

Oscar Wilde's Short Stories

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Introduction - Oscar Wilde

Oscar Wilde was Irish. He was born in Dublin in 1854. His parents were very famous person. His father, William, was an important doctor. His mother was a poetess^①. She was called Jane but preferred the name "Speranza". She thought it was more interesting and romantic than Jane. Oscar's parents invited many clever and important people to their house in Dublin. They spoke together about clever and important things. When Oscar was a young boy he loved listening to them. He studied at Oxford University and won prizes for his poetry. Oscar Wilde was a very good writer but he preferred talking. He was also a very funny and a clever man. People wanted to listen to him and to laugh at his jokes. He was very popular and everybody invited him to there dinner parties.

He wrote poems, short stories, plays for the theater and one novel. Two of his most famous workers are his novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and the play *The Importance of Being Earnest*.

① poetess: 女诗人。

THE YOUNG KING

Part One: The Old King's Secret

There was once an old King. He had no son to be King when he died. His people were very worried.

"Who will be the next King?" they asked. But before the King died he revealed^① a secret: his only daughter, the Princess, had a child. In secret, she married an ordinary man and they had a son. Some people said her husband was an artist and some people said he was a musician. But his identity^② was a mystery and nobody knew about their secret son.

When the baby was a week old some men took him while his mother was sleeping. The Princess died immediately. Some people said for sadness. Other people said someone gave her poison^③ in a cup of wine. The men left the baby with a very poor family. This poor family lived in the forest and the boy became a shepherd^④. He looked after goats all day.

The old King made an important decision: "The boy must be the new King when I die," he said. He sent his servants into the forest. "Find the boy and bring him here."

The servants found the boy and brought him to the palace. When the boy arrived he was very happy. He immediately fell in love with all the beautiful things around him. He took off his old leather tunic and put on his fine new clothes. Then he began to explore the castle. He ran from room to room admiring all the beautiful statues, paintings and jewels in the palace. The

① revealed: 透露。

② identity: 身份。

③ poison: 毒药。

④ shepherd: 牧羊人。

people of the city talked about him: "The young King spends all his time admiring statues," they said. "Beauty and art are the most important things for him." In fact the young King was so fascinated with^① beautiful objects that he wanted more of them. He sent merchants^② to India to buy ivory and jade. He sent men to Persia for silk carpets, and others to find amber^③ in the north. He sent servants to look for green turquoise in the magic tombs of the Egyptian kings.

The young King thought about all these things but most of all he thought about his coronation robe.

He was sixteen and it was his coronation day the next day. He was very happy because he had a beautiful coronation robe of gold, a crown of rubies and a scepter of pearls. He ordered men to work night and day to prepare his coronation robes. "Search the whole world for the biggest rubies for my crown and the most beautiful pearl for my scepter," he said.

The young King was in his beautiful bedroom and he was thinking about his coronation robes. It was night time and he looked around him. The room was full of silver and gold and beautiful colors. Through the window he could smell the perfume^④ of jasmine^⑤, he could hear a nightingale singing and he could see the moon shining. Servants arrived and put flower petals^⑥ on his pillow. He was very happy. Tomorrow was his coronation day. He played beautiful music on his lute^⑦ and at midnight he closed his eyes and went to sleep.

① was so fascinated with: 被迷住。

② merchants: 商人。

③ amber: 琥珀。

④ perfume: 香味。

⑤ jasmine: 茉莉。

⑥ petals: 花瓣。

⑦ lute: 诗琴。

That night the young King had a dream.

Part Two: The Dreams

This was the young King's dream:

He is in a horrible, dark building. There is a terrible smell, the small windows have bars^① and not much sunlight can enter. But in the poor light the young King sees lots of people working. They are making cloth. They are very thin. Their faces are hungry and their hands tremble^② because they are tired. Pale, ill children sit in the dark corners of the room. The young King watches them.

A man speaks to him angrily and asks, "Why are you watching me? Are you my master's spy?"

"Who is your master?" asks the young King.

"A man like me, but I have poor clothes and I am very hungry. He wears beautiful clothes and is very rich. We work for him all day. We make wine and he drinks it. We work on the land but he eats the food. We are his slaves."

"But this is a free land," says the young King. "You are no man's slave."

"In war, weak men are the slaves of strong men. In peace, poor men are the slaves of rich men."

"Are you all slaves?"

"Yes, the women and the children. The old and the young."

Suddenly the young King sees the cloth on the machine. It is gold. The young King is terrified^③. "You are making some very beautiful gold cloth. What is it?"

"It is for the coronation robe of the young King," the man replies.

① **bars:** 长条金属。

② **tremble:** 颤抖。

③ **terrified:** 很害怕。

When the young King heard this he screamed^① and woke up. But then he saw the yellow moon at the window and soon slept again. He had another dream.

This was his second dream:

He is on a long boat. The sun is very hot and a hundred slaves are rowing^② the boat and working. The master of the boat is giving orders: he is black like ebony^③ and has a red silk turban^④ on his head. In his ears he has big silver earrings. Someone is whipping^⑤ the slaves while they work.

