

一 亲情与爱心

第 1 篇

Sometimes a Bad Boy Is So Good

by Jean Kerr

[阅读提示]

这是一篇母亲的自述,以第一人称的道白,讲述一个家庭妇女一天的辛劳。不要担心文章会像流水账,读来索然无味。标题已向我们透露,文章一定会非常幽默有趣。在叙述层面之下,我们还需仔细体味文章的弦外之音。文篇选自琼·科尔(Jean Kerr)的文集《请不要吃雏菊花》(*Please Don't Eat Daisies*)。下面几个英语单词你可能不熟悉,请先认识一下:

strap 捆,绑

crayon 蜡笔

cereal 谷类食物

crash 破裂声,哗啦声

lipstick 口红
whistle 吹口哨

pirate 海盗

[诵读选篇]

I try to be a good mother to my four boys. I really try. I try not to shout at them. I try not to raise my voice when I say, “You know, dear, Mommy doesn’t *like* you to throw the calendar into the toilet.”

But believe me, being a mother is not easy, not easy at all. Just one morning with my boys will show you what I mean.

It’s 7 a.m. I go downstairs in my husband’s old bathrobe and start to get breakfast. But first —

“Mom! I can’t find my shoe!” That’s one of the twins.

“Mom! Where’s my spelling book?” That’s the other twin.

“I need 32 cents for lunch!” That’s Christopher, the oldest boy.

I find the shoe, the spelling book, the 32 cents and go back to the kitchen. I find that Gilbert, the youngest boy, has been strapped to a chair with a cowboy belt.¹ I untie him. All the while, I keep my temper.² I don’t even raise my voice when the fighting starts. I hear myself saying softly, “Just because he ate your crayons is no reason to hit him on the head.”³

Finally, the boys are seated at the breakfast table. The twins spell out their names in butter on the tablecloth. But I refuse to let this upset me. Then all four boys decide to make

sandwiches out of boiled eggs and cereal. I keep cool. "After all, they're just little boys," I tell myself. Then I see Christopher — stirring his orange juice with an old pocket comb. That does it.⁴ I raise my voice — higher and higher. I can be heard for miles and miles.

In trying to manage my boys, I've learned one thing for sure.⁵ It is: Don't let a child have the last word.⁶ This isn't easy. Somehow, when I'm dealing with a five-year-old, I begin to sound like one myself. And a five-year-old is better at five-year-old talk than I am.

Let's say I'm busy downstairs. Suddenly I hear a great crash from upstairs. I shout up.

"What was that awful noise?"

"What noise?"

"You didn't hear that noise?"

"No. What did it sound like?"

"Never mind what it sounded like. Stop it."

"Stop what?"

"Whatever you're doing."

"I'm not doing anything."

"Stop it anyway."

"I'm brushing my teeth. Shall I stop that?"

I've learned I can't win this way. So now, when I hear a crash from upstairs, I don't give the boy up there a chance to talk. Instead I call up, "Hey, you, pick up your pants."

Of course, I don't find out what caused the noise. But I do get

results. A pair of pants gets picked up. (There's always at least one pair on the floor.) And the boy stops whatever it is he was doing.⁷

I know I should punish a boy when he is bad. That's part of being a good mother. But sometimes a *bad* boy is so *good* that I can't punish him. Let me tell you about Christopher.

He was at school when I discovered what he had done. He had taken my new lipstick. And with it he had drawn a map on the floor of the garage. It was a beautiful map — a map showing where pirates had buried their treasure. But my lipstick was gone. And the garage floor was a mess. I was just waiting to get my hands on Christopher.⁸

At four o'clock he arrived home from school. He was whistling happily. I started to call to him. But just then Christopher saw my husband, who was working in the yard. "Hi, Dad!" the boy sang out.⁹ "Where is the beautiful lady?"

Me — a beautiful lady! Chris¹⁰ was calling me a beautiful lady! Now how could a mother punish a good boy like that?

