

'Tis Our Life

【英语学习四十年精选之
美 · 文 · 卷】

+ 性情人生

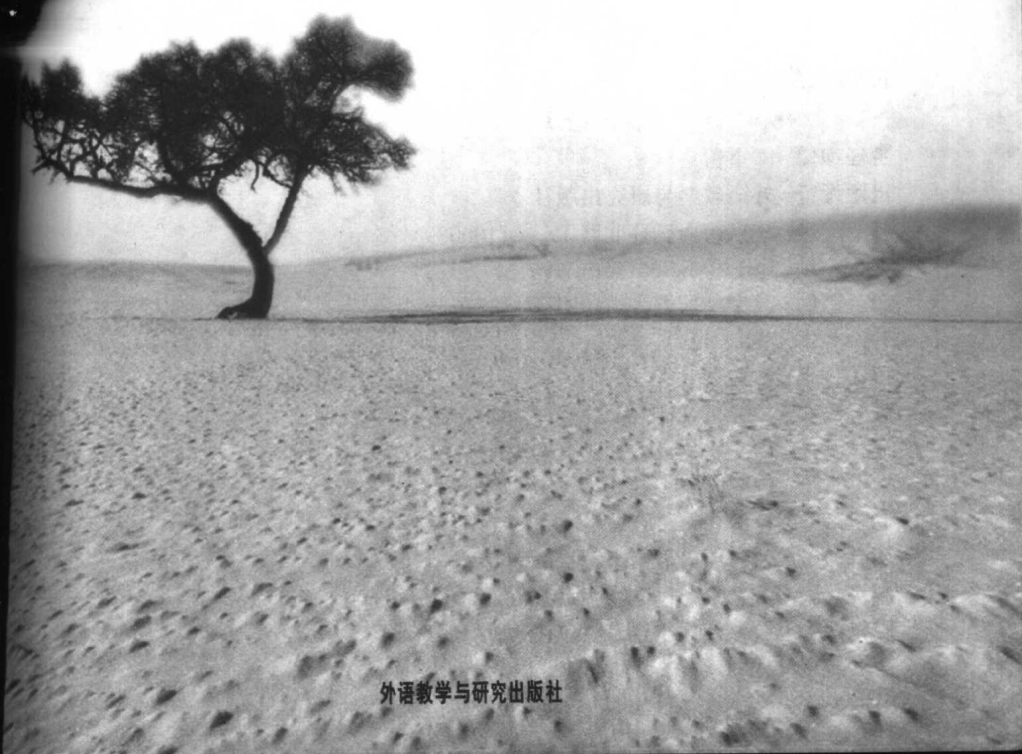
外语教学与研究出版社

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i s u r l i f e



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前言

《英语学习》创刊于1958年，是中国第一本英语辅导杂志。从诞生的那一天起，《英语学习》就确立了严谨而不失活泼、品位与趣味并重的办刊风格，在帮助读者提高英语水平的同时向他们介绍国外的社会文化，力图真正成为读者们“学习英语的终身益友、了解世界的精彩橱窗”。40多年来，《英语学习》和一代又一代的读者共同成长，在广大师生及社会各界英语爱好者中树立了崇高的威望，《英语学习》巅峰时期高达百万的单期发行量便是这一点的明证。

在现代社会中，英语无疑是越来越重要的一种交流与学习的工具，人们学习英语的热情也达到了前所未有的高度。身处信息时代，各式各样的学习材料俯拾即是，作为杂志编者的我们也感到了空前的压力。我们尽力在庞大芜杂的信息流中为读者选取真正有价值的材料，并把它们加工成营养丰富同时又美味可口的精神食粮，以此来最大限度地满足读者的要求。英语之于英语国家的社会文化恰如鱼之于海，学习英语不能脱离它存在的环境；尽管全球化进程正在把我们的星球变成一个小村庄，我们对村里邻

居们的了解实在也还非常有限。有鉴于此，我们尽力在杂志中为读者展现最新的国外社会风貌，使读者不光能学到鲜活生动的语言，更能对它所植根的土地有所认识。惟其如此，英语才能真正成为他们手中得心应手的工具。

我们此次推出的丛书汇集了《英语学习》杂志40年的精华，按所收文章内容分为7卷。《英语的门槛有多高》（名家箴言卷）中集中了多位名家学习英语的切身体会，读者可以从中分享他们的成功经验，更可以此为参照找出适合自己的学习方法；《时日留痕》（时文卷）中的时事文章从各个角度反映了我们的世界40年来发生的变化，折射着时间之河的粼粼波光，读者也可从中看到英语以及英语学习的流变；《性情人生》（美文卷）收录的都是精彩美妙的好文章，它们的光彩不会因时光流逝而减褪；《给我讲个故事吧》（童话传说卷）以精彩有趣的故事和传说阐释了西方传统和民俗，让你在不知不觉间跨越了不同文化之间的鸿沟；《科技之虹》（科技卷）记录了40年来科技给我们生活带来的许多变化，你会发现一些我们如今习以为常的东西曾经多么地让人惊讶；《话里话外》（语言文化卷）揭示了许多英语习语背后的历史和文化，让你知其然更知其所以然；《国外风情面面观》（异域风情卷）则是展示各国人民生活的一个万花筒。这套丛书中所有文章都曾在《英语学习》上刊载，此次结集时我们又对之进行了深入细致的整理和加工，希望能予读者最大的方便和乐趣。