Finally the boat arrives in a small bay and the master throws the anchor^⑥ and a long rope ladder^⑦ into the sea. Some men take the youngest slave. They tie^⑧ a heavy stone to him and throw him into the sea. The young slave disappears into the water but returns to the boat many times. Every time he returns he has a beautiful pearl in his hand. The master of the ship looks at the pearls and puts them into a little green bag.

The young slave returns to the boat for the last time. He is very pale and tired. In his hand he has a very beautiful pearl. The pearl is round and white like the moon. But the young slave's ears and nose are full of blood. He falls and dies but the master of the boat laughs. He takes the pearl from the young slave's hand and the other slaves throw his dead body into the sea. "This pearl is for the scepter of the young King," he says.

When the young King heard this he screamed and woke up but he saw the stars at the window and soon slept again.

① **screamed:** 尖叫。

② **rowing:** 划船。

③ **ebony:** 乌木。

④ **turban:** 头巾。

⑤ **whipping:** 用鞭子抽打。

⑥ **anchor:** 锚。

⑦ **rope ladder:** 梯子。

⑧ **tie:** 捆绑。

This was his third and last dream:

He is in a tropical forest. It is full of strange fruit and beautiful, poisonous^① flowers. There are snakes in the grass, parrots^② in the trees and monkeys^③ and peacocks all around. The young King sees lots of men working in a dry river. They are digging the ground and cutting big rocks and stones.

Death and Avarice^④ are in a dark cavern. They are also watching the men. Death says to Avarice, "Give me one third of your men," but Avarice refuses. "No! They are my servants," she says.

Death is very angry when he hears this. He sends Malaria^⑤ to kill one third of the men.

"What have you got in your hand?"

Death asks. "Three grains of corn^⑥. But why are you interested?" she asks. Death says, "Give me one grain of corn to plant in my garden." But Avarice replies, "No, it is my corn," and she hides the corn in her pocket.

Again, Death is very angry when he hears this and calls Fever^⑦. Fever comes in a red robe like fire, he touches one third of the men and kills them. "Now give me a grain of corn for my garden," says Death.

"No, never!" replies Avarice. Death is extremely angry and calls Plague^⑧. Plague arrives from the sky, flying like a bird and kills the rest of the men. Avarice screams and runs into the forest. Death takes his red horse and rides

① **poisonous:** 有毒的。

② **parrots:** 鹦鹉。

③ **monkeys:** 猴子。

④ **avarice:** 贪婪。

⑤ **malaria:** 疟疾。

⑥ **grains of corn:** 谷粒。

⑦ **fever:** 发烧。

⑧ **plague:** 瘟疫。

away, fast like the wind. And then dragons and terrible monsters^① come out of the rivers and the valleys.

The young King cries and says, "Who were those men? What were they doing?"

"They were looking for rubies for a king's crown," replies a voice behind him. The young King turns and sees a man in white. This man has a mirror in his hand.

"Which king?" he asks.

"Look in this mirror and you will see the king," replies the man in white.

He sees his face in the mirror screams and wakes up. He sees the sun shining at his window. It is his coronation day.

^① **monsters:** 怪物。

Part Three: The Coronation

A servant arrived with the coronation clothes. They were extremely beautiful but the young King remembered his dreams. "Take these clothes away. I don't want to wear them," he said.

"Is this a joke, Your Majesty?" asked the servant, but the young King told him about his dreams.

"In my robe there is sadness and pain, in the rubies there is blood and in the pearl there is death," he said.

The servant replied, "Please forget your dreams. Put on the robe and the crown. The people will not recognize^① a king without a crown and a scepter."

But the young King put on his old tunic from the forest and took his shepherd's staff^②. "I arrived in the palace with these clothes and I will leave the palace with these clothes," he said. "Now I am ready for my coronation."

A servant asked him, "Where is your crown?" And he took a briar^③ of thorns^④ from his balcony. "This will be my crown," he replied.

The young King rode his horse to the cathedral^⑤. The people laughed when they saw him. "This is not the King but the King's servant," they said. He explained his dreams but one man was angry and said, "Do you not know that rich people give poor people work. It is difficult to work for a hard master but it is more difficult to work for no master. Please return to the palace and put on your coronation robes."

"The rich and the poor are brothers," he replied, but the people laughed

① recognize: 认出。

② staff: 棍棒。

③ briar: 野蔷薇。

④ thorns: 刺。

⑤ cathedral: 大教堂。

again.

He arrived at the great door of the cathedral but the soldiers stopped him. "What do you want? Only the King can enter by this door."

"I am the King," he replied. The Bishop^① saw him and asked, "Where is your crown? Where is your scepter?"

The young King told the Bishop of his dreams but the Bishop answered, "Listen to me, I am an old man. There are many bad things in the world but you cannot change them all. There are thieves and pirates and beggars but you can't make these things disappear. They are too much for one person. Go back to the Palace and put on your coronation clothes."

