无踪，像圣诞老人一样神秘。

事实上，我倒也挺喜欢他回来，尽管我在一大早爬上大床时，夹在他和妈妈中间挤得难受。他抽烟，烟草使他身上散发出一种舒心的霉味；他刮脸，其动作惊人的好玩。他每次回来都要留下一些纪念品——什么坦克模型、用弹壳做刀把的廓尔喀短刀、德国头盔、帽徽和擦拭军扣用的小棒等各式各样的军用品——这些都被他仔细地存放在衣橱顶上的一个长匣子里，以便日后有用。父亲什么东西都爱收藏，希望日后能派上用场。当他不在时，妈妈就让我把椅子搬来，站在上面去翻腾他那些稀罕玩艺儿。她并不像父亲那样看重它们。

战争期间是我一生中最平静的时期。我住的小阁楼，窗户朝向东南，虽然妈妈给安了窗帘，但并不起什么作用。我总是天一亮就醒来，随着前一天事情的淡忘，感觉自己就像初升的太阳一样，光芒四射，心花怒放。任何时候的生活都没有像当时那样单纯、明朗和充满希望。我把两只脚从被窝里伸出来——称它们为左太太和右太太——设计些戏剧场景，让她们讨论当天的问题。至少右太太是这样，她非常善于表演；但对于左太太，我掌控得就没那么自如。她多半只是点点头表示一下赞同而已。

她们讨论妈妈和我当天要做什么，圣诞老人该给小孩送什么礼物，我们怎样才能使家里更有生气，比如，要不要再添一个小孩的问题。在这个问题上，妈妈总是和我意见不一致。我们家是我们这排房子中唯一没有再添小孩的。妈妈说要等爸爸回来后，我们才能养得起，因为新添一个小孩要花费17镑6先令。

2 Santa Claus: 圣诞老人，也指圣·尼古拉斯。传说中的人物，通常被描绘成一个在圣诞节前夕（一些欧洲国家中的圣·尼古拉斯节），从遥远的北方来给孩子们送礼物的老人。他身着红装，留着白胡子，形象滑稽，和蔼可亲，深受孩子们的喜爱。

3 Gurkha knives: 廓尔喀短刀。一种宽面刃的短刀，因最早使用于印度廓尔喀部落而得名。

That showed how simple she was. The Geneys up the road had a baby, and everyone knew they couldn't afford seventeen and six. It was probably a cheap baby, and Mother wanted something really good, but I felt she was too exclusive. The Geneys' baby would have done us fine.

Having settled my plans for the day, I got up, put a chair under the attic window, and lifted the frame high enough to stick out my head. The window overlooked the front gardens of the terrace behind ours, and beyond these it looked over a deep valley to the tall, red-brick houses terraced up the opposite hillside, which were all still in shadow, while those at our side of the valley were all lit up, though with long strange shadows that made them seem unfamiliar; rigid and painted.

After that I went into Mother's room and climbed into the big bed. She woke and I began to tell her of my schemes. By this time, though I never seem to have noticed it, I was petrified in my nightshirt, and I thawed as I talked until, the last frost melted, I fell asleep beside her and woke again only when I heard her below in the kitchen, making the breakfast.

After breakfast we went into town; heard Mass¹ at St. Augustine's² and said a prayer for Father, and did the shopping. If the afternoon was fine we either went for a walk in the country, or a visit to Mother's great friend in the convent, Mother St. Dominic³. Mother had them all praying for Father, and every night, going to bed, I asked God to send him back safe from the war to us. Little, indeed, did I know what I was praying for!

One morning, I got into the big bed, and there, sure enough, was Father in his usual Santa Claus manner, but later, instead of uniform, he put on his best blue suit, and Mother was as pleased as anything. I saw nothing to be pleased about, because, out of uniform, Father was all together less interesting, but she only beamed, and explained that our prayers had been answered, and off we went to Mass to thank God for having brought Father safely home.

The irony of it! That very day when he came in to dinner he took off his boots and put on his slippers, donned the dirty old cap he wore about the house to save him from colds, crossed his legs, and began to talk gravely to Mother, who looked anxious. Naturally, I disliked her looking anxious, because it destroyed her good looks, so I interrupted him.

"Just a moment, Larry!" she said gently.

This was only what she said when we had boring visitors, so I attached no importance to it and went on talking.

"Do be quiet. Larry!" she said impatiently. "Don't you hear me talking to Daddy?"

