



英文插图

中文导读

世界名著阅读丛书

Rebecca Of
Sunnybrook Farm
太阳溪农场的丽贝卡

〔美〕凯特·道格拉斯·维珍 著

蔡红昌 等编译



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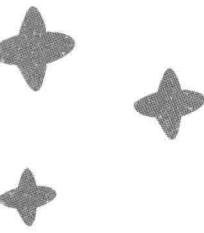
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内 容 简 介

《太阳溪农场的丽贝卡》是 20 世纪美国最伟大的儿童文学作品之一，是一部关于“快乐、阳光”的童话。主人公丽贝卡生活在一个偏僻小农场里的一个超级大家庭——妈妈和 7 个兄弟姐妹。虽然生活清苦且有数不清的繁重劳作，但一家人依然相亲相爱、其乐融融。十岁那年，丽贝卡受到邀请，离开农场，来到陌生的姨妈家寄住并接受教育。丽贝卡憧憬着未来，但姨妈家刻板的规矩束缚得她几乎喘不过气来。可她从未因此抱怨哭泣，丽贝卡仍然像阳光般热情、坦诚和率真，她热心助人、努力学习，不仅交到了好几个知心朋友，还赢得了大家的喜爱，更深深打动了两位姨妈的心。



前言

凯特·道格拉斯·维珍 (Kate Douglas Wiggin, 1856—1923), 美国著名作家、教育家。

1856年, 凯特·道格拉斯·维珍出生在美国费城, 父亲在她很小的时候就去世了, 之后母亲携家人移居到缅因州。

1878年, 维珍在美国旧金山开办了第一家免费幼儿园——“银街幼儿园”, 后来还和妹妹一起创办了幼儿师范学校。在和一位才华横溢的年轻律师结婚后, 维珍不再继续教学, 但仍然坚持每周举办讲座, 开办教育培训课程, 并造访了许多家幼儿园。

为了替学校筹集资金, 维珍开始勤奋写作, 她早期的小说《帕特茜的故事》和《鸟儿的圣诞颂歌》等都获得了巨大成功。1888年, 维珍和丈夫移居纽约, 之后她出版了小说《提摩西的追求》和《波利奥利佛的问题》, 其中小说《波利奥利佛的问题》得到了英国著名作家吉卜林的高度赞美, 称其主人公是英文小说中最让人快乐的女主人公。1889年, 丈夫突然去世, 之后维珍几乎将全部精力都投入到幼儿教育事业, 但业余时间她仍坚持写作。除此之外, 她还致力于儿童慈善阅读事业。1895年, 她与出版商瑞奇再婚, 在丈夫坚定的支持下, 她出版了多部成功的作品, 其中包括经典之作《阳光溪农场的丽贝卡》。

维珍一生出版了大量的文学作品, 代表作有《太阳溪农场的丽贝卡》(Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm, 1910)、《朴素的故事》(Homespun Tales, 1920)、《佩内洛普的成长史》(Penelope's

Progress, 1898)等,而使她名扬世界的是《太阳溪农场的丽贝卡》,该书被认为是“美国孩子的励志经典”,美国大文豪马克·吐温认为这本书“美丽,温暖,沁人心脾”。

在中国,《太阳溪农场的丽贝卡》同样是最受广大青少年读者欢迎的经典文学作品之一。作为世界儿童文学宝库中的经典之作,它影响了一代又一代中国人的美丽童年、少年直至成年。基于这个原因,我们决定编译《太阳溪农场的丽贝卡》,并采用中文导读英文版的形式出版。在中文导读中,我们尽力使其贴近原作的精髓,也尽可能保留原作简洁、精炼、明快的风格。我们希望能够编出为当代中国读者所喜爱的经典读本。读者在阅读英文故事之前,可以先阅读中文导读部分,这样有利于了解故事背景,从而加快阅读速度。同时,为了读者更好地理解故事内容,书中加入了大量的插图。我们相信,该经典著作的引进对加强当代中国读者,特别是青少年读者的人文修养是非常有帮助的。

