

LOVE and LIFE

英语阅读文选



情感的真谛

THE TWO
SIDES OF LOVE



海洋出版社

爱与生命——英语阅读文选

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THE TWO SIDES OF LOVE

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前 言

在 21 世纪,不懂英语即为文盲。英语的学习已成为每位青年朋友的日修课程。同时,我们内心也渴望了解自己的人生,知道自己是什么样的人,有着怎样的未来,如何去把握自己的人生。我们为这些既渴望学习英语、了解西方文化,同时又渴望洞察人生的青年朋友编写了这套英语阅读系列丛书——“爱与生命”。

这套丛书的优点有两方面:

一方面,从文章的形式来看有两个特色:首先,文章风格主要为“论述型”、“推理型”,与大学英语四、六级、TOEFL、GRE、PETS 等考试的阅读文章风格基本一致。通过阅读这些文章,可增强英语语感,扩大阅读量,提高阅读速度。其次,阅读是扩充单词量的最佳途径,为了方便同学记忆单词,加深对文章的理解,我们还将较生僻的单词和常用的短语、句型作了注解、分析,使一般的大学生在注解的帮助下都能完全读懂每一篇文章。“熟能生巧”,大量的语篇阅读必定对学生的写作能力和技巧的提高大有裨益。

另一方面,从文章的内容来看,“爱与生命”丛书是专门根据青年朋友的成长需要而设计的一套英语读物。在我们青年人心中,经常问这样的问题:

- * 我为什么活在这个世界上?
- * 我是谁? 我的性格是什么?
- * 生命的目的和意义是什么?
- * 如何得到真正的、永恒的爱情?
- * 友谊如何才能“地久天长”?
- * 婚姻意味着什么?
- * “随心所欲”等于自由和幸福吗?

“爱与生命”英语阅读系列丛书沿着这些问题,深入青年人的内心。不同于以往的“英语文学名著”、“实用英语”或“娱乐英语”的是,她直接谈论青年人最关心的人生观问题,围绕人生的价值、意义和目的,深入探讨个性成长、友谊、恋爱、婚姻、职业、社会道德等严肃主题,并提出与之相应的青年人的责任、义务和使命,使大家对我们的生命以及生命中的爱有更深刻的认识,更有利于培养健康的人格和高尚的品德。

为了使读者学习纯正的英文,编者在选材上尽量避免删节。应当指出,本书有的观点虽然肤浅,甚至是错误的,但全书的主流是积极向上的,希望读者在学习英语的同时,对其观点加以鉴别、分析,取其精华,去其糟粕。

人的性格决定了其情感表达方式。受性格影响,人的情感表达常常具有明显的倾向。或过于严厉,或过于娇纵,或过于外露,或过于含蓄。正所谓过犹不及,这些倾向会使情感的接受方不能恰如其份地领会我们内心的原意,会使关怀被误认为虚情,严厉成为苛责,宽容成为懦弱……

《情感的真谛》讲述如何正确认识我们的性格特点,适当地调整情感的表达方式,使性格成为加深友谊、增进感情的强大动力。

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1

DISCOVERING LOVE'S TWO SIDES

你是否天性温柔,甚至委曲自己,成全他人?你是否生来严厉,即使出于好意,也让人产生畏惧?温柔与严厉如果走向极端,势必影响人际关系的确立与发展,甚至至亲至爱的关系也难逃土崩瓦解的厄运。因此,试图在二者中寻求平衡就成为建立深厚、稳定、真正意义的爱的关键。爱是温柔,也是严厉;爱是恩慈,也是公义;爱是热情、耐心、细腻、理解,也是约束、纠正、保护和持之以恒。欢迎您勇敢地走出自我了解的第一步,塑造完美个性,全心全意地爱他人,恰如其分地展现你的爱。

DARRELL stood outside the local pizza parlor, hesitating before he opened the door. He shook his head as if to clear away his last minute doubts about this meeting. Finally, with a sigh,^① he forced aside his fear,

① sigh n. 叹气

pushed open the door, and walked into his son's favorite restaurant.