1 Mass: 弥撒, 罗马天主教中的主要宗教仪式, 源于传说中耶稣基督的最后晚餐。

2 St. Augustine: 圣奥古斯丁(? ~ 604), 罗马本笃会圣安德烈隐修院院长, 597年率传教团到英格兰, 使英格兰人皈依基督教, 同年任英格兰坎特伯雷首任大主教, 故被称为“坎特伯雷的圣奥古斯丁”。

由此可见，她头脑多么简单，路那头的杰尼家就新添了个小孩。可谁都知道他们是付不起17镑6先令的。也许他们的孩子便宜，妈妈想要一个真正好的，但我觉得她未免太挑剔了。对我们来说，有个杰尼家那样的孩子就行。

想好了一天的计划，我便起床，在阁楼的窗户前放把椅子，拉起窗框好把头伸到外边。窗外是我们家后面一排房子的前花园，再往远看就是深谷对面山坡上那一排排高大的红砖房，太阳还没有照到；而我们这边的房子已经是沐浴在旭日的光辉下，长长的影子使它们看上去很陌生，很死板，像是画里的房子似的。

之后，我便来到妈妈的房间，爬到她的大床上。待她醒来时，我开始给她讲述我一天的安排。这时，穿着睡衣的我已冻得冰凉，可我似乎从未感觉到。躺在妈妈的身边，我说着说着就浑身热乎起来，直到身上的最后一丝寒气融化，再次进入梦乡。等听到妈妈在楼下厨房做饭时，我这才又醒来。

早饭后，我们进城，在圣奥古斯丁教堂听完弥撒，并为爸爸做过祈祷后再去市场购物。下午如果天气好，我们要么去乡间散步，要么去修道院看望妈妈的好朋友，圣多米尼克教母。妈妈让她们全都为爸爸祈祷。我也在每天晚上睡觉前祈求上帝将爸爸平安地送回家，其实我并不知道我在祈祷什么！

一天早晨，我爬上大床，再次看到了，毫无疑问，圣诞老人般来去无踪影的爸爸。但是，后来我发现他不再穿制服而是穿上了他那件漂亮的蓝外套，妈妈甭提有多高兴了。我却看不出有什么值得高兴的地方，因为爸爸脱下军装就没有那么好玩啦。可是妈妈却一个劲地高兴，说是我们的祈祷总算应验了。我们还去做弥撒，感谢上帝终于把爸爸安全地送回了家。

令人感到滑稽的是：就在那天他进屋吃饭时，他脱下靴子，换上拖鞋，戴上了那顶为预防感冒在屋里戴的又脏又旧的帽子，跷着二郎腿，一本正经地跟妈妈谈起话来，妈妈却是满脸的愁容。自然，我不喜欢妈妈哭丧着脸。这样不好看，于是我打断爸爸。

“等一会儿，拉里！”妈妈柔声说。

她只是平时在家里有不受欢迎的客人时才这样说，所以我并没有太在意她的话，只管往下说。

“别打岔，拉里！”妈妈不耐烦了。“没听到我在跟爸爸说话吗？”

3 Mother St. Dominic: 圣多米尼克教母，女修道院的主持。

This was the first time I had heard those ominous words, “talking to Daddy,” and I couldn’t help feeling that if this was how God answered prayers, he couldn’t listen to them very attentively.

“Why are you talking to Daddy?” I asked with as great a show of indifference as I could muster.

“Because Daddy and I have business to discuss. Now, don’t interrupt again!”

In the afternoon, at Mother’s request, Father took me for a walk. This time we went into town instead of out to the country, and I thought at first, in my usual optimistic way, that it might be an improvement. It was nothing of the sort. Father and I had quite different notions of a walk in town. He had no proper interest in trams, ships, and horses, and the only thing that seemed to divert him was talking to fellows as old as himself. When I wanted to stop he simply went on, dragging me behind him by the hand; when he wanted to stop I had no alternative but to do the same. I noticed that it seemed to be a sign that he wanted to stop for a long time whenever he leaned against a wall. The second time I saw him do it I got wild. He seemed to be settling himself forever. I pulled him by the coat and trousers, but, unlike Mother who, if you were too persistent, got into a wax and said: “Larry, if you don’t behave yourself, I’ll give you a good slap,” Father had an extraordinary capacity for amiable inattention. I sized him up and wondered would I cry, but he seemed to be too remote to be annoyed even by that. Really, it was like going for a walk with a mountain! He either ignored the wrenching and pummeling entirely, or else glanced down with a grin of amusement from his peak. I had never met anyone so absorbed in himself as he seemed.

At tea time, “talking to Daddy” began again, complicated this time by the fact that he had an evening paper, and every few minutes he put it down and told Mother something new out of it. I felt this was foul play. Man for man, I was prepared to compete with him any time for Mother’s attention, but when he had it all made up for him by other people it left me no chance. Several times I tried to change the subject without success.

“You must be quiet while Daddy is reading, Larry,” Mother said impatiently.

It was clear that she either genuinely liked talking to Father better than talking to me, or else that he had some terrible hold on her which made her afraid to admit the truth.

“Mummy,” I said that night when she was tucking me up, “do you think if I prayed hard God would send Daddy back to the war?”

“No, dear,” she said with a smile. “I don’t think he would.”

“Why wouldn’t he, Mummy?”

“Because there isn’t a war any longer, dear.”

“But, Mummy, could God make another war, if he liked?”

“He wouldn’t like to, dear. It’s not God who makes wars, but bad people.”

“Oh!” I said.