But the young King passed the Bishop and entered the cathedral. He went to the altar^② and looked at the image of Christ. He saw the light of the candles and the smoke of the incense^③. Suddenly a crowd of people ran into the cathedral. They had swords and were very angry. "Where is this King dressed in beggar's clothes?" they cried. "We must kill him because a beggar cannot rule us. He will be bad for our country." But the young King prayed silently in front of the altar. Then he turned and looked at the people sadly.

At that moment a ray of sun shone into the cathedral. It illuminated^④ the young King at the altar. The sun made a beautiful robe around him, red roses grew on his dry crown of thorns and white lilies grew on his staff. The roses were redder than rubies and the lilies were whiter than pearls. Music started to play and voices started to sing. The glory of God filled the cathedral. The people knelt down^⑤.

① **bishop:** 主教。

② **altar:** 祭坛。

③ **incense:** 香。

④ **illuminated:** 照亮。

⑤ **knelt down:** 跪下。

"He is crowned^① by someone greater than me," the Bishop said and he knelt in front of the young King. The boy came from the altar and passed the people. But they didn't have the courage to look at his face because it was the face of an angel.

^① **crowned:** 立为君主。

THE STAR-CHILD

Part One: The Baby

One winter night in a big forest of pine trees, two woodcutters^① were walking home. It was very, very cold and there was snow on the ground. The trees were cold, the birds were cold and the animals were cold. The rabbits stayed in their rabbit holes and the squirrels^② stayed in the trees.

But the two woodcutters continued their journey. They prayed to Saint Martin the protector of travelers and finally they saw the lights of their little village in the distance. They were very happy and laughed. The Earth now seemed like a flower of silver and the moon seemed like a flower of gold. But soon they became sad again. "Why were we so happy?" asked one woodcutter. "Life is for rich people, not poor people like us. It is better if we die in the snow or if a wild animal eats us."

Suddenly, something very strange happened. A very bright and beautiful star fell from the sky into the snow.

"Look," said one of the woodcutters to his friend, "perhaps we will find a pot of gold. Let's go and see!"

When they arrived they found a thing of gold on the white snow. But it wasn't the treasure they wanted. It was a golden cloak^③ with golden stars on it. They opened the cloak and inside they saw a little baby, sleeping. Round the baby's neck was a chain^④ of amber.

"This is not good," said one of them. "Let's leave the baby here. We have

① **woodcutters:** 伐木者。

② **squirrels:** 松鼠。

③ **cloak:** 斗篷。

④ **chain:** 链子。

too many children and not enough money to buy food. I don't want another child."

"But we can't leave this little baby here alone." said the other woodcutter. "He will surely die. I will take him home with me. We have many children and not enough food, but my wife will look after him." And the good woodcutter took the baby in his arms and continued his journey home.

When they arrived at their village the first woodcutter said, "You have the child so you must give me the cloak of gold."

But his friend answered, "No, this cloak is not yours or mine. It is the baby's cloak. It must stay with him."

The woodcutter's wife was very happy to see her husband. She put her arms round him and kissed him.

"I found something in the forest and I brought it home for you," he said.

"Good, what is it? We are very poor and we need many things." But she was very angry when she saw the baby. "We have too many children already and not enough money to buy food. I don't want another child," she said. But then she looked at the baby and her heart was full of pity.

"He is a Star-Child," said her husband. "We must love him." So the woman put the baby in a little bed to sleep. She put the cloak and the chain into a chest. "Yes, we will love him," she answered.

Part Two: The Mother

The Star-Child lived with the woodcutter and his family but he was very different from them. Every year the Star-Child became more beautiful: his skin was white like ivory, his hair was gold like the daffodils^①, his lips were like the petals of a red flower and his eyes were blue like the violets near a river. The other people in the village had black hair and black eyes and they watched the Star-Child in wonder.

The Star-Child was very beautiful but very cruel, arrogant^② and selfish. He laughed at the other children in the village and said, "Your parents are poor but I am noble, I come from a star." He had no pity for poor people. He laughed at ugly people and ill people. He hurt animals and he laughed when they suffered. He was very vain^③ and loved his beauty. In summer he often went to the well in the priest's orchard^④ and looked at the reflection of his face in the water. Then he was happy.

The woodcutter and his wife treated the boy well but they were very sad. They often said to him, "We were good to you. We felt pity for you. Why are you so cruel? Why do you act in this way?"

The priest^⑤ was very worried and said to him, "You must respect all God's creatures^⑥! Even the fly is your brother. Why do you cause pain to others?"

But the Star-Child didn't listen. He continued to hurt animals and laugh at the problems of other people. The other children followed him because he

① **daffodils:** 黄水仙。

② **arrogant:** 高傲的。

③ **vain:** 自负的。

④ **orchard:** 果园。

⑤ **priest:** 神职人员。

⑥ **creatures:** 生物。

was beautiful and could dance and make music. They followed his orders. He was their leader and they became cruel and hard like him.

