

Unit 13

Reading B

An Excerpt from *The Dream of the Red Chamber* 《红楼梦》选段

— “The Lady Dowager Sends for Her Motherless Grand-Daughter” 贾母接外孙黛玉

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1 To return to Daiyu. When she disembarked, a sedan-chair from the Rong Mansion and carts for her luggage were waiting in readiness. She had heard a great deal from her mother about the magnificence of her grandmother's home; and during the last few days she had been impressed by the food, costumes and behaviour of the relatively low-ranking attendants escorting her. She must watch her step in her new home, she decided, be on guard every moment and weigh every word, so as not to be laughed at for any foolish blunder. As she was carried into the city she peeped out through the gauze window of the chair at the bustle in the streets and the crowds of people, the like of which she had never seen before.

再说黛玉。下船时，荣国府的轿子和载运行李的车辆已准备停当。她曾从母亲那里听到很多关于外祖母家的豪华；而且在过去的几天里，护送她的那些级别相对较低的仆人的食物、服饰和举止也给她留下了深刻印象。她决定在新家里一定要谨言慎行，时刻保持警惕，斟酌每一句话，以免因任何愚蠢的错误而被人嘲笑。当她被抬进城时，她透过轿子的纱窗窥视着街上的热闹和人群，这些都是她以前从未见过的。

2 After what seemed a long time they came to a street with two huge stone lions crouching on the north side, flanking a great triple gate with beast-head knockers in front of which ten or more men in smart livery were sitting. The central gate was shut, but people were passing in and out of the smaller side gates. On a board above the main gate was written in large characters: Ningguo Mansion Built at Imperial Command.

过了似乎很长时间，他们来到一条街上，北侧有两只巨大的石狮子蹲伏着，两侧是一个巨大的三开大门，门前有兽首门环，十来个穿着整齐制服的人坐在那里。中间的大门紧闭着，但人们正从较小的侧门进进出出。大门上方的一块牌子上用大字写着：敕造宁国府。

3 Daiyu realized that this must be where the elder branch of her grandmother's family lived.

黛玉意识到这里一定是外祖母家大房所住之处。

4 A little further to the west they came to another imposing triple gate. This was the Rong Mansion. Instead of going through the main gate, they entered by the smaller one on the west. The bearers carried the chair a bow-shot further, then set it down at a turning and withdrew. The maid-servants behind Daiyu had now alighted and were proceeding on foot. Three or four smartly dressed lads of seventeen or eighteen picked up the chair and, followed by the maids, carried it to a gate decorated with overhanging flowery patterns carved in wood. There the bearers withdrew, the maids raised the curtain of the chair, helped Daiyu out and supported her through the gate.

再往西一点，他们来到了另一座宏伟的三开大门前。这便是荣国府。他们没有走正门，而是从西边的侧门进入。轿夫抬着轿子又走了一箭之地，然后在一个拐角处放下轿子退下了。黛玉身后的丫鬟们这时也下了轿，步行跟在后面。三四个十七八岁、衣着光鲜的小伙子抬起轿子，后面跟着丫鬟们，把轿子抬到一扇装饰着木雕垂花图案的门前。在这里，轿夫退下了，

丫鬟们掀起轿帘，扶黛玉出来，搀扶着她进了门。

5 Inside, verandahs on both sides led to a three-roomed entrance hall in the middle of which stood a screen of marble in a red sandal wood frame. The hall gave access to the large court of the main building. In front were five rooms with carved beams and painted pillars, and on either side were rooms with covered passageways. Cages of brilliantly coloured parrots, thrushes and other birds hung under the eaves of the verandahs.

里面两侧有游廊通向中间一间有三间屋子的门厅，厅中间立着一架红檀木框的大理石屏风。从门厅可以进入主建筑的大院子。前面是五间雕梁画栋的屋子，两边是有廊屋相通的房间。色彩鲜艳的鹦鹉、画眉和其他鸟儿的笼子挂在游廊的屋檐下。

6 Several maids dressed in red and green rose from the terrace and hurried to greet them with smiles.

几个穿着红绿衣裳的丫鬟从游廊上站起身来，笑着急忙上前迎接她们。

7 "The old lady was just talking about you, " they cried. "And here you are. "

“老太太正念叨着你呢，”她们叫道，“这不，你就来了。”

8 Three or four of them ran to raise the door curtain, and a voice could be heard announcing, "Miss Lin is here. "

三四个丫鬟跑过去挑起门帘，这时能听到一个声音通报：“林姑娘到了。”

9 As Daiyu entered, a silver haired old lady supported by two maids advanced to meet her. She knew that this must be her grandmother, but before she could kowtow the old lady threw both arms around her.