I was disappointed about that. I began to think God wasn’t quite what he was cracked up to be.

这是我第一次听到这些晦气的字眼，“跟爸爸在说话”，我禁不住在想如果这就是上帝对我们祈祷的回应，那么上帝肯定没有认真倾听我们的祈祷。

“你为什么要跟爸爸说话？”我鼓足勇气满不在乎地问道。

“因为爸爸和我在谈正事。好啦，别再插嘴了！”

到了下午，在妈妈的要求下，爸爸带我去散步。这一次我们是进城，而不是到乡下去。起初我想，这可能是个进步，我一直看问题比较乐观。然而根本不是那回事。爸爸跟我进城去散步的想法大不一样。他对电车、轮船和马这些东西丝毫不感兴趣，他唯一的兴趣好像就是跟年龄相仿的人交谈。当我想停下来时，他硬拽着我走；而他要停下来时，我却只能也停下来。我注意到他一靠墙就意味着要停很久。所以当他又要靠墙时，我不干了。可他却好像永远都那么平静，任凭你怎样去拉扯他的上衣还是裤子。要是妈妈，如果你一再坚持她就会生气地说：“拉里，要是再不乖，我可要好好揍你了。”爸爸则不然，对我这样的软磨硬泡不理不睬，而且是和颜悦色。我上下打量着他，心想要不要哭闹，可他看上去那么冷漠，哭也无济于事。真的，跟他一起散步就像跟大山一起散步一样！他要么任你随意拉拽捶打，要么低头看一眼开心一笑。我从未见过像他这样只顾自己的人！

喝茶时，“跟爸爸说话”又来了。这一次反倒更复杂，爸爸手里拿着一份晚报，每隔几分钟就停下来，把看到的新闻念给妈妈听。我觉得这样太不公平了。一对一，我随时准备跟他争夺妈妈的注意力，但他把其他的人当话题来对付我，我就没辙了。好几次，我都试图改变话题但没能成功。

“爸爸看报时你一定要安静，拉里。”妈妈不耐烦地说。

显然，要么是她真喜欢跟爸爸说话而不愿跟我说话，要么就是她受制于爸爸，不敢透露真情。

“妈咪，”那天晚上当她给我盖被子时，我说：“如果我向上帝祈祷，他会把爸爸再送回战场吗？”

“不会的，亲爱的，”她微笑着说：“我想他不会。”

“为什么不会，妈咪？”

“因为战争已经结束了，亲爱的。”

“可是，妈咪，如果上帝愿意的话，他会再发动一场战争吗？”

“他不会的，亲爱的，不是上帝发动的战争，而是坏人。”

“哦！”我说道。

对此，我很失望。我开始认为上帝不如人们吹捧的那样。

Next morning I woke at my usual hour, feeling like a bottle of champagne. I put out my feet and invented a long conversation in which Mrs. Right talked of the trouble she had with her own father till she put him in the Home. I didn't quite know what the Home was but it sounded the right place for Father. Then I got my chair and stuck my head out of the attic window. Dawn was just breaking, with a guilty air that made me feel I had caught it in the act. My head bursting with stories and schemes, I stumbled in next door, and in the half-darkness scrambled into the big bed. There was no room at Mother's side so I had to get between her and Father. For the time being I had forgotten about him, and for several minutes I sat bolt upright, racking my brains to know what I could do with him. He was taking up more than his fair share of the bed, and I couldn't get comfortable, so I gave him several kicks that made him grunt and stretch. He made room all right, though. Mother waked and felt for me. I settled back comfortably in the warmth of the bed with my thumb in my mouth.

"Mummy!" I hummed, loudly and contentedly.

"Sssh! dear," she whispered. "Don't wake Daddy!"

This was a new development, which threatened to be even more serious than "talking to Daddy." Life without my early-morning conferences was unthinkable.

"Why?" I asked severely.

"Because poor Daddy is tired."

This seemed to me a quite inadequate reason, and I was sickened by the sentimentality of her "poor Daddy." I never liked that sort of gush; it always struck me as insincere.

"Oh!" I said lightly. Then in my most winning tone: "Do you know where I want to go with you today, Mummy?"

"No, dear," she sighed.

"I want to go down the Glen and fish for thornybacks with my new net, and then I want to go out to the Fox and Hounds, and —"

"Don't-wake-Daddy!" she hissed angrily, clapping her hand across my mouth.

But it was too late. He was awake, or nearly so. He grunted and reached for the matches. Then he stared incredulously at his watch.

"Like a cup of tea, dear?" asked Mother in a meek, hushed voice I had never heard her use before. It sounded almost as though she were afraid.

"Tea?" he exclaimed indignantly. "Do you know what the time is?"

"And after that I want to go up the Rathcooney Road," I said loudly, afraid I'd forget something in all those interruptions.

"Go to sleep at once, Larry!" she said sharply.

I began to snivel. I couldn't concentrate, the way that pair went on, and smothering my early-morning schemes was like burying a family from the cradle.