

Moral Reading Through English

英 语 情 感 阅 读 丛 书

# Fraternity and Friendship

(博爱友情篇)

编注 宫玉波 杨毓媛

主审 范凤祥





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英语情愿

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编注:宫玉波 杨丽娟

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## 编者的话

人世间最难得的是真诚，  
最宝贵的是友情。

*In one's life,  
what one values most  
is honesty and  
what one cherishes most  
is friendship.*

## 前 言

人有贤愚，书有优劣。贤者愚者，差别在于读书，读书可以补先天之不足。读好书可以怡情、博采、长才、益德。《英语情感阅读丛书》，就是这样一套不可多得的好书。它包括父亲篇、母亲篇、师生篇、爱情篇、婚姻家庭篇等共十本，几乎囊括了人生的一切经历。作者们用短小的篇幅，质朴的语言，实话实说，将自己对父母的深情、师长的崇敬、子女的关怀、弟子的教诲、邻里的情谊、家庭的温馨、事业的追求、人生的感悟、童真的追忆等等至情至理，一一诉诸笔端，跃然纸上，不图粉饰，但求分享，读来使人感动，令人深思，给人激励，催人奋发。此书无论少长读者，不论英语水平深浅，都可阅读，益德长才。

此套丛书的文章均选自现代英美报刊，作者多是常人，述说的多是常事常情，对中国读者来说，仿佛是自己的经历，或是身边事儿，他人用英文写出，似曾相识，自己未曾表达出来而已。读着读着，你会不由自主地觉得，虽国度不同、肤色各异、语言有别，但人情人性通矣。读此书，可真正了解天下人的喜怒

哀乐、为人处事，足补时下传媒之不足。

十年前便有选编此丛书之想，盼望在书架上能有一排这样的小书，清清爽爽，干干净净，既能学到地道英文，又可了解欧美人情，既可推荐给学生与子女，又能坦然长留书橱。

当我将上述想法与大通私立商贸外语学校的同事一谈，皆表赞同，并有年轻学生的热盼，于是有关老师雷厉风行，积极奋战，经过精心筛选和严谨注释，现在这套丛书的全部书稿便摆在案前，令人欣慰不已。于是写下上面几句，以作前言。

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宋贵庆

1996.12 于大连

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**Is his ladder just a gift?**

## **A Neighbor's Gift**

*CHRISTOPHER DE VINCK*

EACH NOVEMBER for eight years I would ask my neighbor if I could borrow his 16-foot \* aluminum extension ladder<sup>(1)</sup> to clean the leaves from my gutters<sup>(2)</sup>.

Each November Barry would \* pull on<sup>(3)</sup> his plaid<sup>(4)</sup> coat and escort<sup>(5)</sup> me behind his house, where he kept the ladder under a crawl space.

The two of us would stoop<sup>(6)</sup> and make our way through old cobwebs<sup>(7)</sup>, reshuffle<sup>(8)</sup> a tricycle or two, drag a hose<sup>(9)</sup> out of the way.

"Going to your folks' home for Thanksgiving<sup>(10)</sup> this year?" he'd ask.

"Same as last year," I'd answer.

Barry would grab<sup>(11)</sup> one end of the ladder, and I'd grab the other. "Let me help you get this thing over," Barry would say as I'd jump over the thin wire fence separating our yards. The ladder wasn't heavy. We just enjoyed playing out our

parts.

“I really should buy one of these.”

“Why bother?” Barry would reply. “You can use mine anytime.”

Barry and his wife, Patti, came to the baptisms<sup>(12)</sup> of my children and \* handed down<sup>(13)</sup> the pants, shirts and boots their children outgrew. My family and I took shelter in his house one February night for five or six hours while the oil company repaired our \* stalled furnace<sup>(14)</sup>.

\* “The pulley system sticks a bit,”<sup>(15)</sup> he would warn about the ladder.

“I’ll get it back to you in a few hours.”

“No hurry. If I’m not home, just leave it on the other side of the fence.” With a quick wave Barry would then return to his house.

Each November.

Last winter a “For Sale” sign appeared on Barry’s front lawn. It was difficult to accept that his company really was leaving New York for Dallas.

Even when the moving van stood before Barry’s house, I still didn’t react as I should have. I should have embraced him. I simply shook his hand and said good-by. As he drove away, I should have waved and waved and waved, but I



didn't.

That evening, as I was pulling my son's tricycle in for the day, I found, leaning against the side of my garage, the 16-foot aluminum extension ladder.