本书由蔡红昌组织编译。参加本书编译工作的还有赵雪、刘乃亚、纪飞、陈起永、熊建国、程来川、龚武元、李毛华、徐平国、敖宗林、龚桂平、熊志勇、潘文华、陈凤英、谭学民、李丹妮、张灵玲、谭榜乾、付建平、汪疆玮、龚火荣、葛文聪、杨晓、葛文博、张雨、葛其昌、于丹等。限于我们的科学、人文素养和英语水平,书中难免会有不当之处,衷心希望读者朋友批评指正。

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第一章“我们有七个”

Chapter 1 “We are Seven”

导 读

五月中旬的一天，杰里·柯布先生驾驶着一辆旧邮车，轰隆隆地驶过从枫林村到波若河的大道。

车厢里还坐了一位黑头发的小乘客。因为长得太瘦弱了，姿势又很僵硬，所以她不管怎么用脚尽力把自己顶在座位中间，身体还是在皮面坐垫上滑来滑去，或者弹起又落下。每当这时，她总要将头上那顶可笑的小草帽推回原位，放好那把粉色小阳伞，还要留意一个镶满珠子的小包，检查里面的宝贝有没有丢失。

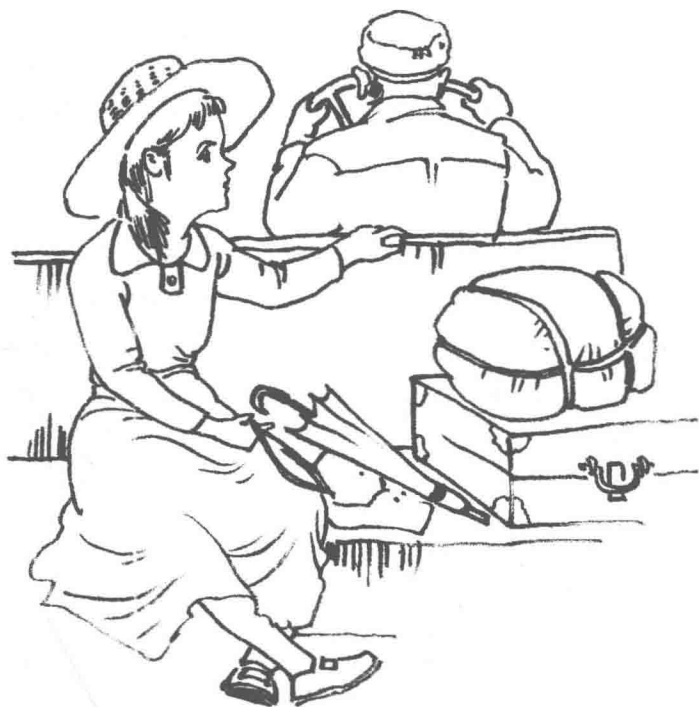
这事情开始于半个小时前。当柯布先生正准备离开枫林村的邮局时，一个女人询问这车是不是去波若河的。在得到肯定的答复后，她拜托柯布将一个女孩送到她在波若河的姐姐家。

临上车，小女孩的妈妈叮嘱道：“再见了，丽贝卡。别淘气，乖乖地坐着，

这样到了姨妈家才会又整洁又漂亮。别给柯布先生惹下麻烦，您瞧她真够兴奋的……”

丽贝卡正兴奋地说起以前去维尔汉姆的事——在她心中这已经是一趟旅行啦，因为她还带了睡衣！妈妈立刻压低声音试图做最后的教导：“不是说过么？不要哇啦哇啦地说些睡衣啦袜子啦，尤其是男士在场的时候。”

这时，柯布先生吆喝了一声，马车已经开始跑了起来。一个小脑袋探出车厢，用足足放大了三倍的嗓门喊出了那令人不快的字眼：“知道了，妈妈！”



