

英美文学经典
The Canons of British & American Literature

美国小说

American Fiction

洪增流 主编
安徽教育出版社

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图书在版编目(CIP)数据

美国小说/洪增流主编. —合肥:安徽教育出版社,
2003. 2

(英美文学经典)

ISBN 7-5336-2873-X

I. 美... II. 洪... III. 小说—文学评论—美国
IV. I712.074

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(2003)第 007577 号

责任编辑:吴 骅 装帧设计:袁 泉

出版发行:安徽教育出版社(合肥市跃进路 1 号)

网 址:<http://www.ahep.com.cn>

经 销:新华书店

排 版:安徽飞腾彩色制版有限责任公司

印 刷:合肥商中印刷厂

开 本:880×1230 1/32

印 张:21

字 数:520 000

版 次:2003 年 2 月第 1 版 2003 年 2 月第 1 次印刷

印 数:2 000

定 价:38.00 元

发现印装质量问题,影响阅读,请与我社发行部联系调换

电 话:(0551)2651321

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前 言

美利坚是个年轻的国度。当中国古代四大小说成书,丹尼尔·笛福完成《鲁滨逊漂流记》的时候,美国甚至尚未立国。不过,后来者自有后来者的优势。伴随着美国资本主义经济的飞速发展,小说这朵璀璨的文学之花,很快便在那片富饶的大地上生根、开放了。

与许多历史久远的国家不同,小说从一开始,就占据了美国文学创作的主流地位。在第一位小说家华盛顿·欧文发表了他的首部小说集《见闻札记》(1820)之后不过二三十年,美国便迎来了浪漫主义小说的繁荣,出现了爱伦·坡、霍桑、梅尔维尔等杰出小说家,以及像《红字》、《白鲸》这样的杰作。

不过,初期的美国小说,无论语言风格,还是题材形式,都师承了英国小说的衣钵。一般认为,直到马克·吐温在《哈克·芬》(1884)中,采用美国口语作为小说语言,才标志着美国小说真正意义上的独立。

但美国文化毕竟根基浅薄,所以,在此后的一个时期内,美国小说暂时仍难摆脱欧陆小说的荫泽,尤其在形式方面,更从欧洲小说那里获益匪浅。这并不是说美国小说缺乏个性。由于独特的文化语境,美国小说主题与形式,一开始就更加倾向于个人主义与市场品味。所以在欧洲曾经盛极一时,造就了像狄更斯、巴尔扎克、托尔斯泰这样大师级人物为代表的批判现实主义,在美国就没有多少知音。相反,源于法国但未成气候的自然主义小说,由于它更关注个人命运,在美国却遭遇了始料不及的繁荣,成就了一批颇有影响的自然主义小说家,如德莱塞、弗兰克·诺里斯、杰克·伦敦等等。

第一次世界大战终于使这种局面发生了逆转。它不仅摧毁了欧洲的经济优势,也撼动了欧洲在文化领域的领导地位。整个20年代,当欧洲正默默舔舐它的战争创伤之际,美国小说却步入了发展的

黄金时代。不仅作品的数量空前，形式上也日趋多样化，涌现出菲茨杰拉德、海明威、福克纳等多位文坛巨擘，以及《了不起的盖茨比》、《永别了，武器》、《喧哗与骚动》等一批杰作。这些作家和作品的影响力一直持续到战后。

当代的美国小说，虽然饱受现代传媒与流行文化的冲击，仍在众多的文学形式中独领风骚。单就数量而言，这是美国小说创作最为繁荣的时期。不过，随着后现代社会的多元化，读者群体的细分，当代美国小说，也日益显现出多元化的风貌。既有亚文化特征的犹太小说、黑人小说、女权小说的繁荣，又有注重形式创新的黑色幽默、超现实主义和反小说的流行。所以，虽然战后也产生了不少有影响的作家，如贝娄、海勒、厄普代克等，但他们的影响力，同战前的大家们相比，已经不可同日而语了。但我们并不能据此断言美国小说走了下坡路。历史总是越是久远才越看得清楚。恐怕还得假以时日，我们才能对当代美国小说，做一个恰当的评说。

综观美国小说的历史，可以说硕果累累，成就斐然。虽然它在艺术上的造诣未见得超越英、法、俄等国小说所达到的高度，但由于美国是世界首屈一指的强国，美国小说在世界上的影响力却深远得多。这就难怪许多中国读者对不少美国名著的内容早已耳熟能详了。

但是，原著就很少有人读过了。相信不少有一定英文基础的文学爱好者，都有过读几本原版小说的想法。一方面可以提高自己的英语水平，另一方面又可以更加真切地体味作品的思想内涵。但是碍于时间和语言上的障碍，恐怕即使英语专业的学生，也很少有时间 and 毅力，完整地读上几本的。

