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■ Elizabeth Gaskell (英) 著

Cranford

克兰福德



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- Elizabeth Gaskell (英) 著
- Kate Mattock (英) 改写
- 高黎 译

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克兰福德

著 (英) Elizabeth Gaskell

改写 (英) Kate Mattock

译 高 黎

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关于本书

克兰福德没有富人,但人们却忌讳谈论贫穷。绝对不能!那样做很俗气,而脱俗在克兰福德很重要。在尊敬的贾米森夫人的晚会上只有抹了黄油的薄面包(昂贵的食物显得俗气),杰西·布朗小姐公开谈论她那当店主的舅舅的时候,德博拉·詹金斯小姐生气极了。做生意的舅舅!多可怕啊!

150 年前的社会规则虽然和现在的不同,但人并没有什么两样。克兰福德的女士们和任何时代的人一样,她们会有喜怒哀乐,会骄傲、勇敢、嫉妒——也非常善良。可爱温柔的马蒂小姐遇到困难时,大家都想帮她。虽然马蒂小姐在生活中遇到很多不幸,但也有一个惊喜在等待着她……

CRANFORD

In Cranford nobody is very rich, but you must not talk about being poor. Indeed not! That would be a very vulgar thing to do. And in Cranford it is important not to be vulgar. At the Honourable Mrs Jamieson's evening parties there is only thin bread-and-butter (expensive food would be vulgar), and Miss Deborah Jenkyns is extremely cross when Miss Jessie Brown talks openly about her shopkeeper uncle. An uncle in trade! What horror!

The rules of society were different 150 years ago, but people stay the same. The ladies of Cranford are just like people in any age. They can be sad, happy, proud, brave, angry, jealous — and very kind. When dear, gentle Miss Matty is in trouble, everybody wants to help her. And though there are many sadnesses in Miss Matty's life, there is also a very happy surprise waiting for her ...

Contents

目 录

1. Our society	2
我们的社会	3
2. The captain	14
上尉	15
3. A love-affair of long ago	28
很久以前的一段恋情	29
4. Poor Peter	44
可怜的彼得	45
5. 'Your ladyship'	58
“尊敬的夫人”	59
6. Signor Brunoni	74
布鲁诺尼先生	75
7. Sudden news	90
突然的消息	91
8. True friends	104
真正的朋友	105
9. A happy return	120
幸福归来	121
ACTIVITIES: Before Reading	134
ACTIVITIES: While Reading	136
ACTIVITIES: After Reading	140

1

Our society

The first thing to say is that Cranford is held by the ladies. They rent all the best houses. If a married couple comes to live in the town, the gentleman soon disappears from sight. He is either frightened away by being the only man at the Cranford evening parties or he is at his business all week in Drumble, twenty miles away by train.

Anyway, what is there for a gentleman to do in Cranford? The town already has a doctor, and the ladies manage everything else perfectly well themselves. They keep the gardens tidy and their maid-servants busy. They have opinions on every important matter without troubling themselves with unnecessary reasons or arguments. They know exactly what everyone in the town is doing. They are kind to the poor and, usually, very kind and friendly to each other.

‘A man,’ as one of them said to me once, ‘is *terribly* in the way in the house!’

The Cranford ladies are not fashionable, and they prefer the old ways. When I lived there, they had exact rules for visiting, which they explained most seriously to any young people who came to stay: ‘Our friends have asked how you are, my dear, after your journey. They are sure to call on you the day after tomorrow, so be ready to receive them

1. 我们的社会

首先要说的是，克兰福德是由女士们控制着的。她们租住最好的房子。如果一对夫妇来镇上生活，那个男人不久就会从人们的视野中消失。他要么是因为成了克兰福德晚会上惟一的男人而被吓跑，要么就是整个星期都待在 20 英里外的德莱姆伯尔忙自己的事，那里有火车相通。

不管怎么说，男人在克兰福德能做什么呢？镇上已经有一个医生了，其他事情女士们自己都处理得井井有条。她们让花园保持整洁，让女仆们忙进忙出。对每件重要的事情她们有自己的看法，从不费神做无谓的推理或争论。镇里每个人在做什么她们都了如指掌。她们对穷人很好，通常彼此之间也非常友善。

“男人，”其中一位曾经对我说，“在家里实在碍手碍脚！”