黛玉进入屋内，一位由两个丫鬟搀扶着的银发老妇人走上前来迎接她。她知道这一定是她的外祖母，但还没等她磕头，老妇人就张开双臂抱住了她。

10 "Dear heart! Flesh of my child!" she cried, and burst out sobbing.

“我的心肝儿！我儿的骨肉啊！”她哭喊着，突然放声大哭起来。

11 All the attendants covered their faces and wept, and Daiyu herself could not keep back her tears. When at last the others prevailed on her to stop, Daiyu made her kowtow to her grandmother. This was the Lady Dowager from the Shi family mentioned by Leng Zixing, the mother of Jia She and Jia Zheng, who now introduced the family one by one.

所有的仆人们都掩面哭泣，黛玉自己也忍不住流下眼泪。最后，在其他人的劝说下，她才止住哭泣，黛玉向她的外祖母磕头行礼。这位就是冷子兴提到过的史氏老夫人，贾赦和贾政的母亲，现在她一个一个地介绍家人。

12 "This, " she said, "is your elder uncle's wife. This is your second uncle's wife. This is the wife of your late Cousin Zhu. "

“这是你大舅母。这是你二舅母。这是你已故的珠大哥哥的妻子。”

13 Daiyu greeted each in turn.

黛玉依次向每个人问好。

14 "Fetch the girls," her grandmother said. "They can be excused their lessons today in honour of our guest from far away."

“把姑娘们叫来。”她的外祖母说，“今天可以免了她们的功课，以欢迎远道而来的客人。”

15 Two maids went to carry out her orders. And presently the three young ladies appeared, escorted by three nurses and five or six maids.

两个丫鬟去执行她的命令。不一会儿，三位年轻小姐在三个乳母和五六个丫鬟的陪同下出现了。

16 The first was somewhat plump and of medium height. Her cheeks were the texture of newly ripened lichees, her nose as sleek as goose fat. Gentle and demure, she looked very approachable.

第一个女孩身材有些圆润，中等个头。她的脸颊如刚成熟的荔枝般细腻，鼻子像鹅脂般光滑。温柔娴静，看上去很亲切。

17 The second had sloping shoulders and a slender waist. She was tall and slim, with an oval face, well-defined eyebrows and lovely dancing eyes. She seemed elegant and quick-witted with an air of distinction. To look at her was to forget everything vulgar.

第二个女孩削肩细腰，身材高挑苗条，鸭蛋脸面，俊眼修眉，顾盼神飞，文彩精华，见之忘俗。

18 The third was not yet fully grown and still had the face of a child.

第三个还未完全长大，仍有一张孩子般的脸。

19 All three were dressed in similar tunics and skirts with the same bracelets and head ornaments.

三个人都穿着相似的上衣和裙子，戴着同样的手镯和头饰。

20 Daiyu hastily rose to greet these cousins, and after the introductions they took seats while the maids served tea. All the talk now was of Daiyu's mother. How had she fallen ill? What medicine had the doctors prescribed? How had the funeral and mourning ceremonies been conducted? Inevitably, the Lady Dowager was most painfully affected.

黛玉急忙起身迎接这些表姐妹。介绍过后，她们各自落座，丫鬟们端上茶来。现在所有的话题都围绕着黛玉的母亲。她是怎么生病的？医生开了什么药？葬礼和守孝仪式是如何进行的？老夫人自然最为悲痛。

21 "Of all my children I loved your mother best," she told Daiyu. "Now she has gone before me, and I didn't even have one last glimpse of her face. The sight of you makes me feel my heart will break!" Again she took Daiyu in her arms and wept. The others were hard put to it to comfort her.

“在我所有的孩子中，我最疼爱你的母亲。”她对黛玉说，“现在她先我而去，我甚至没能最后看她一眼。看到你，我觉得我的心都要碎了！”她再次把黛玉搂在怀里哭泣。其他人费了好大劲才安慰好她。

22 All present had been struck by Daiyu's good breeding. For in spite of her tender years and

evident delicate health, she had an air of natural distinction. Observing how frail she looked they asked what medicine or treatment she had been having.

在场的人都为黛玉的良好教养所打动。尽管她年纪尚小，且明显身体娇弱，但她有一种自然的高贵气质。看到她如此虚弱的样子，他们询问她一直在服用什么药物或接受什么治疗。

23 "I've always been like this," Daiyu said with a smile. "I've been taking medicine ever since I was weaned. Many well-known doctors have examined me, but none of their prescriptions was any use. The year I was three, I remember being told, a scabby monk came to our house and wanted to take me away to be a nun. My parents wouldn't hear of it. The monk said, 'If you can't bear to part with her she'll probably never get well. The only other remedy is to keep her from hearing weeping and from seeing any relatives apart from her father and mother. That's her only hope of having a quiet life.' No one paid any attention, of course, to such crazy talk. Now I'm still taking ginseng pills."