丽贝卡坐在车厢后座上

我那么说的意思是——如果睡衣都带了，那么就是一趟真正的旅行！”

当这话传到她的妈妈——兰德尔太太耳中时，她只能气恼地看着马车消失在视线里，自言自语道：“这下米兰达要忙起来了。”

没过多久，丽贝卡就换到了柯布先生的身边。柯布先生注意到她有一对美丽而深邃的眼睛，当她看着他的时候，他就像被重重地敲了一下。当然，她还有一张永远不会停止说话的小嘴巴。

丽贝卡告诉柯布先生，她住在太阳溪农场，拥有一个大家庭——妈妈和七个孩子，她是老二。米兰达姨妈本来是想要老大汉娜过去的，可是兰德尔太太离不开这个得力小助手，于是就把丽贝卡送走了。丽贝卡觉得米兰达姨妈家的楼梯下也许有食人恶魔和巨人——不过，也没准是精灵和仙女呢！所以她可能会有点儿害怕，但是绝对不会可耻地逃跑的。

说说笑笑之间，马车已经行驶到了砖屋所在的那条街上。丽贝卡和柯布先生约好了以后一起去米尔顿旅行的事，此时马车正顺着碧绿枫树夹道的道路轰隆隆地驶进村子。

当村民从各家的窗户往外看的时候，可以看到一个穿着浅黄色印花布裙的小人儿正拘谨地坐在车厢后座上；如果他们视力更好些，就能看到她胸口的那片印花棉布正随着心跳在剧烈地起伏。这个小女孩苍白的脸颊不知不觉已经爬上了两朵红晕，晶亮的大眼睛被涌起的泪水濡湿了。

丽贝卡的旅行到此为止了。

The old stage coach was rumbling along the dusty road that runs from Maplewood to Riverboro. The day was as warm as midsummer, though it was only the middle of May, and Mr. Jeremiah Cobb was favoring the horses as much as possible, yet never losing sight of the fact that he carried the mail. The hills were many, and the reins lay loosely in his hands as he lolled back in his seat and extended one foot and leg luxuriously over the dashboard. His brimmed hat of worn felt was well pulled over his eyes, and he revolved a quid of tobacco in his left cheek.

There was one passenger in the coach,—a small dark-haired person in a glossy buff calico dress. She was so slender and so stiffly starched that she slid from space to space on the leather cushions, though she braced herself against the middle seat with her feet and extended her cotton-gloved hands on each side, in order to maintain some sort of balance. Whenever the wheels sank farther than usual into a rut, or jolted suddenly over a stone, she bounded involuntarily into the air, came down again, pushed back her funny little straw hat, and picked up or settled more firmly a small pink sun shade, which seemed to be her chief responsibility,—unless we except a bead purse, into which she looked whenever the condition of the roads would permit, finding great apparent satisfaction in that its precious contents neither disappeared nor grew less. Mr. Cobb guessed nothing of these harassing details of travel, his business being to carry people to their destinations, not, necessarily, to make them comfortable on the way. Indeed he had forgotten the very existence of this one unnoteworthy little passenger.

When he was about to leave the post-office in Maplewood that morning, a woman had alighted from a wagon, and coming up to him, inquired whether this were the Riverboro stage, and if he were Mr.

Cobb. Being answered in the affirmative, she nodded to a child who was eagerly waiting for the answer, and who ran towards her as if she feared to be a moment too late. The child might have been ten or eleven years old perhaps, but whatever the number of her summers, she had an air of being small for her age. Her mother helped her into the stage coach, deposited a bundle and a bouquet of lilacs beside her, superintended the "roping on" behind of an old hair trunk, and finally paid the fare, counting out the silver with great care.

"I want you should take her to my sisters' in Riverboro," she said. "Do you know Mirandy and Jane Sawyer? They live in the brick house."

Lord bless your soul, he knew 'em as well as if he'd made 'em!

