

[全新版大学英语2]-Unit5 True Height

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导
读

Look at the following two sayings and then see if the story of Michael Stone bears out the points they make.

The greater the obstacle, the more glory in overcoming it. -- Molière

When it is dark enough, you can see the stars. -- Charles A. Beard

读一读以下两则名言，想一想迈克尔·斯通的故事是否印证了其间的道理。

障碍越是巨大，逾越它也就越感自豪。——莫里哀

只有天空漆黑时，你才可以看到星星。——查尔斯·A·比尔德

True Height

1 His palms were sweating. He needed a towel to dry his grip. The sun was as hot as the competition he faced today at the National Junior Olympics. The pole was set at 17 feet. That was three inches higher than his personal best. Michael Stone confronted the most challenging day of his pole-vaulting career.

他手心在出汗。他需要用毛巾把握竿的手擦干。太阳火辣辣的，与他今天在全国少年奥林匹克运动会上所面临的竞争一样热烈。横杆升到了17英尺。比他个人的最高纪录高出3英寸。迈克尔·斯通面临的是其撑竿跳高生涯中最具挑战性的一天。

2 The stands were still filled with about 20,000 people, even though the final race had ended an hour earlier. The pole vault is truly the highlight of any track and field competition. It combines the grace of a gymnast with the strength of a body builder. It also has the element of flying, and the thought of flying as high as a two-story building is a mere fantasy to anyone watching such an event.

尽管赛跑决赛一小时前就已经结束，看台上仍然观众满座，足有20,000人上下。撑竿跳高确实是所有田径比赛中最精彩的项目。它融合了体操运动员的优雅与健美运动员的力量。它还具有飞翔的特征，对观看该项目比赛的观众来说，飞跃两层楼的高度简直是一件不可思议的事情。

3 As long as Michael could remember he had always dreamed of flying. Michael's mother read him numerous stories about flying when he was growing up. Her stories were always ones that described the land from a bird's-eye view. Her excitement and passion for details made Michael's dreams full of color and beauty. Michael had this one recurring dream. He would be running down a country road. As he raced between golden wheat fields, he would always outrun the locomotives passing by. It was at the exact moment he took a deep breath that he began to lift off the ground. He would begin soaring like an eagle.

迈克尔自从能记事起就一直梦想着飞翔。从小到大，母亲给迈克尔念过无数关于飞翔的故事。她的故事总是从高空俯瞰描述大地。她对细节的激情和酷爱使得迈克尔的梦境色彩缤纷、绚丽无比。迈克尔总是重复做着同一个梦。他在乡间大路上飞奔。当他奔跑在金色的麦田之间时，总是把开过的机车一路甩在身后。就在他深深吸上一口气的瞬间，他开始从地面一跃而起，就像一头雄鹰那样开始翱翔。

4 Where he flew would always coincide with his mother's stories. Wherever he flew was ~~with a keen eye for detail~~ and the free spirit of his mother's love. His dad, on the other hand, was not a dreamer. Bert Stone was a hard-core realist. He believed in hard work and sweat. His motto: If you want something, work for it!

他飞越的都是母亲故事里描述的地方。无论他飞向何方，他都怀着母爱所赋予他的自由精神，用敏锐的目光观察入微。可他的父亲却不是个梦想家。伯特·斯通是个彻头彻尾的现实主义者。他信奉的是努力与苦干。他的格言是：要想有所收获，就得努力工作！

5 From the age of 14, Michael did just that. He began a very careful training program. He worked out every other day with weightlifting, with some kind of running work on alternate days. The program was carefully monitored by Michael's coach, trainer and father. Michael's dedication, determination and discipline was a coach's dream. Besides being an honor student and only child, Michael Stone continued to help his parents with their farm chores. Mildred Stone, Michael's mother, wished he could relax a bit more and be that "free dreaming" little boy. On one occasion she attempted to talk to him and his father about this, but his dad quickly interrupted, smiled and said, "You want something, work for it!"

