

SIDE BY SIDE: **British and American Short Stories**

**Roald Dahl
Sara Maitland
Sherwood Anderson
Patricia Zilver**

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現代の日本の若者について、女が強くなったとか、男がやさしくなったとかいうコメントをしばしば耳にする。その他さまざまな局面でジェンダーの境界線が揺らぎはじめている、とも言われる。だからと言って、長年にわたり男と女の間にうがたれてきた深い溝が埋まりつつある、とするのは早計に過ぎよう。このような風潮に眉をひそめる大人は相変わらず多いし、当の若者たちにしても、肝心なところで意外に保守的な考えをのぞかせたりする。ファッションや風俗、あるいは法制、といった外側の変化に比べて、意識の変革ははるかに遅れてやって来るものだ。だが少なくとも、「女はこういうものだ」とか「男ならこうでなくては」というような既製の枠にとらわれず、自分らしい生き方を志向する若者が増えつつあるのは確かなようだ。非婚率の上昇や出生率の低下の根底には、旧態依然たる価値観の押しつけに対する女性の側からの無言の抵抗がある。男性の側にしても、より大きな役割を当然のごとく背負わされてしまうことへの疑問や反発があっても不思議はない。男が力でリードし、女はおとなしくそれに従うという図式で成り立っていた予定調和的な「古き良き(?)時代」は、形の上でも意識の上でも、そろそろ終わりを告げるべきだろう。女性が自立へ向けて真の強さを身につけ、男性も「権力」や「腕力」への思い込みを捨て去れば、法のもとでは「平等」と言われながら、現実には大きく傾いたままの関係を是正し、望ましい調和を目指すことができるはずだ。互いに歩み寄り、手をたずさえて、共に生きる道を探るべき時が来ている。

このテキストでは、両性のより良い関係を模索するためのケーススタディとして、4つの「愛」の形を提示した。取り上げた作品は、いずれも、テーマ性に加え、ストーリーの面白さと英語の読みやすさを絶対条件として、数ある英米の短編の中から選び抜いたものである。購読用のテキストとしてはもちろんのこと、ディスカッションのトピックとして、またリポートの素材としても活用していただけることと思う。それぞれの作品と作者については、注の部分の解説をご覧ください。

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Roald Dahl

LAMB TO THE SLAUGHTER

THE room was warm and clean, the curtains drawn, the two table lamps alight—hers and the one by the empty chair opposite. On the sideboard behind her, two tall glasses, soda water, whisky. Fresh ice cubes in the Thermos bucket.

Mary Maloney was waiting for her husband to come home 5
from work.

Now and again she would glance up at the clock, but without anxiety, merely to please herself with the thought that each minute gone by made it nearer the time when he would come. There was a slow smiling air about her, and about 10
everything she did. The drop of the head as she bent over her sewing was curiously tranquil. Her skin—for this was her sixth month with child—had acquired a wonderful translucent quality, the mouth was soft, and the eyes, with their new placid look, seemed larger, darker than before. 15

When the clock said ten minutes to five, she began to listen, and a few moments later, punctually as always, she heard the tyres on the gravel outside, and the car door slamming, the footsteps passing the window, the key turning in the lock. She laid aside her sewing, stood up, and went forward to kiss him 20
as he came in.

'Hullo, darling,' she said.

'Hullo,' he answered.

She took his coat and hung it in the closet. Then she walked over and made the drinks, a strongish one for him, a
5 weak one for herself; and soon she was back again in her chair with the sewing, and he in the other, opposite, holding the tall glass with both his hands, rocking it so the ice cubes tinkled against the side.

For her, this was always a blissful time of day. She knew
10 he didn't want to speak much until the first drink was finished, and she, on her side, was content to sit quietly, enjoying his company after the long hours alone in the house. She loved to luxuriate in the presence of this man, and to feel—almost as a sunbather feels the sun—that warm male glow that came out
15 of him to her when they were alone together. She loved him for the way he sat loosely in a chair, for the way he came in a door, or moved slowly across the room with long strides. She loved the intent, far look in his eyes when they rested on her, the funny shape of the mouth, and especially the way he
20 remained silent about his tiredness, sitting still with himself until the whisky had taken some of it away.

'Tired, darling?'

'Yes,' he said. 'I'm tired.' And as he spoke, he did an unusual thing. He lifted his glass and drained it in one
25 swallow although there was still half of it, at least half of it, left. She wasn't really watching him but she knew what he had done because she heard the ice cubes falling back against the bottom of the empty glass when he lowered his arm. He

paused a moment, leaning forward in the chair, then he got up and went slowly over to fetch himself another.

'I'll get it!' she cried, jumping up.

'Sit down,' he said.

When he came back, she noticed that the new drink was 5
dark amber with the quantity of whisky in it.

'Darling, shall I get your slippers?'

'No.'

She watched him as he began to sip the dark yellow drink, and she could see little oily swirls in the liquid because it was 10
so strong.

'I think it's a shame,' she said, 'that when a policeman gets to be as senior as you, they keep him walking about on his feet all day long.'

He didn't answer, so she bent her head again and went on 15
with her sewing; but each time he lifted the drink to his lips, she heard the ice cubes clinking against the side of the glass.

'Darling,' she said. 'Would you like me to get you some cheese? I haven't made any supper because it's Thursday.'

'No,' he said. 20

'If you're too tired to eat out,' she went on, 'it's still not too late. There's plenty of meat and stuff in the freezer, and you can have it right here and not even move out of the chair.'

Her eyes waited on him for an answer, a smile, a little nod, but he made no sign. 25

'Anyway,' she went on, 'I'll get you some cheese and crackers first.'

'I don't want it,' he said.