谨以此丛书向王佐良、许国璋、周珏良、刘世沐、刘承沛、熊德锐等关怀《英语学习》成长的前辈及为杂志付出过心血的所有编者、作者表示敬意，并向予以我们最大支持的广大读者深致谢忱。我们相信它能对读者改进英语阅读能力有实质性的帮助，而作为一切语言能力之基础的阅读能力的改进必能带来英语整体水平的大幅提高，愿大家读得兴味盎然！

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性情人生 目录

比尔的小女儿

Bill's Little Girl

■ After Zona Gale



Bill was thirty when his wife died, and little Minna was four. Bill's carpenter shop was in the yard of his house, so he thought that he could keep house¹ for Minna and himself. All day while he worked in his shop, she played in the yard, and when he had to be absent for a few hours, the woman next door² looked after³ her. Bill could cook a little⁴, coffee and bacon and fried potatoes⁵ and pancakes⁶. When the woman next door said this was not the food for four-year olds⁷, he asked her to teach him to cook oatmeal⁸ and vegetables, and though he always burned the dishes in which he cooked these things, he cooked them every day. He swept, all but the corners⁹ and he dusted every object¹⁰; and he said that after he had cleaned the windows he could not see through them as well as he could before. He washed and mended Minna's little dresses and mended her doll. He found a cat for her to play with¹¹.

When she was old enough to go to school¹², Bill took her there every morning and called for her¹³ in the afternoon. Once he

1. keep house: 照料家事。

2. the woman next door: 隔壁那家女人。next door 是定语，修饰 woman。

3. looked after: 照顾，看管。

4. could cook a little: 会做点饭。

5. fried potatoes: 煎山芋。

6. pancake: 锅饼。

7. four-year olds = four-year-old children。

8. oatmeal: 麦片。这里指麦片粥。

9. all but the corners: 除了角落里都扫了。这里 but 等于 except。

10. object: 物件。

11. found a cat for her to play with: 给她找了个猫玩。to play with 意义上的英语是 cat。

12. 她已经到了该上学的年纪了。

13. called for her: 招呼她（回去）。

dressed himself in his best clothes and went to visit the school. But he could not understand the coloured paper and the designs and the games¹⁴, and he did not go there again.

Minna was six when Bill fell ill. On a May afternoon he went to a doctor. When he came home, he sat in his shop for a long time and did nothing. The sun was shining through the window in bright squares.¹⁵ He was not going to get well.¹⁶ The doctor had told him that he would be dead in six months.

He could heard that Minna was singing to her doll which he had mended for her.

When she came to kiss him that night, he made an excuse, for he must never kiss her now. He looked in her eyes¹⁷ and said: "Minna's a big girl now, she doesn't want father to kiss her." But her lip curled¹⁸ and she turned away sad¹⁹, so that next day Bill went to another doctor to make sure²⁰. The other doctor made him sure.

He tried to think what to do. He had a sister in Nebraska²¹, but she was a tired woman. His wife had a brother in the city, but he was a man of many words²². And little Minna... there were things known to her which he himself did not know — matters of books and pictures and the words of songs. He wished that he could hear of somebody who would understand her. And he had only

14. the coloured paper and the designs and the games: 彩色的纸张啦, 图样啦, 游戏啦。即小学低年级用的各种教具。通常在列举三个以上的事物时, 只有在最后一个以前用and, 如 There is a book, a pen and an ink-bottle on the table. 这里连用了两个and是强调名目繁多的意思。再如: I saw placards and flags and balloons and models in the May Day parade.

15. 太阳光透过玻璃窗照进来, 变成了一块块明亮的方格子。

16. 他反正是不会好了。注意: to be going to do something 一般有主观上打算去做某事的意思。

这儿显然没有这种意思。

17. 他看着她的眼睛。

18. her lip curled: 她噘起了嘴唇。

19. 她很不高兴地转过身去。这里 turned away sad 是双重谓语, 即同时起谓语动词与连系动词的作用。sad 是表语, 修饰主语 she。

20. to make sure: 原意是“去肯定一下”, 这里指去问一问, 看前一个医生的诊断是否正确。

21. Nebraska: 美国中部州名。

22. a man of many words: 爱唠叨的人。反义词是 a man of few words (沉默寡言的人)。

six months. Then the neighbour told him that he ought not to have the child there, and him coughing as he was²³. And he knew that he had to decide.