克兰福德的女士们并不时髦，她们更喜欢传统的生活方式。我住在那里的时候，她们有严格的串门规矩，她们对来这里的年轻人都会非常认真地解释这些规矩：“亲爱的，我们的朋友们问你是否旅途劳顿。她们一定会在后天来看你，所以从 12 点开始你就要做

couple n. two people or things that are seen together or associated, esp. a man and woman together. 一对，一双（尤指男女）。**trouble** v. let oneself be worried or concerned about sth. （使）费神；（使）费心。**terribly** adv. (infml.) very. 很，非常。**in the way** causing inconvenience or obstruction. 造成不便或阻碍。

from twelve o'clock. From twelve to three are our calling hours. '

Then, after the friends had called: 'Always return a call within three days, my dear. And never stay longer than a quarter of an hour. '

The result of this rule, of course, was that nothing interesting was ever discussed. We talked about things like the weather, and left at the right time.

One or two of the Cranford ladies were poor, I imagine, but they tried to hide it, and the others kindly helped. When Mrs Forrester gave a party and her little maid had to get the tea-tray from under the sofa on which we sat, everyone just went on talking. And when Mrs Forrester pretended she did not know what cakes were on the tray, no one looked surprised. But we knew, and she knew that we knew, and we knew that she knew that we knew, that she had made the cakes herself that morning.

In fact, the Cranfordians thought it was 'vulgar' (a favourite word) to give anything expensive to eat or drink at their evening parties. Thin bread-and-butter was all that the Honourable Mrs Jamieson gave — and *she* was related to the late Lord Glenmire.

Yes, spending money was always 'vulgar', and we certainly did not tell anyone that we had very little to spend. So I shall never forget the horror when an old army captain came to live in Cranford and spoke openly about being

好迎接她们的准备。从 12 点到 3 点是我们的串门时间。”

朋友们拜访过后，她们又说：“一定要在三天内回访，亲爱的。但待在那里的时间千万别超过一刻钟。”

当然，有这条规矩束缚着，谈话的内容也就从来没有什么意思。我们谈谈天气之类的话题，然后准时离开。

我猜想，克兰福德有一两位女士家境并不宽裕，不过她们尽力掩饰这一点，其他人也善意地帮忙。福里斯特夫人举行聚会的时候，她的小女仆不得不从我们坐着的沙发下面取出茶盘，而大家还继续谈话。福里斯特夫人假装不知道托盘上是什么蛋糕，没人显出惊讶的样子。但我们知道，她也知道我们知道，而且我们也知道她知道我们知道，蛋糕是那天早上她亲手做的。

实际上，克兰福德人觉得在晚上请客人吃喝昂贵的东西很“俗气”（人们最爱用的一个词）。抹了黄油的薄面包片就是尊敬的贾米森夫人用来待客的全部东西——她可是已故的格伦米尔勋爵的亲戚。

是的，花钱总是很“俗气”，我们当然不会告诉别人我们没多少钱可花。所以，当一位军队老上尉到克兰福德来生活并且公开谈



vulgar *adj.* lacking in good taste or refinement, 粗俗的；庸俗的。**Honourable** *title* given to the children of peers below the rank of marquis. 对侯爵以下贵族子女的尊称。**related** *adj.* (esp. pred.) in the same family or class, etc. (尤作表语) 属于同一家族或种类等的。**horror** *n.* feeling of intense dislike; hatred. 强烈的厌恶；憎恶；痛恨。

poor! In the street! The ladies were already rather cross about the arrival of a gentleman, and even more cross that he was going to work for a new railway near the town. If, as well as being a man and working for that awful railway, Captain Brown was going to talk about being poor, *then nobody must speak to him.*

I was surprised, therefore, when I visited the town a year after the captain arrived, to discover that he had made himself very popular. My own friends had been strongly against calling on him, but now they welcomed him into their house, even before twelve o'clock in the morning. He had been friendly and sensible, though the Cranford ladies had been cool, and at last his helpfulness had won him a place in their hearts.

Captain Brown was living, with his two daughters, in a small house on the edge of the town. He was probably over sixty at this time, though he looked younger. In fact, Miss Brown, his elder daughter, looked almost as old as he did. She was only about forty, but her face was white and tired.