LAMB TO THE SLAUGHTER

She moved uneasily in her chair, the large eyes still watching his face. 'But you *must* have supper. I can easily do it here. I'd like to do it. We can have lamb chops. Or pork. Anything you want. Everything's in the freezer.'

5 'Forget it,' he said.

'But, darling, you *must* eat! I'll fix it anyway, and then you can have it or not, as you like.'

She stood up and placed her sewing on the table by the lamp.

10 'Sit down,' he said. 'Just for a minute, sit down.'

It wasn't till then that she began to get frightened.

'Go on,' he said. 'Sit down.'

She lowered herself back slowly into the chair, watching him all the time with those large, bewildered eyes. He had
15 finished the second drink and was staring down into the glass, frowning.

'Listen,' he said, 'I've got something to tell you.'

'What is it, darling? What's the matter?'

He had become absolutely motionless, and he kept his head
20 down so that the light from the lamp beside him fell across the upper part of his face, leaving the chin and mouth in shadow. She noticed there was a little muscle moving near the corner of his left eye.

'This is going to be a bit of a shock to you, I'm afraid,' he
25 said. 'But I've thought about it a good deal and I've decided the only thing to do is tell you right away. I hope you won't blame me too much.'

And he told her. It didn't take long, four or five minutes at

LAMB TO THE SLAUGHTER

by Roald Dahl

《作者について》 ウェールズ南部に生まれる。両親はノルウェー人。英国空軍パイロットとして第二次大戦に従軍し負傷、のち諜報部に移る。この時期、デスクワークの合間に、パイロットとしての体験をベースにした短編小説を書き始める。アメリカの雑誌に発表された作品はたちまち好評を得て、*Someone Like You* (1953), *Kiss, Kiss* (1960) などの短編集として出版された。巧みなストーリー展開、奇抜なプロット、独特のブラックユーモアなどで、圧倒的人気を博したダールの作品は、各国語に翻訳されてベストセラーとなる。日本でも愛読者が多い。1983年のWhitbread賞児童文学部門受賞作品 *The Witches* など、子供向けの物語も数多く書いている。

《作品について》 初めての子供を身ごもった幸せいっぱい若妻に、突然夫の口から別れ話もちだされた。あまりの意外さに呆然としたまま、妻は思いきった行動に出る。夫に頼りきって生きてきた彼女には、夫と離れてひとりで生きることなど考えられないのだ。だが一見頼りなげな彼女が、いざとなると「かわい貞淑な妻」のイメージを逆手にとって、まんまと窮地を脱する。*Someone Like You* 収録。

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- 7 **Lamb to the Slaughter** 「屠所にひかれる小羊」の意味で、旧約聖書「イザヤ書」53章7節に出てくるこの句は、日常会話でも「身の危険も知らずにおとなしく」という意味でよく使われる。この作品では身の危険に気づかない夫を指すと同時に、凶器として羊肉が使われるという意味をかけた、皮肉なタイトルとなっている。
- 2 **alight**=(were) on
- 4 **Thermos bucket** 「保冷用の容器」 Thermos [θɜːməs] は商標名。
- 7 **Now and again**=from time to time
would ~ 「くり返し~するのだった」
- 9 **made it nearer** itはthe timeを受ける。
- 10 **air** 「雰囲気」
- 12- **her sixth month with child** 「妊娠六カ月」
- 16 **listen** 「耳をすます」
- 8 4 **strongish** 「やや強めの」 -ish は形容詞語尾で、「～があった」「～っぽい」などの意味をもつ。cf. childish
- 6 **the other**=the other chair

NOTES

- 8 **the side** = the side of the glass
- 11 **on her side** 「彼女の方は」 ふたりとも黙っているのだが、沈黙の背後にある気持ちはまったく違っている。
- 14 **male glow** 前に the sun とあるように、妻が夫という太陽の光で生きている関係を示す。
- 16 **for** = because of ; on account of
- 18 **far look** 「遠くを見るようなまなざし」
they = his eyes
- 20 **with himself** 「自分の内にこもって」
- 21 **it** = his tiredness
- 24- **drained it in one swallow** 「一息にそれを飲み干す」 drain = drink up
- 9 2 **to fetch himself another** 「自分でお代わりをしに行く」 another = another glass of whisky
- 6 **the quantity of** = a large amount of
- 10 **oily swirls** 「油が水に混じったときにできるような渦」
- 12 **it's a shame** = it's wrong it は that 以下を受ける仮主語、that 節の主語は次行の they で、ここでは警察当局を示す不特定代名詞。
- 13 **senior** = higher in rank
- 15- **went on with** < go on with = continue
- 22 ~ **and stuff** 「～や何か」
- 23 **right** 強調のための副詞、cf. right now
- 10 2 **must** イタリック体は強調を示す。
- 3 **lamb chops** 「小羊の骨つきアバラ肉」
- 6 **fix** = prepare (dinner)
- 11 **It wasn't till then that...** 「そのときになってはじめて…した」 It ~ that の強調構文。
- 12 **Go on** ここでは「続ける」ではなく、「さあ；いいから(座っていないさい)」くらいの意味。
- 13 **lowered herself** < lower oneself 「(立ち上がっていたので、また)腰をおろす」
- 17 **I've got** = I have
- 26 **right away** = without any delay
- 11 4 **there it is** 「そういうことなんだ」
- 4- **it's kind of a bad time** 「(彼女が妊娠中なので)あまりよいタイミングでない」 kind of = 《口語》 somewhat; rather
- 5 **simply** 「どう考えても」
- 6 **see** 「取りはからう」
- 7 **I hope not** = I hope there needn't be any fuss
- 8 **wouldn't** 仮定法の would.
- 10 **It occurred to her** = It came to her mind