[参考译文]

坏孩子有时那么可爱

琼·科尔

我想成为我四个儿子的好母亲。我真的尽力而为了。我

说话尽量不提高嗓门；你要知道，乖孩子，妈妈不喜欢你把日历塞在抽水马桶里。”

但相信我，当母亲不容易，真是太难了。同我家的男孩打一个上午的交道，就会让你明白我的意思。

早上七点钟，我穿着丈夫的旧浴袍到楼下准备吃早饭。但首先听到的是——

“妈 我的鞋子找不到了！那是双胞胎中的一个。

“妈 我的拼写本到哪里去了？那是另一个孪生兄弟。

“给我三角二分午餐钱！”那是克里斯托弗，最大的一个。

我找到了鞋子、拼写本，拿出三角二分，然后回到厨房。我发现最小的儿子吉尔伯特被绑在椅子上，用的是牛仔皮带。我把他解开。从头至尾，我忍着不发火。甚至在他们打起来的时候，我还是没有拉大嗓门。我听到自己轻声轻气地说，“就算他吃了你的蜡笔，你也不该打他的头。”

最后，孩子们都坐到了餐桌边上。孪生兄弟俩用奶油把自己的名字写在餐桌布上。我还是不让自己为这件事动怒。接着，四个男孩都决定用煮鸡蛋和麦片做三明治。我保持冷静。“他们毕竟还只是些小孩子，”我对自己说。再后，我看到克里斯托弗用一把旧的木梳搅橘子汁。这回我忍无可忍了。我扯起了嗓门，越来越高，老远老远的地方都听得见。

在管束孩子方面，我确实学到了一个办法。那就是别让你的孩子说了算。但这不容易。反正，在同五岁孩子打交道时，我自己说话也像个五岁孩子。但五岁孩子说五岁孩子的话比我在行。

比如说我在楼下忙着，突然间听到楼上一声震响。我朝上吼道：

“那么响是什么声音？”

“哪来的声音？”

“你没听到那声音？”

“没有。是怎么样的声音？”

“别管怎么样的声音。快停下。”

“停下什么？”

“停下你在做的事。”

“我什么事也没在做。”

“反正给我停下。”

“我正在刷牙。要停下吗？”

我现在知道了，这样做无法胜出。所以现在，当我听到楼上震响，我不给上面的孩子开口的机会，而是朝楼上喊，“嗨，你，把你地上的裤子拣起来。”

当然，我没法知道响声是怎么回事，但效果不错。地上的一条裤子被拣了起来（任何时候地上至少会有一条裤子）。同时，孩子也停下了他在干的事。

我知道孩子捣蛋就应该惩罚。那是当好母亲的组成部分。但是有时候坏孩子那么可爱，我又无法下手。我给你们讲克里斯托弗的事。

他去上学的时候，我发现了他干的事。他拿了我那支新口红，用口红在车库的地面上画了一张地图。画得倒是很不错——一张海盗埋藏财宝的标示图。但我的口红给用完了，而且车库地上一片狼藉。我等着克里斯托弗回来找他算账。

四点钟他放学回到家，兴高采烈地哼着曲子。我正要喊他过来，这时，克里斯托弗看到在前院干活的我的丈夫。“你好，爸！”孩子大声喊道，“那位大美人在哪？”

我——大美人！克里斯叫我大美人！你说哪个母亲能惩罚这样的乖孩子？

[难点注释]

1. cowboy belt：一种牛仔用的宽皮带。cowboy, 19 世纪美国西部的骑马牧人，在电影、小说中常被浪漫化。
2. keep my temper：捺住性子。temper，脾气。其它表达如：lose one's temper,发脾气,生气；fly into a temper,发脾气。
3. to hit him on the head: 砸他的头。请注意英语表达中打击身体某部时用“动词+某人+ on +某部位”的句型。如：“打我耳光”不能说 hit my face，而应说 hit me on the face。同类表达如：kick him on the leg，踢他脚。
4. That does it. (口语表达,表示不耐烦)够了,行了,到了极限。
5. for sure 肯定,确切无疑。如：I can't say for sure. 我说不准。No one knows for sure what happened to him. 没人确切知道他出了什么事。
6. Don't let the child have the last word. ；不让孩子说了算。the last word,最后的话,决定性的话(扩展词义为 定论,最后决定权)。如：We make suggestions, but the manager has the last word. 我们提建议，但决定权在经理手中。
7. And the boy stops whatever it is he was doing. 男孩停下了他刚才正在做的事。强调句，本来句子应该是：The boy stops what he was doing. 这其中的 what 用了强调式

whatever it is,不管(做的是)什么。

8. get my hands on Christopher 等见到克里斯托弗(再给他颜色看)。get one's hands on ... ,把……弄到手。
9. the boy sang out : 男孩大声喊着说。sing out,大声喊出来,说出来。如Sing out. We can't hear you 大声点,我们听不见。
10. Chris 克里斯,是 Christopher 的昵称。