希望本书能够弥补您的缺憾。我们在这里精选了从19世纪美国文艺复兴时期到当代共17位杰出小说家的代表作品，并配以译文，及简短的作者简介、选文赏析，以方便读者读懂、读透作品的精神内涵。

本书由洪增流教授主编，戚涛、张玉红、孙亚、尚晓进、柯扬茜、姚岚、周点素、吉海虹、吴天一、周芳琳等参加编写。

由于时间与能力所限,本书难免存在疏漏之处,欢迎广大读者批评指正。

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Edgar Allan Poe 埃德加·爱伦·坡

【作者简介】

埃德加·爱伦·坡(1809—1849)是19世纪美国著名短篇小说家、诗人和文学评论家。1809年生于波士顿一个演员家庭。坡的童年很不幸,不满三岁便因父亲出走母亲病故而沦为孤儿,由弗吉尼亚州里士满的富商约翰·爱伦收养。17岁那年,坡进入弗吉尼亚大学,但因故没能完成学业。后入读西点军校,又因故意违纪而被开除。坡具有文学天赋,他短暂的一生大多数时间从事写作和编辑工作,先后担任过《南方文学信使报》、《伯顿绅士报》、《格雷姆杂志》、《百老汇报》等刊物的编辑。坡一生贫寒,27岁娶了小他14岁的表妹弗吉尼亚·克莱蒙。1847年妻子病逝后,他陷入极度痛苦之中,于1849年英年早逝。

坡在短篇小说、诗歌和文学评论三个领域都取得了卓越的成就。他的短篇小说随着他思想的变化大致可分为三类。开始,他的小说注重分析,推理严密,如《莫格街谋杀案》(*The Murders in the Rue Morgue*)和《瓶子里发现的手稿》(*MS Found in a Bottle*)。随后,他的小说推理性减少,恐怖气氛逐渐增加,如《椭圆形画像》(*The Oval Portrait*)。坡的后期作品充满着恐怖气氛,让人读来毛骨悚然,如梦魇一场。在诸如《厄舍古屋的倒塌》(*The Fall of the House of Usher*)和《那桶阿蒙提拉多酒》(*The Cask of Amontillado*)等经典作品中,坡巧妙地演绎着他那永恒的主题“美的幻灭、死亡的恐怖、忧郁的恐怖、对怪异现象的疑惧”。他的短篇小说主要收集在他的小说集《荒诞奇异的故事》(*Tales of The Grotesque and Arabesque*, 1840)中。

坡的诗歌范围狭窄,大都表现内心活动,主题除了爱情便是死亡、幻灭和伤悼,色调阴暗凄凉。他认为只有美和死亡的紧密结合才

能表现诗趣,强调运用和谐的形式和鲜明的视觉形象,把音乐和图画、节奏和形象统一起来。他的诗作《乌鸦》(*The Raven*)、《致海伦》(*To Helen*)、《伊斯拉菲尔》(*Israfil*)、《安娜贝尔·莉》(*Annabel lee*)等堪称美国抒情诗中的上乘之作,对19世纪末法国象征主义诗人波德莱尔和马拉美等人产生了巨大的影响。

坡在文学理论方面也有独特的建树,主张“为艺术而艺术”的唯美主义原则。J·R·洛威尔称之为“最有见识、最富哲理的大无畏评论家。”坡对他本人的文学理论身体力行,而对于除霍桑之外同时代其他作家的作品都大肆文诛笔伐,似有王婆卖瓜之嫌。其文学思想集中体现在他的《诗歌原理》(*The Poetic Principle*)、《创作的哲学》(*The Philosophy of Composition*)和《评霍桑的〈故事重述〉》(*Review of Twice-told Tales*)等作品中。

这里选的是坡的短篇小说《那桶阿蒙提拉多酒》。

The Cask of Amontillado

The thousand injuries of Fortunato I had borne as I best could, but when he ventured upon insult I vowed revenge. You, who so well know the nature of my soul, will not suppose, however, that I gave utterance to a threat. *At length* I would be avenged; this was a point definitively settled — but the very definitiveness with which it was resolved precluded the idea of risk. I must not only punish but punish with impunity. A wrong is unredressed when retribution overtakes its redresser. (It is equally unredressed when the avenger fails to make himself felt as such to him who has done the wrong.)

It must be understood that neither by word nor deed had I given Fortunato cause to doubt my good will. I continued, as was my wont, to smile in his face, and he did not perceive that my smile now was at the thought of his immolation.