从14岁起，迈克尔就是这么做的。他开始按非常周密的计划训练。他每隔一天进行举重训练，其它的日子做些跑步训练。训练计划由迈克尔的教练、训练员兼父亲严加督导。迈克尔的投入、执着、自律正是每一个教练所梦寐以求的。迈克尔在学校是位优秀生，在家是个独生子，但他仍帮助父母在自家的农场上干些杂活。迈克尔的母亲米尔德里德·斯通希望他能更放松些，还是做那个“自由幻想”的小男孩。有一次，她试

图跟他及其父亲好好谈一下，可当父亲的马上就打断了她，笑着说：“要想有所收获，就得努力工作！”

6 All of Michael's vaults today seemed to be the reward for his hard work. If Michael Stone was surprised, excited or vain about clearing the bar at 17 feet, you couldn't tell. As soon as he landed on the inflated landing mat, and with the crowd on its feet, Michael immediately began preparing for his next attempt at flight. He seemed unaware of the fact that he had just beaten his personal best by three inches and that he was one of the final two competitors in the pole-vaulting event at the National Junior Olympics.

迈克尔今天跃过的所有高度显然都是对他刻苦努力的回报。迈克尔·斯通在成功跃过17英尺的横杆时是感到惊讶、激动还是得意，人们无从知晓。迈克尔身体刚刚落在充气垫上，观众还没坐下，他马上就开始准备下一次飞跃。他似乎并未意识到自己刚刚把个人最好成绩提高了3英寸，已经是全国少年奥林匹克运动会撑竿跳高项目最后两名决赛者之一。

7 When Michael cleared ~~the bar at 17 feet 2 inches~~ and 17 feet 4 inches, again he showed no emotion. As he lay on his back and heard the crowd groan, he knew the other vaulter had missed his final jump. He knew it was time for his final jump. Since the other vaulter had fewer misses, Michael needed to clear this vault to win. A miss would get him second place. Nothing to be ashamed of, but Michael would not allow himself the thought of not winning first place.

当迈克尔成功跃过17英尺2英寸和17英尺4英寸高度的横杆时，他仍没有流露出丝毫感情。他仰面躺着，听到观众在叹息，他知道另一位撑竿跳运动员最后一跳没有成功。他知道自己最后一跳的时刻到了。由于那位运动员失败次数较少，迈克尔这一跳只有成功才能获胜。这一次跳不过就会使自己落到第二名。那也丝毫无愧，但迈克尔决不让自己产生哪怕一丝与冠军无缘的念头。

8 He rolled over and did his routine of three finger-tipped push-ups. He found his pole, stood and stepped on the runway that led to the most challenging event of his 17-year-old life.

他翻了个身，照例指尖撑地做了三下俯卧撑。他找着了撑竿，站起身，踏上那引向其17年生命中最具挑战性的一跃的跑道。

9 The runway felt different this time. It startled him for a brief moment. Then it all hit him like a wet bale of hay. The bar was set at nine inches higher than his personal best. That's only one inch off the National record, he thought. The intensity of the moment filled his mind with anxiety. He began shaking the tension. It wasn't working. He became more tense. Why was this happening to him now, he thought. He began to get nervous.

Afraid would be a more accurate description. What was he going to do? He had never experienced these feelings. Then out of nowhere, and from the deepest depths of his soul, he pictured his mother. Why now? What was his mother doing in his thoughts at a time like this? It was simple. His mother always used to tell him when you felt tense, anxious or even scared, take deep breaths.

这一回，那跑道显得有些异样。刹那间，他感到一阵惊吓。一种惶惑不安的感觉向他袭来。横杆升在高出他个人最高纪录9英寸的高度。他想，这一高度与全国纪录只差1英寸了。这一刻紧张异常，他感到焦虑不安。他想摆脱紧张情绪。没有用。他更紧张了。在这种时刻怎么会这样呢，他暗暗思忖着。他有点胆怯起来。说是恐惧也许更为恰当。怎么办？他以前从来不曾有过这种感觉。这时，不知不觉地，在内心最深处，出现了他母亲的身影。为什么是在这一刻？记忆中，母亲在这种时刻会怎样做呢？很简单。母亲过去总跟他说，当你觉得紧张、焦虑、甚至害怕的时候，就深深地吸气。

10 So he did. Along with shaking the tension from his legs, he gently laid his pole at his feet. He ~~began to stretch out his arms~~ and upper body. The light breeze that was once there was now gone. He carefully picked up his pole. He felt his heart pounding. He was sure the crowd did, too. The silence was deafening. When he heard the singing of some distant birds in flight, he knew it was his time to fly.