One day a poor beggar woman arrived in the village. Her clothes were very old and torn^① and she had no shoes on her feet. She was very tired and sat under a tree to rest. The Star-Child saw her and said to his friends, "Look at that ugly woman. We don't want her here," and they started to throw stones at the poor woman. She was terrified but she didn't stop looking at the Star-Child.

"What are you doing?" shouted the woodcutter when he saw this. "Stop immediately. Why do you have no pity for this poor woman?"

"I will not listen to you. You are not my father," replied the Star-Child.

"This is true, but when I found you in the forest I had pity for you."

The old woman was listening and when she heard these words she screamed and fainted^②. The woodcutter carried her into his house and his wife put meat and drinks on the table for her. But she did not eat or drink. She asked, "Did this child come from the forest? Did he have a gold cloak with stars on it? Did this happen about ten years ago?"

The woodcutter was very surprised. "Yes," he replied.

"And did he have an amber chain round his neck?"

"Yes he did," said the woodcutter. "Come with me and I will show you the cloak and the chain."

The woman looked at these things and started to cry with joy. "He is my little son. I am his mother," she said. "I lost him in the forest ten years ago and I looked all over the world for him. Now I have him again." The woodcutter was very surprised and called the boy. "Come into the house and

① **torn:** 破产。

② **fainted:** 昏倒。

you will find your mother."

The Star-Child was very happy and ran in but when he saw her he said, "Where is my mother? I can see no-one, only a horrible beggar woman."

"I am your mother," she said.

"You are mad. I am not your son: you are dressed in old clothes, you are a beggar woman and I am a Star-Child!"

"But I recognized you when I saw you and I recognized your cloak of gold and your chain of amber. Robbers stole you from me. Come to me, my son. Your love is very important for me." She opened her arms to him but he was very angry and closed the doors of his heart to her.

The woman cried. "Kiss me before I go because I travelled all over the world and I suffered much to find you."

"Never. You are very ugly. I prefer to kiss a toad^① or a snake."

The woman stood up and went out of the house. She was crying very much. The Star-Child was very happy when she went. He then went to play with his friends.

^① toad: 癩蛤蟆。

Part Three: The Punishment

The Star-Child went to his friends but when they saw him they laughed at him. "We don't want to play with you now because you're ugly," they said. "Why do they say these things to me?" he thought. He went to the well to look at his reflection. He was different now: he had a face like a toad and skin like a snake.

Then the Star-Child understood and started to cry. "This is my punishment," he said. "I am very cruel and my mother suffered. Now I must find her and say sorry."

The woodcutter's little daughter said to him, "It's not important if you're ugly. Please stay. I will not laugh at you."

"No, this is my punishment," he replied. "I treated^① my mother very badly and now I must find her."

He ran into the forest calling, "Mother! Mother! I'm sorry, please come back." All day he called but nobody answered. When night came he slept on a bed of leaves, but when the animals saw him they ran away. They knew that he was a cruel boy.

He said to the mole^②, "You can go under the ground. Tell me if my mother is there?"

"I don't know if your mother is there. I cannot see because you hurt my eyes," replied the mole.

He said to a little bird, "You can fly over the trees. Tell me if you can see my mother."

"I don't know if your mother is there. I cannot fly because you hurt my

① **treated:** 对待。

② **mole:** 鼹鼠。

wings," replied the bird.

He saw a little squirrel and asked, "Where is my mother?"

"I don't know," replied the squirrel. "You killed my mother. Do you want to kill your mother too?"

The Star-Child heard all these things and he cried and prayed to God to forgive him. He travelled to many different villages to find his mother, and the children of these villages laughed at him and threw stones at him.

Nobody had pity for the Star-Child.

Part Four: Three Pieces of Gold

For three years the Star-Child walked around the world but he didn't find his mother. One day he arrived at the gates of a city near a river with a big wall around it. The soldiers there stopped him. "What are you doing here?" they asked.

"I'm looking for my mother," he said. "Please let me pass. Perhaps she is in this city."

"Who is your mother and why are you looking for her?" asked another soldier.

"She is a poor beggar like me and I was very cruel to her. Now I want her pardon^①."

But the soldiers laughed. "You are very ugly. No mother loves an ugly child. She will not be happy to see you. Come with us. We will sell you to be a slave."

They sold the Star-Child to an old man for the price of a cup of sweet wine. This old man was a magician^② from Libya. The Magician took the boy to a dark prison and gave him a piece of old bread and some dirty water. The next day he said, "Now you must go into the forest. In the forest there are three pieces of gold: one is of white gold, one is of yellow gold and the other is of red gold. You are my slave and if you do not bring me the piece of white gold I will beat you one hundred times."

So the Star-Child went to the forest to look for the white gold but he found only many thorns and dangerous plants. He could not find the white gold anywhere. When the sun started to disappear the boy started to cry. He knew

① **pardon:** 宽恕。

② **magician:** 魔术师。

that the Magician wanted to beat him. Suddenly he heard a cry of pain and saw a little hare in a trap. He forgot his problems. He felt pity for the hare and opened the trap.