He dreaded this meeting so much that it took all his emotional strength just to walk inside instead of turning away. Little did he know that within a few hours, he would experience one of the most positive events of his life.

Darrell had come to meet his seventeen-year-old son, Charles. Though Darrell loved Charles deeply, he also knew that of his two boys, Charles was the most different from him.

With his older son, Larry, communication was never a struggle. They acted and thought so much alike that they didn't need to talk much. They just did things together, like hunting or working on their cars. Darrell had always treated Larry as he did the men at his construction sites—rough. And Larry had always responded well to—even thrived on—that kind of treatment.

But Charles was a different case. Darrell could tell early on that Charles was much more sensitive than Larry. Each time Darrell blasted this son to motivate him like his older brother, Darrell could hear an alarm going off deep inside himself.

Darrell had received major doses^① of discipline and distance in his life—the hard side of love—but only a scant^② spoonful of warmth and acceptance—love's soft side. And what little he had been given, he had also measured out

① dose *n.* 给与或接受的东西

② scant *adj.* 不充分的,勉强够的

to his sons.

It's my job to put clothes on their backs and food on the table; it's their mother's job to make them feel loved, he told himself over and over. But he couldn't quite convince^① himself that that was all there was to being a father. Darrell knew how deeply he had been hurt by his own dad. And he had seen that same hurt in Charles's eyes a hundred times.

Darrell knew what a major part of the problem was. Charles had expected – almost demanded – a close relationship with him over the years. It wasn't enough that they go hunting together. Charles wanted to talk while they were on the trip – even while they were hunting!

Only recently had Darrell realized that the sole reason he and Charles were getting along at the moment was that his son had quitted talking to him altogether! Just as Darrell had done as a teenager with his own tough father, Charles had withdrawn^② to a safe distance and was doing his best to stay out of his dad's way.

Like many of us, Darrell had been on the run from close relationships. For years, his wife and son had been pursuing him. And for as many years, he'd been running away from them, trying to keep a “comfortable” distance between them.

Then one day Darrell got a clear look at himself during a men's retreat at his church, and the running stopped.

That day at the retreat, he came face to face with the

① convince *vt.* 使确信

② withdraw *vi.* 撤离

fact that there are two sides of love. Like many men, he had become an expert on its hard side. He could hand out the spankings, but not reach out to hug his son. In a heartbeat he could call down a mistake Charles made, but words of encouragement came up only on a holiday or birthday – if then.

At that men's retreat, Darrell learned that as important as a mother's love is, children need more. They desperately need their father's wholehearted love as well.

Darrell was a strong man, both emotionally and physically. Yet as tough as he fancied himself, just one question the speaker asked pierced^① through to his heart, "When was the last time you put your arms around your son and told him face to face that you love him?"

Darrell couldn't think of a "last time." In fact, he couldn't think of a first time.

He listened as the speaker told him that genuine love has two sides, not just one. Instantly he realized he had been loving Charles only halfheartedly and that his son needed both sides of love from the same person.

What Charles needed most in a father was a real man who could show him how to love a wife and family wholeheartedly, not an insecure man who had to hand off all the warm and loving actions to his wife. Darrell had spent years hardsiding his son to gain his respect; what he had gained instead was his fear and resentment. And it was this realization that caused Darrell to talk his son into meeting him at

① pierce *vi.* 穿透

the local pizza restaurant after football practice one afternoon.

“Hi, Dad,” Charles said, shaking hands with his father, who had just walked in. Charles was six feet two and was used to looking down when he greeted people. But he was looking up to meet his dad’s eyes. And although Darrell had turned fifty-one that same month, he had none of the middle-age spread^① that most men of his age carry. Instead, he still possessed the athletic build that had made him a star on his high school football team.