于是他深深吸了一口气。在摆脱腿部肌肉紧张的同时，他轻轻地把撑竿放在脚边。他开始舒展双臂和上身。刚才飘过一阵轻风，此刻消失了。他小心翼翼地拿起撑竿，只觉得心怦怦在跳。他相信观众们的心也在怦怦跳动。场上鸦雀无声，令人透不过气来。当他听见远处飞鸟啼鸣时，他知道，自己飞身起跃的时刻到了。

11 As he began sprinting down the runway, something felt wonderfully different, yet familiar. The surface below him felt like the country road he used to dream about. Visions of the golden wheat fields seemed to fill his thoughts. When he took a deep breath, it happened. He began to fly. His take-off was effortless. Michael Stone was now flying, just like in his childhood dreams. Only this time he knew he wasn't dreaming. This was real. Everything seemed to be moving in slow motion. The air around him was the purest and freshest he had ever sensed. Michael was soaring like an eagle.

他沿着跑道起跑冲刺，那感觉奇特无比，妙不可言，而又似曾相识。脚下的地面就好像过去常常梦见的乡间大路。金色麦田的景象映现在他的脑海中。他深深吸了一口气，于是奇迹发生了。他飞起来了。他的起跳轻松自如。迈克尔·斯通此刻就像儿时梦境中的那般在飞行。不过这一次他知道自己不是在做梦。这一次他真的在飞。周围一切都似乎在缓缓移动。他感到周围空气从未像这样纯净清新。如同一头雄鹰，迈克尔在翱翔。

12 It was either the eruption of the people in the stands or the thump of his landing that brought Michael back to earth. On his back with that wonderful hot sun on his face, he knew he could only see in his mind's eye the smile on his mother's face. He knew his dad was probably smiling too, even laughing. What he didn't know was that his dad was hugging his wife and crying. That's right: Bert "If You Want It, Work For It" Stone was crying like a baby in his wife's arms. He was crying harder than Mildred had ever seen before. She also knew he was crying the greatest tears of all: tears of pride. Michael was immediately surrounded by people hugging and congratulating him on the greatest accomplishment of his life. He later went on that day to clear 17 feet 6 7/8 inches: a National and International Junior Olympics record.

或许是看台上人们爆发出的欢呼声，或许是他着地时嘭的一声响使迈克尔回到现实之中。他仰面躺着，明媚的骄阳映照着他的脸。他知道自己只能想象母亲的笑靥，他知道爸爸或许也在微笑，甚或欢声大笑。他不知道的是，他爸爸正与妻子相拥而泣。没错，这位“要想有所收获，就得努力工作”的伯特·斯通在妻子怀里孩子似地泪流满面。米尔德里德从没见过他那样哭过。她也知道，他流淌的是最难得的泪水：骄傲的泪水。迈克尔一下子被围住了，人们拥抱他，祝贺他所取得的一生中最辉煌的成就。那天稍后，他接着越过了17英尺6英寸半，创下了全国和世界少年奥林匹克撑杆跳高的新纪录。

13 With all the media attention and sponsorship possibilities, Michael's life would never be the same again. It wasn't just because he won the National Junior Olympics and set a new world record. And it wasn't because he had just increased his personal best by 9 7/8 inches. It was simply because Michael Stone is blind.

随着媒体的关注以及可能随之而来的各种赞助，迈克尔的生活肯定会不同以往。这不仅是因为他获得了全国少年奥林匹克冠军并刷新了一项世界纪录，也不是因为他将自己的最高纪录提高了9英寸半，而是因为迈克尔·斯通是个盲人。

A chance encounter can sometimes make all the difference to whether hardship brings out the best in us or the worst.

磨难到底是能让我们显出内在的美德还是暴露出自身的缺陷，有时一次偶然的遭遇可能会起到决定性的作用。