That day he spent in the shop. It was summer and Minna was playing in the yard. He could hear the words of her songs. He cooked their supper and while she ate, he watched. When he had put her to bed, he stood in the dark, hearing her breathing. "I'm a little girl tonight — kiss me," she had said, but he shook his head. "A big girl, a big girl," he told her.

One whole night he thought. Then he advertised in a newspaper²⁴.

"A man with a few months to live would like nice people to adopt his little girl, six, blue eyes, curls. References required."²⁵ ■

(选自 1960 年第 6 期)



23. and him coughing as he was = while he was coughing so much

24. advertised in a newspaper: 在报上登了一则广告 to advertise: 登广告, 作广告, “广告”的

名词是 advertisement.

25. 请提供证件。这是一个不完全句。完全句应为 References are required 广告中为了节省字数常用不完全句或单元句。

圣诞老人就是我

The Santa Within Me

— A Christmas Story

■ 晓春 选注



There is nothing so beautiful as a child's dream of Santa Claus.¹ I know that because as a boy I used to have that dream myself. But I am Jewish (犹太人) and my parents did not celebrate Christmas². In my school days, I was never invited to the big Christmas party at school. I felt left out and was lonely.³ Christmas was everybody else's holiday, not mine. It was not the toys that I really longed for.⁴ It was Santa Claus and a Christmas tree. So when I grew up and had kids (小孩), I decided to make up for what I missed in my childhood⁵.

At Christmas in 1956, my daughter Claire was two years old. I got a seven-foot tree⁶ and decked (装饰) it out with lights and little bells. Claire's eyes sparkled with joy⁷ as she smiled at the tree. It was the first Christmas tree in my house. It gave off warmth (温暖) that filled every corner (角落) of our home and warmed my heart. Now the Christmas party was held at my house and everyone was invited.

1. 没有任何东西比孩子对圣诞老人的梦想更更好了。

2. Christmas: 圣诞节 (12月25日)。这是基督教的节日。犹太人信奉犹太教 (Judaism), 故不庆祝圣诞节。

3. 我感到被排除在外, 很孤独。

4. 我并不真的想得到玩具。It is... that... 是一个强调句型。

5. 弥补我童年时代所没有得到的东西。

6. a seven-foot tree: 一棵七英尺高的树。

7. sparkled with joy: 闪烁着喜悦的神情。

But still, there was something missing — Santa Claus that brought children love and hope.

When the next Christmas was coming, I bought some bright-red (鲜红的) cloth and my wife made me a special (特别的) dress.

On Christmas Eve, when my wife and kids were sitting round the Christmas tree, I tried on⁸ the new dress and put on a Santa mask with white whiskers and hair⁹. I could not believe my own eyes when I looked into the mirror. The Santa of my childhood stood in front of me. Then I went into the living room where the rest of the family were sitting and singing. In a deep voice I called, "Ho, ho, ho! Merry Christmas,¹⁰ everyone!"

Claire and Danny, our one-year-old son, stood in amazement (惊奇), looking at me. I could see in their eyes how surprised and delighted they felt!¹¹

For two years I played Santa¹² for my children, and I enjoyed it as much as my daughter and son. Then as the third year came, the Santa in me became so excited that he wanted to do something for other children.

One day in late November, I saw a pretty little girl dropping a letter into a mailbox (邮筒) and saying "Mommy (妈妈), are you sure Santa Claus will get my letter?" This gave me an idea. Every Christmas lots and lots of¹³ children wrote to Santa. What happened to their letters? I made a phone call to the post office and was told that all those letters were stored in huge sacks (大麻袋) in the dead-letter office¹⁴.

The following Sunday morning I found myself digging into the huge mailsacks and looking over many of the letters children

8. tried on: 试穿。

9. 带有白胡须白头发的圣诞老人假面具。

10. Merry Christmas: 圣诞快乐。

11. 从他们眼里我看得出他们是多么地惊奇, 多么地高兴!

12. played Santa: 装扮圣诞老人。

13. lots and lots of: 许许多多。

14. 堆放在死信处的大麻袋里。dead letter: 无法投递的信件。

had written to Santa.¹⁵ Most of them were give-me give-me letters¹⁶. And I became quite shocked at the greedy demands of so many spoiled children.¹⁷ Then I came upon a letter from a girl named Suzy. This was the letter.

“Dear Santa, I’m an 11-year-old girl, and I have two little brothers and a baby sister. My father died last winter and my mother is sick. I know there are many people who are poorer than us and I want nothing for myself. But could you send us a blanket (毛毯) because Mommy is cold at night.”