"Thank you, you are very kind," said the hare. "Thanks to you I have my freedom. What can I give you?"

"I must find a piece of white gold for the Magician. If I don't take it to him he will beat me."

"I will help you," said the hare. "I know where to find the white gold." He took the Star-Child to a tree and in the tree he found the gold. The Star-Child was very happy and thanked the hare.

He returned to the city. But at the city gate he saw an old man. This old man was very ill and very poor.

"Give me some money. If you don't give me some money I will die of hunger!" shouted the old man. The Star-Child felt pity for the old man but he only had the piece of white gold for the Magician. "The old man needs the money more than me," thought the Star-Child and gave him the gold.

The Magician was very angry when he saw that the Star-Child didn't have the gold and he beat the boy. He put him in prison with no food and no water.

The next day the Magician said, "Today you must return to the forest and find the piece of yellow gold. If you do not do this I will beat you three hundred times." The boy went into the forest and looked for the gold. He looked all day long but he could not find it. Finally he sat under a tree and started to cry. The hare heard him and asked, "Why are you crying?"

"I must find the piece of yellow gold. If I don't find it the Magician will beat me."

"Follow me. I will show you the yellow gold," said the hare and he took the Star-Child to a pool of water. At the bottom of this pool he found the

piece of yellow gold.

The Star-Child returned to the city but at the city gate he saw the old man again. "Give me some money. If you don't give me money I will die of hunger!" he shouted. The Star-Child felt pity for the old man and gave him the gold.

The Magician was very angry. "What!?! No gold? No gold, no food and no water!" He beat the Star-Child and put chains on him and put him in prison again.

The next day the Magician said, "Today you must return to the forest and find the piece of red gold. If you find it, you will be free. If you do not find it, I will kill you." The boy went into the forest and all day long he looked for the gold but he could not find it. In the evening he sat under a tree and started to cry. The hare heard him and asked, "Why are you crying?" The Star-Child explained everything and again the hare helped him. This time he found the gold in a cave near the tree.

"Thank you, thank you," said the boy and he ran back to the city.

At the city gate he saw the old man. "Give me some money. If you don't give me money, I will die!" he shouted. The Star-Child felt pity for the old man and gave him the gold. "You need it more than me," he said, but he was very sad and his heart was very heavy. "The Magician will kill me," he thought.

But when he passed the guards at the city gates they bowed^① to him and said, "Look at our beautiful Lord!" The Star-Child walked through the city and more and more people followed him. They all said, "He is the most beautiful boy in the world." But the Star-Child was very sad, "They are laughing at me," he thought. He walked for a long time and finally arrived in

① bowed: 鞠躬。

a big square where there was a king's palace. The people said, "You are our Lord, the son of our king!"

"I am not a king's son. I am the son of a poor beggar woman. Why do you say that I am beautiful? I know I am very ugly."

"Why do you say that you are ugly? Look!" said a soldier. The Star-Child looked into the soldier's shield. The shield was silver like a mirror. There he saw his face and saw that his face was beautiful like before.

"There is a prophecy^①," said the people, "that on this day our king will come. You are our king. Take this crown and this scepter. Govern us with justice and with mercy."

"No, I am a bad boy," he replied. "I must find my mother, I cannot accept the crown and the scepter."

He turned towards the city gate. In the crowd he saw his mother, the beggar woman. Then next to her he saw the old man from the city gate.

He ran to the woman, knelt in front of her and kissed her feet.

"Mother I am so sorry. Please forgive me. Once I gave you my hatred^②. Please give me your love now."

But the woman didn't speak. The Star-Child spoke to the old man. "Please, I helped you three times. Please tell my mother to speak to me."

But the old man didn't speak. The Star-Child started to cry. "Please forgive me, Mother. Please forgive me."

The woman put her hand on the boy's head and said, "Stand up." The old man put his hand on the boy's head too. When the Star-Child stood up he saw that the beggar woman was a queen and the old man was a king. The queen said to him, "This is your father. You helped him three times." And

① **prophecy:** 预言。

② **hatred:** 仇恨。

the king said to him. "This is your mother. You washed her feet with your tears."

The boy hugged^① them and kissed them both. They took him to the palace and they put a crown on his head and a scepter in his hand.

He was a very good king and showed justice and mercy to everyone. He sent gifts to the woodcutter and his family. He helped poor people, he was kind to the animals and birds and there was peace in all the land.

Unfortunately he died after three years because he suffered a lot in his life and the next king was a cruel king.

① **hugged:** 拥抱。

THE NIGHTINGALE AND THE ROSE

Part One: The Student in Love

In a nest, in a tree, in a garden a nightingale^① sang. Her song was beautiful: she sang of love and happiness. One day she saw a young student in the garden.

"She says she will dance with me if I give her a red rose," said the Student, "but in my garden there is no red rose." And when he said this his eyes filled with tears. "Every day I study philosophy^② and I read all the things that wise men say about happiness. Now my happiness depends on^③ a red rose!"