Miss Jessie Brown was ten years younger and twenty times prettier. Her face was round and had dimples. Miss Jenkyns once said, when she was annoyed with Captain Brown (for a reason I'll explain later), that it was time Miss Jessie stopped having dimples and looking like a child. There was indeed something childish about the way she looked, but I liked her face. So did everybody — and I do

论贫穷的时候,我感到非常惊骇!他就在大街上公开谈论!这种感觉我至今难忘。女士们对于一位先生的到来已经够生气的了,更让她们生气的是,他还要在镇子附近新建的铁路上工作。如果布朗上尉身为男人,还为那条该死的铁路工作,还要谈论贫穷,那么谁都不该和他说话。

因此上尉到此一年后我再次来到镇上,发现他居然很得人心,实在令我惊讶。我自己的朋友们曾经强烈反对拜访他,现在却欢迎他到她们家里去,哪怕是在上午 12 点之前。他对人友善,通情达理,所以虽然克兰福德的女士们曾经冷淡过他,他对她们的帮助最终还是在她们心中为自己赢得了一席之地。

布朗上尉和两个女儿住在镇子边上的一幢小房子里。当时他大概已经 60 多岁了,不过看起来要年轻得多。事实上,他的大女儿布朗小姐看起来年纪几乎和他一样大。她只有 40 岁左右,面容却苍白而疲惫。

杰西·布朗小姐比她小十岁,漂亮 20 倍。她长着一张圆脸,还有两个酒窝。詹金斯小姐曾经说,和布朗上尉生气的时候(具体原因我会在后面解释),杰西小姐的酒窝就不见了,看起来也不像个孩子了。她的长相的确有些孩子气的地方,不过我喜欢她的样子。大家都喜欢——我觉得她没法忍住

cross *adj.* (infml.) rather angry. (口)生气的;恼怒的。**awful** *adj.* extremely bad or unpleasant; terrible. 极坏的;极讨厌的;可怕的。**discover** *v.* (esp. passive) come to know or realize (sth.). (尤用于被动语态)了解到;认识到,发觉(某事物)。**dimple** *n.* small natural hollow in the chin or cheek (either permanent, or which appears e.g. when a person smiles). (下巴或脸颊上自然的)小窝;酒窝。

not think she could prevent the dimples.

I first saw the Brown family together in Cranford church. The captain sang loudly and happily; and when we came out, he smiled at everyone and patiently helped Miss Brown with her umbrella.

I wondered what the Cranford ladies did with him at their card-parties. We had often been glad in the past that there were no gentlemen to worry about. Indeed, we had almost persuaded ourselves that it was 'vulgar' to be a man. So now, when Miss Deborah Jenkyns (with whom I was staying) gave a party for me and invited the Browns, I wondered how the evening would go.

It was the third week of November, so it was dark by four o'clock. The card-tables were arranged. Candles and clean packs of cards were put on each one. The fire was lit. The maid was given final orders. And there we stood in our best dresses, ready to light the candles as soon as the first person knocked at the door.

The Browns arrived when the tea-trays were on the tables. The captain took immediate care of all the ladies, passing round cups and bread-and-butter. He was clearly a favourite. But all the time he kept an eye on his elder daughter — a sick woman, I was sure. Miss Jessie seemed almost as popular as her father. She talked to those not playing cards, and later she sang while Miss Jenkyns beat time to the music.

不让酒窝出现。

我最初是在克兰福德的教堂见到布朗一家的。上尉唱歌嗓音洪亮，神采奕奕；我们出来的时候，他朝每个人微笑，并耐心地替布朗小姐打伞。

我想知道克兰福德的女士们在牌局中怎么对他。以前我们总是为不必担心男人而高兴。真的，我们差点儿让自己相信作个男人是件“俗气”的事。所以，现在德博拉·詹金斯小姐（我住在她那里）要为我举行一个晚会，并且邀请了布朗一家，我想知道晚上会发生些什么。

时值11月的第三个星期，4点钟天就黑了。牌桌已经摆好，每张桌子上都放着蜡烛和一副副干净的纸牌。火也生上了。女仆已吩咐完毕。我们穿上最好的裙子站着，准备好在第一个敲门的时候把蜡烛点燃。

茶盘摆上桌的时候，布朗一家到了。上尉马上开始为所有的女士服务，把茶杯和涂了黄油的面包递给大家。显然人们都很喜欢他。不过他一直留意着他的长女——一个病怏怏的女人，我可以肯定。杰西小姐好像几乎和她父亲一样受欢迎。她和不打牌的人聊天，后来她唱起了歌，而詹金斯小姐随着音乐打拍子。

persuade v. cause sb. to do sth. by arguing or reasoning with him. 说服或劝说某人做某事. keep an eye on sb./sth. make sure that sb./sth. is safe, etc.; look after sb./sth. 留心或注意某人或某事物. time n. type of rhythm. 拍子.