I could not hold back my tears¹⁸ as I read the letter. And I dug deeper into the sacks. I found eight more letters like that. They were all from children of poor families. I took them with me and immediately sent each child a telegram (电报):

“I got your letter and will be at your house on Christmas Day. Wait for me. Santa.”

I knew I could not possibly fill (满足) all the needs of the children. But I could bring them joy and happiness on the holiday.

Early on Christmas Day, while my kids were still in bed, my wife drove me round New York City to see the children whose letters I had answered. I was in the special dress and the Santa mask. It was my first round playing Santa and bringing Christmas presents to other children.¹⁹ It had snowed the night before and the streets were covered with heavy snow.

“Hiya Santa!²⁰ Hiya Santa!” Wherever I appeared, children greeted me warmly, and wherever I was, there was joy and laughter (欢乐和笑声). In one place, I noticed a little girl crying

15. 第二个星期日的上午，我从大邮袋里翻阅了许多孩子写给圣诞老人的信

16. give-me give-me letters: (孩子)向圣诞老人要东西的信

17. 我对那么多被惯坏了的孩子贪得无厌的要求感到很震惊。

18. 我抑制不住自己的眼泪。

19. 这是我第一次装扮成圣诞老人送礼物给别的孩子

20. 您好，圣诞老人！Hiya (美口语) = How are you.

among a happy crowd of kids. I bent down (俯身) and asked,

“What’s the matter?”

“Oh, Santa,” she sobbed (啜泣), “I’m so happy!”

Tears ran down from my eyes under the mask.

Another Christmas I went to see a Polish (波兰的) boy Peter, who said he felt lonely. Peter and his parents had just moved to this country and lived in a slum (贫民区) outside the city. With the toy bag in my hand, I walked up the steps and knocked. As I stepped into the boy’s house, Peter just stood there and looked.

“You came,” he said. “I wrote and... you came.” It was clear that he was so surprised to see Santa in his house that he did not know what to say. I talked with him and gave him an electric train set (电动小火车) and a basketball. Peter was overjoyed and thanked me a lot. When I was about to leave, I heard Peter’s mother say something to her husband in Polish (波兰语). My parents were Polish and so I speak a little and understand a lot.

“From the North Pole,”²¹ I answered her question in Polish.

The woman looked at me in astonishment (惊讶地).

“You speak Polish?” she asked.

“Of course,” I said. “Santa speaks all languages.” And I left them in joy and wonder.

I enjoyed playing Santa so much that I did it for twelve years. Every year when Christmas was drawing near (临近), I felt stirred (激动) and returned to the dead-letter office and to those heartbreaking (令人心碎的) letters. I made my rounds from Christmas Eve to Christmas Day, and from one side of New York to the other.

On Christmas Eve in 1967 Claire handed me a little poem.

“I know that Santa is make-believe²²,

21. (我是)从北极来的。

22. make-believe: 假装的, 虚构的。



But I still love him so,
Because he is my daddy, ho, ho, ho!"

So she got to know it in the end. When she read the letters I gave her, she cried. Later on she became a true Santa's helper, shopping and wrapping (包扎) the toys for my Christmas rounds.

A few years ago I made my last call. I knew there were four kids in the family and came with a toy for each²³. The house was small and there was hardly any furniture (家具) in it. The kids had been waiting for me all day.

"Santa will come, Mommy. He is sure to come." Now and then they looked at my telegram and repeated this to their mother.

As soon as I touched the door bell, the door opened and they all came up to me. They reached for my hands and held on²⁴ before I could step into the house.

"Hiya Santa! Hiya Santa!"

"We just knew you would come."

The kids could not have been happier!²⁵ Their eyes were shining with happiness and excitement.

I took each of them on my lap (膝上) and told them Christmas stories. Then I gave them each a toy.

All the while there was a fifth girl standing in the corner, a girl with blond (金色的) hair and blue eyes.

I turned to her and asked,

"You are not one of this family, are you?"

She shook her head sadly and answered, "No."

"What's your name?" I asked.

"Lisa."

"How old are you?"

"Seven."

23. 为他们每人带了一件玩具。

24. 他们抓住我的双手不放。

25. 孩子们高兴极了。

“Come and sit on my lap.”

She hesitated (犹豫) but then she came over.

“Did you get any toys for Christmas?” I asked her in a soft voice.

“No,” she said.

I took out a big beautiful doll (布娃娃).

“Do you want this doll?” I asked the little girl.

“No.” Then she turned to hold my head in her little hands and whispered in my ear, “I’m Jewish.”

I smiled, and whispered, “I’m Jewish, too.”

Lisa smiled back. Then she took the doll I handed her and ran out of the house.

I don’t know which of us was happier — Lisa, or the Santa in me? ■

(选自 1981 年第 11 期)