"Well, she's going there, and they're expecting her. Will you keep an eye on her, please? If she can get out anywhere and get with folks, or get anybody in to keep her company, she'll do it. Good-by, Rebecca; try not to get into any mischief, and sit quiet, so you'll look neat an' nice when you get there. Don't be any trouble to Mr. Cobb.—You see, she's kind of excited.—We came on the cars from Temperance yesterday, slept all night at my cousin's, and drove from her house—eight miles it is—this morning."

"Good-by, mother, don't worry; you know it isn't as if I hadn't traveled before."

The woman gave a short sardonic laugh and said in an explanatory way to Mr. Cobb, "She's been to Wareham and stayed over night; that isn't much to be journey-proud on!"

"It WAS TRAVELING, mother," said the child eagerly and willfully. "It was leaving the farm, and putting up lunch in a basket, and a little riding and a little steam cars, and we carried our nightgowns."

“Don’t tell the whole village about it, if we did,” said the mother, interrupting the reminiscences of this experienced voyager. “Haven’t I told you before,” she whispered, in a last attempt at discipline, “that you shouldn’t talk about night gowns and stockings and—things like that, in a loud tone of voice, and especially when there’s men folks round?”

“I know, mother, I know, and I won’t. All I want to say is”—here Mr. Cobb gave a cluck, slapped the reins, and the horses started sedately on their daily task—” all I want to say is that it is a journey when”—the stage was really under way now and Rebecca had to put her head out of the window over the door in order to finish her sentence—” it IS a journey when you carry a nightgown!”

The objectionable word, uttered in a high treble, floated back to the offended ears of Mrs. Randall, who watched the stage out of sight, gathered up her packages from the bench at the store door, and stepped into the wagon that had been standing at the hitching-post. As she turned the horse’s head towards home she rose to her feet for a moment, and shading her eyes with her hand, looked at a cloud of dust in the dim distance.

“Mirandy’ll have her hands full, I guess,” she said to herself; “but I shouldn’t wonder if it would be the making of Rebecca.”

All this had been half an hour ago, and the sun, the heat, the dust, the contemplation of errands to be done in the great metropolis of Milltown, had lulled Mr. Cobb’s never active mind into complete oblivion as to his promise of keeping an eye on Rebecca.

Suddenly he heard a small voice above the rattle and rumble of the wheels and the creaking of the harness. At first he thought it was a cricket, a tree toad, or a bird, but having determined the direction from which it came, he turned his head over his shoulder and saw a small shape

hanging as far out of the window as safety would allow. A long black braid of hair swung with the motion of the coach; the child held her hat in one hand and with the other made ineffectual attempts to stab the driver with her microscopic sunshade.

"Please let me speak!" she called.

Mr. Cobb drew up the horses obediently.

"Does it cost any more to ride up there with you?" she asked. "It's so slippery and shiny down here, and the stage is so much too big for me, that I rattle round in it till I'm 'most black and blue. And the windows are so small I can only see pieces of things, and I've 'most broken my neck stretching round to find out whether my trunk has fallen off the back. It's my mother's trunk, and she's very choice of it."

Mr. Cobb waited until this flow of conversation, or more properly speaking this flood of criticism, had ceased, and then said jocularly:—

"You can come up if you want to; there ain't no extry charge to sit side o' me." Whereupon he helped her out, "boosted" her up to the front seat, and resumed his own place.

Rebecca sat down carefully, smoothing her dress under her with painstaking precision, and putting her sunshade under its extended folds between the driver and herself. This done she pushed back her hat, pulled up her darned white cotton gloves, and said delightedly:—

"Oh! this is better! This is like traveling! I am a real passenger now, and down there I felt like our setting hen when we shut her up in a coop. I hope we have a long, long ways to go?"

"Oh! we've only just started on it," Mr. Cobb responded genially; "it's more 'n two hours."

"Only two hours," she sighed "That will be half past one; mother