Charles and his father were the kind of people that “all you can eat” restaurant managers hate to see walk in the door. That evening they kept their waitress running back and forth as they devoured three baskets of bread sticks and nearly as many pizzas. As their dinner progressed from appetizers^② to the main course, their conversation moved from small talk to the serious matter Darrell wanted to discuss.

“Charles,” Darrell said, adjusting his glasses and looking down slightly as he spoke, “I’ve been doing a lot of thinking lately. It’s been hitting me hard that this is your last summer at home. You’ll be leaving for college soon. And along with the bags of clothing you’ll be packing, you’ll also be taking emotional bags that, for good or bad, I’ve helped you pack over the years.”

Charles was normally the family comedian,^③ but this

① spread *n.* 宽度,此处指发胖、发福

② appetizer *n.* 开胃的食物

③ comedian *n.* 喜剧演员,搞笑的人

time, instead of trying to “lighten up” the conversation, he sat quietly. It wasn’t like his father to talk about their relationship. In fact, it wasn’t like him to talk about anything serious. That’s why he was all ears as he listened to his father.

“Son, I’d like to ask you to do something. Think back as far as you can——back to three years old even – and remember every time I’ve hurt your feelings and never made things right; every time I’ve made you feel unloved or inadequate by something I’ve said or done.

“I know we’re different people. I can see now that I was always pretty hard on you. Actually, I was way too tough on you most of the time. I’ve tried to push you into being the person I thought you should be. Now I realize I’ve spent very little time listening to who you really want to become.

“Feel free to share with me anything I’ve done that’s hurt you, and all I’m going to do is to listen. Then I’d like for us to talk about it, and I want to ask your forgiveness for each thing you can think of. You don’t need to be packing any extra, negative baggage that I may have given you. You’ve got enough ahead of you over the next four years in college without that.

“I realize there’s been a lot of water under the bridge – a lot of wasted years.” Taking off his glasses and wiping tears from his eyes, he sighed,^① then looked straight at Charles. “We may be here all night,” he continued, “and I’m ready for that. But first, you need to know how much I

① sigh *vi.* 叹气

love you and how proud I am of you.”

Charles had seen the words “I love you” written on birthday and Christmas cards in his father’s handwriting, but this was the first time he had heard them from his father’s lips. He’d learned to expect his father’s hardness. Now that Dad had added softness to his love, Charles didn’t know what to say.

“Dad,” he stammered.^① “don’t worry about the past. I know you love me.” But at his father’s insistence, he put his memory on “rewind” and let his thoughts fly back across the pictures he’d accumulated from seventeen years of being with his dad.

Slowly, as Charles grew more confident that the conversational waters really were safe, he unloaded years of hurt right at the table. There were the seasons he spent becoming an outstanding football player to please his father, when all the time he would rather have been playing soccer.

There was the subtle^② resentment he had always felt that no matter how hard he tried, he could never quite live up to his older brother’s accomplishments. And there were the many harsh comments his father had made to motivate him but that had actually been discouraging and hurtful.

As he recounted^③ to his father each experience, large or small, Charles could see a genuine softness and sorrow in his dad’s eyes. What’s more, he heard words of remorse^④ and

① stammer *vi.* 口吃, 结巴

② subtle *adj.* 微妙的

③ recount *vt.* 详述, 依次说明

④ remorse *n.* 后悔

healing for even the smallest thing that had left a rough edge on a memory.

Nearly three hours later, the fruitful conversation finally came to an end. As Darrell reached for the check, he said, "I know this was quick notice for you to have to think back on seventeen years. So just remember, my door is always open if there's anything else I need to ask your forgiveness for."

Dinner was over, but a new relationship was just beginning for them. After eighteen years of being strangers living under the same roof, they were finally on their way to finding each other.

Not long ago, television news cameras captured thousands of people cheering as the Berlin Wall came down after dividing the city for more than thirty years. And that night in the restaurant, we can just imagine that angels stood all around and cheered as the first hole in an emotional wall between a father and son was blown open.