[篇章简评]

如果哪个母亲说：“我那孩子真让我头痛”或者说：“没见过谁家孩子有那样顽皮”，请不要表示同情，因为多半她言不由衷，不是在诉苦，而是在炫耀。抱怨诉说的内容也许是真实的，但理解只能在字面之外。选篇的标题用了矛盾修辞法，把“坏的”与“可爱的”两个冲突的概念捏在一起，使读者产生强烈的好奇心和阅读“求解”的欲望。同时，标题又创造了幽默，而且十分贴切地表述了一个母亲的矛盾心态。孩子天性调皮，每一个动作都令人发笑，但又充满天真和想象力，常让母亲哭笑不得。而母亲无休无止地劳作，献身于家庭，苦在其中，也乐在其中。选篇的结尾十分巧妙。实在忍无可忍下决心要惩罚孩子时，做母亲的突然又轻易为自己找了个不加实施的理由。通篇叙述乍一听来像琐琐碎碎、唠唠叨叨的罗列，表白

常常自相矛盾，不合逻辑。但唠叨和怨言中流露出难以掩饰的自豪感，也闪现出高尚的母爱。文篇的妙处在于：弦外之音才是主题曲。

第 2 篇

When Mothers Get the Bug

by Joyce Lubold

[阅读提示]

母亲病了,头痛脑热,休息一天就会过去。但全家陷入了混乱。母亲每日为家人操心、为家事操劳的重要性,这时才突然凸显出来。家中不可一日无母。全家都需要她,她感到了自己的价值,病也突然好了。文章写得轻松诙谐,真实感人。文章是乔伊斯·鲁伯尔德的散文《母亲们为何不生病》(“Why Mothers Don’t Get Sick”)中的片断,刊于《读者文摘》(*Readers’ Digest*)杂志。阅读前,请先熟悉一下下面列出的单词:

bug 小毛病

trash 垃圾

bang *n.* 砰的响声

v. 发出砰的一声

giggle 咯咯笑

battle 战斗

disturb 惊动

[诵读选篇]

* Have you ever had the 24-hour bug?¹ You know, you have a fever, you ache and you have to stay in bed. Well, most people have had it sometime, and most people get over it in 24 hours. Most people, that is, except mothers.² A mother can get over it in 12 hours or less!

Mother has just taken her temperature — and it's over 100.³ She's got the bug that's going around.

It's right after lunch. The older children are at school, and the baby is sleeping. There's no reason why Mother cannot go to bed. But first she has a few things to do. Prepare the meat for dinner. Leave a note for the cleaners. Find someone to serve coffee for her at the meeting tonight. Put in the next load of wash.⁴ Carry out the trash.

At last she falls into bed. Ah-h-h-h! Her aching legs feel comfortable on the cool sheets. Her burning eyes close. She's asleep!

Then, suddenly, the front door bangs open as the children come home from school. "Mom! Mom! Where ARE you?" Mother tries to answer but their cries drown out her weak calls.⁵ Soon they find her — in bed.

"Didn't you even get up yet?" cries the younger girl.

"Who'll take me to the training class?" asks the boy.

"What about dinner? We've got to eat," says the older girl.

Mother understands. She knows that the children aren't used to a mother in bed.⁶ "I'm sick," she says. "I can't do anything. I'll just have to leave it all to you," she says. "Cook the potatoes ... take care of the baby ... put plates, spoons and forks on the table."

The children ran off like soldiers going into battle. For a time Mother is left to the quiet of her room and the ache in her head.⁷

Then Father comes home. He comes into the bedroom, drops heavily on the side of the bed and reaches for her hand. He looks tired. Mother starts worrying about him. "It's nothing, dear — just this bug that's going around," she says. "I can get up and do dinner and ..."

Father shakes his head. "You stay right there. Don't worry about a thing. The kids and I will take over."⁸ We'll get along fine without you."