The Nightingale heard this and said to herself, "Finally, here is a true lover. Every night I sing of love and this young man suffers for love."

The Student continued: "I love the Professor's daughter and tomorrow there is a ball at the Prince's palace. My love will be there. If I take her a red rose she will dance with me. If I have no red rose she will not speak to me." The young student looked around the garden. There were yellow roses and white roses but no red roses. "Poor me," he said. "I need one red rose but I cannot see any in this garden."

"Ah," said the Nightingale, "Love is a wonderful thing: it is more precious than emeralds^④, opals^⑤ and pearls, you cannot buy love in the market place with gold coins."

"The musicians will play their violins and my love will dance to their music. But she will not dance with me. I have no red rose to give her." The

① **nightingale:** 夜莺。

② **philosophy:** 哲学。

③ **depends on:** 依赖。

④ **emeralds:** 翡翠。

⑤ **opals:** 蛋白石。

Student fell onto the grass and started to cry.

A butterfly heard him and asked, "Why is he crying?"

A daisy asked her friend, "Why is he crying?"

"Why is he crying?" said a little green lizard.

"He is crying for a red rose," said the Nightingale.

"A red rose?" they all replied. "That's ridiculous^①!"

The other animals laughed but the Nightingale understood. She watched the student sadly and thought of the mystery^② of love.

① **ridiculous:** 可笑的。

② **mystery:** 神秘的。

Part Two: The Nightingale's Sacrifice^①

In the middle of the garden there was a beautiful rose tree. The Nightingale flew to the rose tree and said, "Give me a red rose," she cried, "and I will sing you my sweetest song."

"I'm sorry, my roses are white like the snow on the mountain and the foam^② of the sea," he answered. "Ask my brother who grows round the sundial^③. Perhaps he can help you."

The Nightingale flew to the sundial and said to the rose tree, "Give me a red rose," she cried, "and I will sing you my sweetest song."

"I'm sorry, my roses are yellow like the daffodil," he answered. "Ask my brother who grows under the Student's window. Perhaps he can help you."

The Nightingale flew to the window and asked the rose, "Give me a red rose," she cried, "and I will sing you my sweetest song."

"I'm sorry, my roses are red like the coral^④ in the sea but the winter was cold and my branches are broken. This year I have no flowers."

"But I only need one red rose. Is there nothing I can do?"

"There is one thing you can do but I won't tell you. It is a terrible thing."

"Tell me what it is. I am not afraid," said the Nightingale.

"If you want a red rose you must build it by moonlight with music and color^⑤ it with your own blood. You must sing to me all night and press^⑥ your heart against one of my thorns. All night you must sing and your blood will become my blood."

① **sacrifice:** 牺牲。

② **foam:** 泡沫。

③ **sundial:** 日晷。

④ **coral:** 珊瑚。

⑤ **color:** 着色。

⑥ **press:** 按, 压。

"Death is a big price to pay for a rose," said the Nightingale. "Everybody likes life. I like life. I like to fly and to look at the flowers and to smell their perfumes in the wind. But love is better than life ... and the heart of a man is much more important than the heart of a bird. The Student will have his rose."

Part Three: The Red Rose

The Nightingale flew back to the garden and saw the student lying on the grass. His eyes were full of tears. "Be happy," the bird said. "You will have your red rose and tomorrow night you will dance with your love at the Prince's ball. I will make the rose for you by moonlight, with music and with my own heart's blood. I ask you just one thing, you must promise to be a true lover."

The Student looked up and listened but he didn't understand what the Nightingale was saying: he only understood things in books. But the oak^① tree understood and he said, "Sing me your sweetest song, little Nightingale. I will be sad when you are not here." The Nightingale sang for the oak tree. The Student heard the song and said, "Yes, this music is very beautiful but can a bird really understand love? She sings well but she is like an artist and everybody knows that artists are not sincere^②. She thinks only of music and could never do anything practical to help anybody." He got up, went into his house, lay on his bed and slept.

When night came and the moon shone, the Nightingale flew to the rose tree. She pressed her heart against one of his thorns. All night she sang her sweetest songs. The cold crystal moon listened and the Nightingale's blood slowly left her. At the top of the rose tree a flower started to grow. First it was pale, silver like the new day. But the tree cried "Come closer!"

The Nightingale came closer and sang louder, then the rose became pink like a red rose in a silver mirror.

"Come closer, little Nightingale," said the rose bush. "Come closer. If not,

① oak: 橡树。

② sincere: 真诚的。

the day will come before the rose is finished." The Nightingale came closer and as the thorn pierced^① her heart she sang of a love that never dies. She felt a strong pain and her voice became softer and softer. Finally the rose was ready, a marvelous^② red rose, red like the eastern skies.