It had been a moving night and an important one for both of them. But as they stood up, Charles did something that shocked his father.

Several people looked up from tables nearby as a big, strapping^① football player reached out and gave his equally strong father a warm bear hug for the first time in years. With tears in their eyes, those two strong men of stood there holding each other, oblivious to the stares.

① strapping *adj.* 身材高大的

What Are the Two Sides of Love?

In many ways, on the football field and in the building business, Darrell was a warrior who had conquered any challenges put before him. But for all his success, he had never won the bigger battle for his son's heart until that night. How did it happen? While Darrell was at his retreat,^① he discovered the same things you will find in this book.

It's essential that we learn to balance love's hard and soft sides every day if we want to communicate to others the deepest, most meaningful kind of love.

What do we mean by “hardside” and “softside” love, and why is it so important to understand and communicate both of them to others? While it may seem an unlikely place to look, nature provides a classic illustration of the answers to those questions.

One of the most beautiful things in all God's creation is a rose. In our culture, roses signify love, hearty congratulations and other deep emotions. Roses have been bred to capture and show off the colors of the rainbow. There's great softness in them as well. Like the tenderness of a baby's skin, velvety^② rose petals^③ beg to be touched.

But God knew when He designed the rose that the very softness that makes it a thing of splendor also leaves it easy

① retreat *n.* 隐居,僻静之处

② velvety *adj.* 柔软光滑的

③ petal *n.* 花瓣

prey to those creatures that would destroy its beauty. That's why, along with the softness, He also provided the hardness of thorns. They don't detract^① from its beauty but protect, preserve and enhance it.

What's true in the realm^② of nature is also true in the world of relationships.

Hardside love is doing what's best for another person regardless of the cost. Held in balance, it's the ability to be consistent, to discipline, to protect, to challenge and to correct.

It's the strength a mother needs to stand up to a defiant two-year-old instead of caving in to his immature^③ demands. It's the courage of a father who risks his relationship with his daughter to point out how far she's wandered from the Lord. It's the power an elderly husband demonstrates every day he stays and cares for the wife of his youth who is smitten^④ with Alzheimer's disease instead of giving up and walking away.

Like the thorns on a rose, hardside love is protective. But if left to grow unchecked and never cut back to allow for healthy softside growth, it can become a thornbush instead of a rosebush. Instead of drawing people to its beauty, it can be hurtful and even cause them to move and stay away.

Hardside love is essential. But it's also incomplete by itself.

Softside love is a tenderness that grows to be the same

① detract *vi.* 减损, 贬低

② realm *n.* 领域, 世界

③ immature *adj.* 未成熟的

④ smite *vt.* 袭击, 侵袭

color as unconditional love. When held in balance, it manifests^① characteristics like compassion, sensitivity, patience and understanding.

It's the sympathy of a father who sits with his arm around his daughter as she cries over a lost boyfriend, and the dad doesn't even hint at a lecture or an "I told you so." It's the encouragement of a mother whose cheerful card arrives at the college post office the day before her son's medical school entrance exams. And it's the kindness of a man who still calls his best friend's parents each year on the day their son died in Vietnam – just to let them know he remembers and that their son is more than a name on a wall.

Softside love takes time to understand another's feelings and listens instead of lecturing.^② It shows itself in the willingness to reach out and warmly touch and hug someone. It's also the wisdom to ask "Will you forgive me?" or to say "I was wrong," especially to our children.

Like hardside love, softside love can be pushed out of balance. Without a protective hard side, it can become so emotional and unstable that all the soft petals end up withered^③ on the ground.

Is such a view of love novel?^④ Is trying to understand and balance these two sides of love an invitation to confusion? Hardly. It's actually the very way we were always meant to love others. For it's the way the greatest lover of all

① manifest *vt.* 表示, 证明

② lecturing *n.* 说教, 训诫

③ wither *vi.* 凋谢

④ novel *adj.* 奇怪的, 新奇的