He had a weak point — this Fortunato — although in other regards he was a man to be respected and even feared. He prided himself upon his connoisseurship in wine. Few Italians have the true virtuoso spirit. For the most part their enthusiasm is adopted to suit the time and opportunity, to practice imposture upon the British and Austrian *millionaires*. In painting and gemmery, Fortunato, like his countrymen, was a quack, but in the matter of old wines he was sincere. In this respect I did not differ from him materially; — I was skilful in the Italian vintages myself, and bought largely whenever I could.

It was about dusk, one evening during the supreme madness of the carnival season, that I encountered my friend. He accosted me with excessive warmth, for he had been drinking much. The man wore motley. He had on a tight-fitting parti-striped dress, and his head was surmounted by the conical cap and bells. I was so pleased to see him that I thought I should never have done wringing his hand.

I said to him — “My dear Fortunato, you are luckily met. How remarkably well you are looking to-day. But I have received a pipe of what passes for Amontillado, and I have my doubts.”

“How?” said he. “Amontillado? A pipe? Impossible! And in the middle of the carnival!”

“I have my doubts,” I replied; “and I was silly enough to pay the full Amontillado price without consulting you in the matter. You were not to be found, and I was fearful of losing a bargain.”

“Amontillado!”

“I have my doubts.”

“Amontillado!”

“And I must satisfy them.”

“Amontillado!”

“As you are engaged, I am on my way to Luchresi. If any one has

a critical turn it is he. He will tell me —”

“Luchresi cannot tell Amontillado from Sherry.”

“And yet some fools will have it that his taste is a match for your own.”

“Come, let us go.”

“Whither?”

“To your vaults.”

“My friend, no; I will not impose upon your good nature. I perceive you have an engagement. Luchresi —”

“I have no engagement; — come.”

“My friend, no. It is not the engagement, but the severe cold with which I perceive you are afflicted. The vaults are insufferably damp. They are encrusted with nitre.”

“Let us go, nevertheless. The cold is merely nothing. Amontillado! You have been imposed upon. And as for Luchresi, he cannot distinguish Sherry from Amontillado.”

Thus speaking, Fortunato possessed himself of my arm; and putting on a mask of black silk and drawing a *roquelaire* closely about my person, I suffered him to hurry me to my palazzo.

There were no attendants at home; they had absconded to make merry in honour of the time. I had told them that I should not return until the morning, and had given them explicit orders not to stir from the house. These orders were sufficient, I well knew, to insure their immediate disappearance, one and all, as soon as my back was turned.

I took from their sconces two flambeaux, and giving one to Fortunato, bowed him through several suites of rooms to the archway that led into the vaults. I passed down a long and winding staircase, requesting him to be cautious as he followed. We came at length to the foot of the descent, and stood together upon the damp ground of the

conscience

catacombs of the Montresors.

The gait of my friend was unsteady, and the bells upon his cap jingled as he strode.

"The pipe," said he.

"It is farther on," said I; "but observe the white web-work which gleams from these cavern walls."

He turned towards me, and looked into my eyes with two filmy orbs that distilled the rheum of intoxication.

"Nitre?" he asked, at length.

"Nitre," I replied. "How long have you had that cough?"

"Ugh! ugh! ugh! — ugh! ugh! ugh! — ugh! ugh! ugh! — ugh! ugh! ugh! — ugh! ugh! ugh!"

My poor friend found it impossible to reply for many minutes.

"It is nothing," he said, at last.

"Come," I said, with decision, "we will go back; your health is precious. You are rich, respected, admired, beloved; you are happy, as once I was. You are a man to be missed. For me it is no matter. We will go back; you will be ill, and I cannot be responsible. Besides, there is Luchresi —"

"Enough," he said; "the cough is a mere nothing; it will not kill me. I shall not die of a cough."

"True — true," I replied; "and, indeed, I had no intention of alarming you unnecessarily — but you should use all proper caution. A draught of this Medoc will defend us from the damp."

Here I knocked off the neck of a bottle which I drew from a long row of its fellows that lay upon the mould.

"Drink," I said, presenting him the wine.

He raised it to his lips with a leer. He paused and nodded to me familiarly, while his bells jingled.

“I drink,” he said, “to the buried that repose around us.”

“And I to your long life.”

He again took my arm, and we proceeded.

“These vaults,” he said, “are extensive.”

“The Montresors,” I replied, “were a great and numerous family.”

“I forget your arms.”

“A huge human foot d’or, in a field azure; the foot crushes a serpent rampant whose fangs are imbedded in the heel.”

“And the motto?”

“*Nemo me impune lacessit.*”

“Good!” he said.

The wine sparkled in his eyes and the bells jingled. My own fancy grew warm with the Medoc. We had passed through long walls of piled skeletons, with casks and puncheons intermingling, into the inmost recesses of the catacombs. I paused again, and this time I made bold to seize Fortunato by an arm above the elbow.