Mother's room is quiet again. But it's also empty. Mother lies still, listening for family sounds. She feels left out.⁹ She feels terrible! But everybody else seems to feel great. In fact, there seems to be some sort of party going on. There are giggles from the children. And there are loud laughs from Father.

Suddenly there is a crash, followed by Father's voice.

“Get the baby out of the way before he cuts himself! Where’s the broom? Don’t disturb your mother! I said DON’T DISTURB YOUR MOTHER!”

Now the house grows quiet. It is clear to Mother that the family is eating dinner while she lies there sick and alone. No one has thought to bring dinner to her. They have forgotten all about her. They are doing fine without her. There’s no point in going on living.¹⁰

Then there is another crash. The younger girl rushes in with the news. “They dropped your plate and the dog ate all your dinner.”

The girl runs off. There is more noise until, finally, the children appear, smiling. They are proud of what they bring. There’s a glass of water, three beans, a cold boiled potato, a small piece of burned meat. “Can we stay with you while you eat?” they ask. “Dad is kind of angry. And the kitchen is very dirty. And nobody knows where the broom is. Is it all right if we stay with you?”

Suddenly Mother feels wonderful. As the children watch carefully, she eats her cold dinner. “Everything tastes so good,” she says. Without surprise, her aches and pains are gone.

The old girl speaks up. “Mom, I wish you’d get better. It’s just no fun when you’re sick.”

“Yes,” says the boy, “I hope you feel better tomorrow. We miss you.”

Mother smiles. "I feel better already," she says

[参考译文]

母亲生病的时候

乔伊斯·鲁伯尔德

你有没有得过困扰你 24 小时的小病？就是你发了烧，身上酸痛，不得不卧床休息。反正，大多数人在某个时间都得过这种病，大多数人 24 小时就恢复了。大多数人，也就是说，母亲们除外。一个当母亲的在 12 小时，或者更短时间内就能恢复。

母亲刚刚量过体温——超过华氏 100 度。正在流行的小毛病让她给碰上了。

刚刚吃过午饭。几个大孩子在学校里，小宝宝在睡觉。没有理由为何母亲此时不能去躺一会儿。但是首先她有几件事情要做。准备好晚餐吃的肉，写一张便条给清洁工，找个人替她在今晚的会上送咖啡，把另一大堆要洗的东西放进洗衣机，把垃圾拿出去。

最后她终于倒在了床上。啊——她酸疼的两腿放在凉爽的床单上感到非常舒服。她闭上了发热的双眼。她睡着了！

接着，突然间，前门砰的一声打开，孩子们放学回家了。“妈妈，你在哪里呀？”母亲想答应，但是他们的喊叫声盖过了她微弱的话音。他们很快找到了她——躺在床上。

“你到现在还没有起床？”小女儿叫着说。

“谁带我去上训练课？”儿子问。

“晚饭怎么办？我们不能不吃饭，”大女儿说。

母亲能够理解。她明白孩子们不习惯母亲躺在床上。

“我病了，”她说；“我啥也干不了了。我只能把所有的事都交给你们去干，把土豆煮一下……照看一下小宝宝……把盘子、汤匙和叉子放在桌子上。”

孩子们跑开了，就像士兵去打仗一样。一时间，母亲一人被留下，只感到房内的寂静和头中的疼痛。

接着父亲回家了。他走进卧室，重重地在床的一侧坐了下来，伸手去握她的手。他一脸倦意。母亲开始为他担心。

“没什么，亲爱的——只是那种正在流行的小毛病，”她说；“我可以起床，去做晚饭，还有……”

父亲摇摇头。“你躺着别动。什么事也别操心。我和孩子们接管了。没有你我们照样可以干好。”

母亲的房里恢复了宁静，但也显得空空荡荡。母亲静静地躺着，听着家里的各种声音。她感到被人遗弃了。她感到极不好受！但其他所有人似乎都情绪高涨。事实上，他们好像正举行着晚会，听得见孩子们的咯咯笑声和父亲的大笑声。

突然传来一声碎裂声，接着是父亲的声音。“把小宝宝抱开，别让他割破了！扫帚在哪儿？别打扰你母亲！我说过别打扰你母亲！”

房里又静了下来。母亲明白全家正在吃晚饭，而她却生了病，独自一人躺着。没人想到给她送饭来。他们把她彻底遗忘了。没有她他们照样干得不错。再活下去还有什么意思。