“我自来是如此。”黛玉微笑着说，“从会吃饮食时便吃药，到今未断。请了多少名医修方配药，皆不见效。那一年我三岁时，记得来了一个癞头和尚，说要化我去出家，我父母固是不从。他又说：‘既舍不得他，只怕他的病一生也不能好的了。若要好时，除非从此以后总不许见哭声，除父母之外，凡有外姓亲友之人，一概不见，方可平安了此一世。’疯疯癫癫，说了这些不经之谈，也没人理他。如今还是吃人参养荣丸。”

24 "That's good," approved the Lady Dowager. "We're having pills made, and I'll see they make some for you."

“这很好。”老夫人赞同道，“我们正在制药丸，我会让人也给你做一些。”

25 Just then they heard peals of laughter from the back courtyard and a voice cried:

就在这时，他们听到后院传来阵阵笑声，一个声音喊道：

26 "I'm late in greeting our guest from afar!"

“我来迟了，不曾迎接远客！”

27 Daiyu thought with surprise, "The people here are so respectful and solemn, they all seem to be holding their breath. Who can this be, so boisterous and pert?"

黛玉心中诧异，想道：“这里的人个个都恭敬肃穆，敛声屏气。这来的是谁，如此放诞无礼？”

28 While she was still wondering, through the back door trooped some matrons and maids surrounding a young woman. Unlike the girls, she was richly dressed and resplendent as a fairy.

她正疑惑间，一群媳妇丫鬟簇拥着一个年轻女子从后门进来。此人与那些姑娘不同，服饰华贵，光彩照人，如同仙子一般。

29 Her gold-filigree tiara was set with jewels and pearls. Her hair-clasps, in the form of five phoenixes facing the sun, had pendants of pearls. Her necklet, of red gold, was in the form of a coiled dragon studded with gems. She had double red jade pendants with pea green tassels attached to her skirt.

她戴着金丝八宝攒珠髻，绾着朝阳五凤挂珠钗，项上戴着赤金盘螭璎珞圈，裙边系着豆绿宫绦，双衡比目玫瑰佩。

30 Her close-fitting red satin jacket was embroidered with gold butterflies and flowers. Her turquoise cape, lined with white squirrel, was inset with designs in coloured silk. Her skirt of kingfisher-blue crepe was patterned with flowers.

她穿着一件紧身的红色缎面上衣，上面绣着金色的蝴蝶和花朵。她的翠绿色披风，里衬是白色的松鼠皮，上面镶嵌着彩色丝绸的图案。她的翠蓝色绉纱裙子上印有花朵图案。

31 She had the almond-shaped eyes of a phoenix, slanting eyebrows as long and drooping as willow leaves. Her figure was slender and her manner vivacious. The springtime charm of her powdered face gave no hint of her latent formidability. And before her crimson lips parted, her laughter rang out.

她长着一双丹凤三角眼，两弯柳叶吊梢眉。身量苗条，体格风骚。粉面含春威不露，丹唇未启笑先闻。

32 Daiyu rose quickly to greet her.

黛玉连忙起身迎接。

33 "You don't know her yet. " The Lady Dowager chuckled. "She's the terror of this house. In the south they'd call her Hot Pepper. Just call her Fiery Phoenix. "

“你不认得她。”老夫人笑着说，“她是这府里的一个‘霸王’。在南方，人们会叫她‘辣货’。你只管叫她‘凤辣子’就是了。”

34 Daiyu was at a loss how to address her when her cousins came to her rescue. "This is Cousin Lian's wife, " they told her.

黛玉不知如何称呼她，这时她的表姐妹们来帮她解了围。“这是琏二嫂子。”她们告诉她。

35 Though Daiyu had never met her, she knew from her mother that Jia Lian, the son of her first uncle, Jia She, had married the niece of Lady Wang, her second uncle's wife. She had been educated like a boy and given the school-room name Xifeng. Daiyu lost no time in greeting her with a smile as "cousin. "

黛玉虽不识，也曾听见母亲说过，大舅贾赦之子贾琏，娶的就是二舅母王氏之内侄女，自幼假充男儿教养的，学名王熙凤。黛玉忙陪笑见礼，以“嫂子”呼之。