It was good of Miss Jenkyns to do this, because she had been much annoyed by Miss Jessie a little earlier. 'My mother's brother,' Miss Jessie had said to Miss Pole, 'is a shopkeeper in Edinburgh. 'An uncle in trade! Oh dear! The Honourable Mrs Jamieson was sitting at the nearest card-table and Miss Jenkyns had coughed loudly to prevent her hearing the terrible words. But Miss Jessie had happily repeated them, telling Miss Pole that her uncle sold the best knitting-wool in Edinburgh. So, I say again, it was good of Miss Jenkyns to beat time to her song.

At a quarter to nine, when the trays came back with a little more food, there was conversation. After a while Captain Brown began to talk about books.

'Have you seen any of *The Pickwick Papers*?' he asked. (It was 1836, and Mr Dickens's new book was appearing month by month.)

'Yes, I have,' answered Miss Jenkyns. Miss Jenkyns was the daughter of a past rector of Cranford church and, having his library of church books and sermons, she considered that she knew about books of all kinds.

'And what do you think of them?' asked the captain enthusiastically. 'Aren't they good?'

'Not as good as Dr Johnson,' replied Miss Jenkyns. 'But perhaps your man is young. If he copies the style of the great doctor, he may succeed.'

'But it's quite a different thing, my dear madam!' cried

詹金斯小姐这么做挺不容易,因为早先她还生着杰西小姐的气。“我妈妈的弟弟,”杰西小姐对波尔小姐说,“在爱丁堡开商店。”一个做生意的舅舅!哦,天啊!尊敬的贾米森夫人正好坐在最近的牌桌旁,所以詹金斯小姐大声地咳嗽,以免她听到这些可怕的话。可是杰西小姐又高兴地重复了一遍,告诉波尔小姐她舅舅卖的毛线是爱丁堡最好的。所以,我再说一遍,詹金斯小姐能随着她的歌打拍子真是不容易。

差一刻9点的时候,盛着稍多一点食物的盘子又回到了桌上,谈话也开始了。过了一会儿,布朗上尉开始谈论书籍。

“你们有没有读过《匹克威克外传》?”他问道。(当时是1836年,狄更斯先生的新书每月连载出版。)

“是的,我读过。”詹金斯小姐答道。詹金斯小姐是克兰福德教堂一位已故教区长的女儿,因为拥有他那藏着教会图书和布道文的图书室,她觉得自己了解各种类型的图书。

“你觉得它们写得怎么样?”上尉热心地问道,“挺不错吧?”

“没有约翰逊博士的好,”詹金斯小姐答道,“不过可能你说的那个人年纪还轻。如果他能模仿博士大师的风格,他也许能成功。”

“可那是两回事,亲爱的小姐!”布朗上

conversation n. informal talk. 交谈;谈话;谈天。
sermon n. talk in printed form on a moral or religious subject, usu. given by a clergyman from the pulpit during a religious service. 布道文(通常指教士在讲坛上做出的)。

Captain Brown. ‘Let me just read you something from this month’s paper.’

The *Pickwick* story he read was a very amusing one about a party in Bath, but Miss Jenkyns did not smile. She sent me to fetch Dr Johnson’s *Rasselas*, and read us a slow conversation, full of long words, between Rasselas and his teacher.

‘Now you understand,’ she said grandly as she put the book down, ‘why I prefer Dr Johnson as a writer. Beginners should copy his style, I did, when I began to write letters. Your favourite should do the same.’

‘I hope he won’t copy anything so self-important!’ said Captain Brown.

He was sorry later for what he had said, and stood near Miss Jenkyns’s armchair, trying to please her. But she did not give in. The next day she said what she thought of Miss Jessie’s dimples.