\*\*\*\*\*

## Notes:

- (1) 铝制伸缩梯
- (2) (房屋的) 檐槽
- (3) 穿上(衣服)
- (4) 方格呢
- (5) 伴随
- (6) 弯腰
- (7) 蜘蛛网
- (8) 重新摆放
- (9) 胶皮管, 水龙带
- (10) 感恩节(在美国是 11 月的最后一个星期四)
- (11) 抓住
- (12) (基督教的) 洗礼
- (13) 传下来; 给予
- (14) 出故障的炉子
- (15) 滑轮有点发涩

**Their caring hands and true compassion  
blessed my mother's final days**

## Angels of Mercy

*PETER JARET*

IN THE END, my mother just wanted to be at home.

For more than a year she had been in and out of hospitals—first for the tests that confirmed lung cancer, next for the operation, and then for more tests that showed the cancer had spread into her bones. There were trips to the hospital for \* radiation treatment<sup>(1)</sup>, for chemotherapy<sup>(2)</sup> and for tests that told us neither had been of much help. And then there was one last trip to a hospital emergency room; while on vacation in Florida, my mother awoke one morning paralyzed<sup>(3)</sup> from the chest down by a tumor<sup>(4)</sup> pressing against her spine<sup>(5)</sup>.

The doctors there could offer only what had been tried before. My mother said no. She had had

enough. That afternoon my father \* arranged for<sup>(6)</sup> a home-health-care nurse to come the next morning.

Early that evening, however, he placed a panicked<sup>(7)</sup> call to the nurse, Jarie. My mother was unable to empty her bladder<sup>(8)</sup>; she needed a catheter<sup>(9)</sup>. Jarie raced to us immediately.

For the next two weeks Jarie came almost every day. She taught us how to move my mother, how to exercise her legs, how to bathe her. On the days she didn't come, she called to see how we were managing. One particularly hard day, when I stood at the window wondering how we could bear this, Jarie came up behind me and said simply that she understood, and shared our anguish<sup>(10)</sup>.

When my mother got back home to Chicago, the pain spread. We were frightened, just as we would be later when she developed difficulty swallowing and even breathing.

Her specialists prescribed morphine<sup>(11)</sup> and antibiotics<sup>(12)</sup> over the telephone. But they said they could examine her only in the hospital. By then, moving my mother from bed to wheelchair took two people and was excruciatingly<sup>(13)</sup> painful. And she was terrified of the hospital. It was, for her, a place to die.



With misgivings, my father contacted another home-health-care agency. We were sure we had simply been lucky to find Jarie in Florida. It wasn't so. The three nurses who helped us were just as competent and compassionate.

One in particular, Marilyn, seemed able to make my mother comfortable despite the fiercest pain. Over the next five months, through one scare after another, Marilyn was there. She made it clear that she expected to be called, night or day, if we needed her. She regularly came a few hours early or stayed a few hours late to accommodate our schedules. She took my mother's vital signs, managed her medications, bathed her, treated her bedsores, controlled her fever. And as my mother lost her appetite, her ability to read, her will to fight, Marilyn baked zucchini<sup>(14)</sup> bread for her, read to her, arrived in the morning with flowers from her garden.

In a few short months, and under the hardest circumstances, Marilyn became part of the family, weaving<sup>(15)</sup> a special bond with my mother. The parting seemed unbearable when my mother's sister had to say good-bye after a two-week visit. Marilyn left the two of them alone on the patio. I escaped upstairs. Later I found Marilyn sitting

alone. She was crying.

The last night, when my mother knew she had very little time left, she wanted to know when Marilyn was coming. By the time that Marilyn arrived, my mother had already slipped into something like a coma<sup>(16)</sup>. For more than an hour she had been staring straight ahead, unable to respond. But when Marilyn moved around the bed to reach her side, my mother's eyes followed her.

Marilyn was with my mother when she died. She wept with my father, brother, sister and me. She came, on her own, no longer as a nurse but as a friend, to attend the memorial service.

Several of the nurses who helped us told me that they had left hospital assignments because they felt undervalued<sup>(17)</sup>. I only wish I knew how to place a value on what was, for us, invaluable<sup>(18)</sup> — the help we needed to let my mother die with dignity, with all of us around her, where she wanted to be: at home.

\* \* \* \* \*

## Notes:

(1)放射线治疗

- (2)化学疗法
- (3)瘫痪,麻痹
- (4)肿瘤
- (5)脊柱
- (6)安排
- (7)恐慌的
- (8)膀胱
- (9)导(液)管
- (10)(极度)痛苦
- (11)吗啡
- (12)抗菌素
- (13)极度地
- (14)(植物)绿皮西葫芦
- (15)编织,形成
- (16)昏迷(状态),麻木
- (17)价值受到低估的
- (18)无价的,无法估价的