Then the little Nightingale sang her most beautiful final song. The white moon heard it and she forgot the sun in the East and stayed in the sky to listen. The red rose heard the song and opened her petals in the cold morning air. The sleeping shepherds woke up when they heard it and the river carried its message to the sea. The rose tree heard the song and cried, "Look, little Nightingale, look. The rose is finished."

But the Nightingale didn't hear because she was dead on the grass with the thorn in her heart.

① **pierced:** 刺入。

② **marvelous:** 极好的。

Part Four: The Professor's Daughter

The next day, at lunchtime, the Student woke up and looked out of his window. "That's lucky," he said, "here is a red rose. It is an extremely beautiful red rose. I'm sure it has a long Latin name." He took the rose from the tree. He put on his hat and ran to the Professor's house. The Professor's daughter was sitting near the color.

"Look, here is a red rose for you. Tonight you must dance with me as you promised. You will wear it next to your heart and I will say 'I love you'."

The girl didn't smile but she looked at him. "I'm sorry," she said, "I don't like the color. My dress is blue and the rose is red. And another thing, the Chamberlain's son gave me jewels. Everybody knows that jewels are more expensive^① than flowers. I don't want your rose."

"You are very ungrateful^②," said the Student angrily, and he threw the rose into the street. At that moment a cart passed and the wheels crushed^③ the flower.

"You are very rude," said the girl. "I will dance with the Chamberlain's son, not with you." Then she stood up and went into her house.

The Student started to walk home. "Love is a stupid thing," he said. "I prefer to study books. They are much more interesting and useful. Yes, logic^④ is much more useful than love. I will go home and study philosophy and metaphysics^⑤." And that's what he did.

① **expensive:** 昂贵的。

② **ungrateful:** 不领情的。

③ **crushed:** 压碎。

④ **logic:** 逻辑学。

⑤ **metaphysics:** 形而上学。

Track 1: THE YOUNG KING Part One Listening Exercise

The King is very old and everyone is worried. What will happen when he dies? Look at the questions below. You will hear a conversation between the servant and the King. For each question, put a tick(✓) in the correct box.

1. The old King is very

- A. tired B. old C. worried

2. The King had a

- A. son B. daughter C. secret servant

3. The servant thinks that a princess couldn't be a

- A. shepherd B. problem C. king

4. The princess had a secret

- A. son B. servant C. boyfriend

5. When they hear the secret everybody is

- A. worried B. angry C. surprised

6. The King tells his servant to

- A. go away B. bring the boy to the castle C. find the princess

7. The boy will

- A. live in the forest B. have lots of goods C. be the new King

8. The servant thinks

- A. it's a good idea B. the boy is not a good choice C. the King

is tired

Track 2: THE YOUNG KING Part Three Listening Exercise

You will hear Max and Julia speaking. They are watching the coronation procession of the young King.

Listen to their conversation and look at the summary below. Some information is missing. Fill in the missing information in the numbered spaces.

The young King arrives. He is wearing a (1)_____ of briars and a leather (2)_____ .

This is strange because a king usually has a golden (3)_____ .

Max asks the King why he is wearing the clothes of a (4)_____ man.

The young King thinks that (5)_____ are important.

"The (6)_____ and the poor are (7)_____ ," he says.

(8)_____ agrees with the King but (9)_____ thinks a king must wear a king's (10)_____.

Track 3: THE CORONATION

Here is a picture of Queen's Elizabeth's coronation in 1963. She is wearing a crown and holding a scepter and an orb in her hand. All of these things are called "The Crown Jewels". She is wearing a beautiful robe and sitting on the coronation throne.

In 1066 a French nobleman called William, went to England. He defeated the English and became the new King. Everyone called him "William the Conqueror^①" and he was the first king to be crowned in Westminster Abbey. Now all kings and queens are crowned here.

A coronation is always a moment for celebration but it is also a religious ceremony^②. British monarchs must promise to govern^③ with justice and mercy^④ when the Archbishop of Canterbury^⑤ puts the crown on their head.

① conqueror: 征服者。

② ceremony: 仪式。

③ govern: 统治。

④ mercy: 仁慈。

⑤ Archbishop of Canterbury: 英国大主教。

Track 4: THE CROWN JEWELS

This is St. Edward's Crown. It was made in 1661. All new kings and queens of England wear it at their coronations. Which jewels can you see in it?

The orb is made of gold and was specially designed for the coronation of Kings Charles II in 1662. The monarch^① holds it in his or her right hand. It shows that the king or queen is a Christian. The sword represents authority^② and the ring represents dignity^③.

Did you know?

Some interesting facts about the Crown Jewels

- In 1216 King John loses the Crown Jewels in some quicksand^④.
- Edward III pawns^⑤ the jewels to make money to pay his soldiers.
- Oliver Cromwell orders them to be destroyed in 1649 because they are a symbol of the monarchy.
- The state crown contains the famous Koh-i-noor diamond. It is one of the biggest diamonds in the world and travels from India to Afghanistan to Persia before it arrives in England as a gift for Queen Victoria.

