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https://www.100test.com/kao_ti2020/285/2021_2022__E4_B8_8A_E5_A4_96_E7_89_88_E5_c83_285089.htm UNIT 2 TEXT A heated discussion about whether men are braver than women is settled in a rather unexpected way. The Dinner Party I first heard this tale in India , where is told as if true though any naturalist would know it couldnt be. Later someone told me that the story appeared in a magazine shortly before the First World War. That magazine story , and the person who wrote it , I have never been able to track down. The country is India. A colonial official and his wife are giving a large dinner party. They are seated with their guests officers and their wives , and a visiting American naturalist in their spacious dining room , which has a bare marble floor , open rafters and wide glass doors opening onto a veranda. A spirited discussion springs up between a young girl who says that women have outgrown the jumping-on-a-chair-at-the-sight-of-a-mouse era and a major who says that they havent. "A womans reaction in any crisis , " the major says , "is to scream. And while a man may feel like it , he has that ounce more of control than a woman has. And that last ounce is what really counts." The American does not join in the argument but watches the other guests. As he looks , he sees a strange expression come over the face of the hostess. She is staring straight ahead , her muscles contracting slightly. She motions to the native boy standing behind her chair and whispers something to him. The boys eyes widen : he quickly leaves the room. Of the guests , none except the

American notices this or sees the boy place a bowl of milk on the veranda just outside the open doors. The American comes to with a start. In India , milk in a bowl means only one thing bait for a snake. He realizes there must be a cobra in the room. He looks up at the rafters the likeliest place but they are bare. Three corners of the room are empty , and in the fourth the servants are waiting to serve the next course. There is only one place left under the table. His first impulse is to jump back and warn the others , but he knows the commotion would frighten the cobra into striking. He speaks quickly , the tone of his voice so commanding that it silences everyone. "I want to know just what control everyone at this table has. I will count three hundred thats five minutes and not one of you is to move a muscle. Those who move will forfeit 50 rupees. Ready ? " The 20 people sit like stone images while he counts. He is saying ".....two hundred and eighty....." when , out of the corner of his eye , he sees the cobra emerge and make for the bowl of milk. Screams ring out as he jumps to slam the veranda doors safely shut. "You were right , Major ! " the host exclaims. "A man has just shown us an example of perfect self-control." "Just a minute , " the American says , turning to his hostess. "Mrs. Wynnes , how did you know that cobra was in the room ? " A faint smile lights up the womans face as she replies : "Because it was crawling across my foot." commotion n. noisy confusion or excitement 混乱 ; 骚动 tone n. quality of voice or music 语气 ; 音调 commanding a. authoritative 威严的 forfeit vt. suffer the loss of (sth.) as a punishment (作为惩罚而) 失去 rupee n. monetary unit of India

, Pakistan , etc. 卢比 image n. statue 雕像 emerge vi. come or appear (from somewhere) emergence n. slam vt. shut loudly and with force 砰地关上 host n. man who receives guests 男主人 faint a. weak , indistinct 微弱的 ; 不明显的 crawl vi move slowly by pulling the body along the ground 爬行 100Test 下载频道开通 , 各类考试题目直接下载。详细请访问 www.100test.com