“The nitre!” I said; “see, it increases. It hangs like moss upon the vaults. We are below the river’s bed. The drops of moisture trickle among the bones. Come, we will go back ere it is too late. Your cough —”

“It is nothing,” he said; “let us go on. But first, another draught of the Medoc.”

I broke and reached him a flacon of De Grève. He emptied it at a breath. His eyes flashed with a fierce light. He laughed and threw the bottle upwards with a gesticulation I did not understand.

I looked at him in surprise. He repeated the movement — a grotesque one.

“You do not comprehend?” he said.

"Not I," I replied.

"Then you are not of the brotherhood."

"How?"

"You are not of the masons."

"Yes, yes," I said; "yes, yes."

"You? Impossible! A mason?"

"A mason," I replied.

"A sign," he said, "a sign."

"It is this," I answered, producing from beneath the folds of my *roquelaire* a trowel.

"You jest," he exclaimed, recoiling a few paces. "But let us proceed to the Amontillado."

"Be it so," I said, replacing the tool beneath the cloak and again offering him my arm. He leaned upon it heavily. We continued our route in search of the Amontillado. We passed through a range of low arches, descended, passed on, and descending again, arrived at a deep crypt, in which the foulness of the air caused our flambeaux rather to glow than flame.

At the most remote end of the crypt there appeared another less spacious. Its walls had been lined with human remains, piled to the vault overhead, in the fashion of the great catacombs of Paris. Three sides of this interior crypt were still ornamented in this manner. From the fourth side the bones had been thrown down, and lay promiscuously upon the earth, forming at one point a mound of some size. Within the wall thus exposed by the displacing of the bones, we perceived a still interior crypt or recess, in depth about four feet, in width three, in height six or seven. It seemed to have been constructed for no especial use within itself, but formed merely the interval between two of the colossal supports of the roof of the catacombs, and was backed by

one of their circumscribing walls of solid granite.

It was in vain that Fortunato, uplifting his dull torch, endeavoured to pry into the depth of the recess. Its termination the feeble light did not enable us to see.

“Proceed,” I said; “herein is the Amontillado. As for Luchresi —”

“He is an ignoramus,” interrupted my friend, as he stepped unsteadily forward, while I followed immediately at his heels. In an instant he had reached the extremity of the niche, and finding his progress arrested by the rock, stood stupidly bewildered. A moment more and I had fettered him to the granite. In its surface were two iron staples, distant from each other about two feet, horizontally. From one of these depended a short chain, from the other a padlock. Throwing the links about his waist, it was but the work of a few seconds to secure it. He was too much astounded to resist. Withdrawing the key I stepped back from the recess.

“Pass your hand,” I said, “over the wall; you cannot help feeling the nitre. Indeed, it is very damp. Once more let me implore you to return. No? Then I must positively leave you. But I will first render you all the little attentions in my power.”

“The Amontillado!” ejaculated my friend, not yet recovered from his astonishment.

“True,” I replied; “the Amontillado.”

As I said these words I busied myself among the pile of bones of which I have before spoken. Throwing them aside, I soon uncovered a quantity of building stone and mortar. With these materials and with the aid of my trowel, I began vigorously to wall up the entrance of the niche.

I had scarcely laid the first tier of the masonry when I discovered

that the intoxication of Fortunato had in great measure worn off. The earliest indication I had of this was a low moaning cry from the depth of the recess. It was *not* the cry of a drunken man. There was then a long and obstinate silence. I laid the second tier, and the third, and the fourth; and then I heard the furious vibration of the chain. The noise lasted for several minutes, during which, that I might hearken to it with the more satisfaction, I ceased my labours and sat down upon the bones. When at last the clanking subsided, I resumed the trowel, and finished without interruption the fifth, the sixth, and the seventh tier. The wall was now nearly upon a level with my breast. I again paused, and holding the flambeaux over the mason-work, threw a few feeble rays upon the figure within.

A succession of loud and shrill screams, bursting suddenly from the throat of the chained form, seemed to thrust me violently back. For a brief moment I hesitated, I trembled. Unsheathing my rapier, I began to grope with it about the recess; but the thought of an instant reassured me. I placed my hand upon the solid fabric of the catacombs, and felt satisfied. I reapproached the wall. I replied to the yells of him who clamoured. I reechoed, I aided, I surpassed them in volume and in strength. I did this, and the clamourer grew still.

It was now midnight, and my task was drawing to a close. I had completed the eighth, the ninth and the tenth tier. I had finished a portion of the last and the eleventh; there remained but a single stone to be fitted and plastered in. I struggled with its weight; I placed it partially in its destined position. But now there came from out the niche a low laugh that erected the hairs upon my head. It was succeeded by a sad voice, which I had difficulty in recognizing as that of the noble Fortunato. The voice said —

“Ha! ha! ha! — he! he! he! — a very good joke, indeed —