① monarch: 君主。

② authority: 权威。

③ dignity: 尊贵。

④ quicksand: 流沙。

⑤ pawns: 典当。

Track 5: THE STAR-CHILD Part Four Listening Exercise

Listen to this conversation twice and fill in the gaps.

The Magician and the Star-Child are talking early one morning.

Magician: Come on boy, _____.

Star-Child: What time is it? Is it morning already?

Magician: It's 6 o'clock.

Star-Child: 6: 00! That's very _____. Can I _____ some more, please?

Magician: What? This is a prison, boy, not a hotel!

Star-Child: Alright, alright. Can I have something to _____ then?

Magician: You can _____ this piece of bread.

Star-Child: Thank you very much. Very _____. What's your name?

Magician: I haven't got a name. I am a magician.

Star-Child: Oh!

Magician: And what's your name?

Star-Child: I haven't got a name. I'm a Star-Child.

Magician: Oh. And why are you in this city, Star-Child?

Star-Child: I'm looking for my mother. Perhaps you _____ her. She's very _____ and extremely _____.

Magician: Like her son. Ha, ha, ha.

Star-Child: Don't be _____ and _____ me some water, please.

Magician: Alright, boy, but remember, if you don't _____ me the gold,
There will be no more food for you tomorrow. Ha, ha, ha.

Track 6: Life in Victorian Times

Oscar Wilde wrote in the second half of the nineteenth century. At this time Victoria was the Queen of England and the British Empire was the biggest and most important in the world. (Remember that Wilde was Irish not English. He went to England to study, live and work.) During this time there were many changes in the way people lived. Many inventions changed the way people worked. There was a very big difference between the rich and the poor.

England became more industrialized^① and people started to leave the countryside. They went to work in new factories in the cities. There were not enough houses for everybody so people had to share small houses with other large families or go to the workhouses. The workhouses were terrible places: there was work and a place to live for poor people, but usually there was not enough food and the work was very difficult and dangerous. The factory masters and workhouse masters were usually very strict and had no pity for the workers. Lots of people died because they had accidents with the new machinery^② or because they worked fifteen hours every day in very bad conditions.

① **industrialized:** 工业化的。

② **machinery:** 机器。

Track 7: Famous Victorians

Charles Dickens (1812 – 1870)

We can see that Oscar Wilde thought about the differences between rich and poor people and wrote about these problems in his stories. Another very famous English writer did the same. His name was Charles Dickens. Oscar Wilde's family was very rich and very important and his stories often showed poor children who became rich by a sort of magic. Charles Dickens's family was poor and his stories were very realistic^①: they spoke about poor children in workhouses and bad rich people. These people were not interested in helping others. His most famous stories are *Oliver Twist*, *Great Expectations* and *David Copperfield*.

Doctor Thomas Barnardo (1845 – 1905)

Doctor Barnardo was another famous Victorian. He was Irish like Oscar Wilde. When he visited England he was very shocked by the terrible conditions of the poor, especially the children: they had to carry very heavy sacks of coal, work for many hours every day, go into chimneys to clean them, and so on. He built special houses for poor children. In these houses they could live protected and safe.

Emmeline Pankhurst (1858 – 1928)

The difference between the rich and the poor was not the only difference in Victorian society. There was also the difference between men and women. Women couldn't vote^② at that time. Men thought that they were not very

① realistic: 写实的。

② vote: 投票。

intelligent and could not make important decisions! Emmeline Pankhurst was the leader of a group of women called the Suffragettes^①. The Suffragettes tried to change the social situation and were very brave. The politicians did not like the Suffragettes but finally, in 1918, women aged thirty had the vote and eleven years later in 1929 all women over 21 can vote.

^① **Suffragettes:** 争取妇女选举权的女子。

Track 8: THE NIGHTINGALE... Part Three Listening Exercise

Listen to William and then answer the questions. Choose the best answer A, B or C.

1. William is

- A. a student.
- B. a professor.
- C. a philosopher.

2. He loves studying

- A. philosophy and art.
- B. history and Italian.
- C. philosophy and history.

3. His mother and father

- A. live in a small house.
- B. buy him a lot of things.
- C. are very beautiful.

4. Emily

- A. loves William.
- B. is the Professor's daughter.
- C. loves all the boys.

5. Emily will dance with William if

- A. he buys her lots of things.
- B. he stops studying.
- C. he gives her a red rose.

Track 9: THE NIGHTINGALE... Part Three Listening Exercise

Now listen to Emily and then answer the questions. Choose the best answer A, B or C.

1. Everybody says

- A. Emily loves all the boys.
- B. Emily's mother is a professor.
- C. Emily is very beautiful.

2. The artist's name is

- A. Jonathan.
- B. Richard.
- C. William.

3. Emily's favourite boy is

- A. Richard.
- B. Tristram.
- C. William.

4. Emily likes boys who

- A. dance well.
- B. think she's beautiful.
- C. spend a lot of money.

5. Who will she dance with at Prince's ball?

- A. William.
- B. Tristram.
- C. Jonathan.