

朗文英汉对照世界文学丛书



**Tales of Mystery and Imagination**

# 述异集

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简写本

埃德加·爱伦·坡原著 R.约翰改写 芮 芙翻译



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LONGMAN 朗文



**Tales of Mystery and Imagination**

**述 异 集**

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原著作者: Edgar Allan Poe

改 写: R. John

翻 译: 芮 芙

策划编辑: 刘玲珍

责任编辑: 沈利人

封面设计: 陶雪华

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## Introduction

Edgar Allan Poe was a poet of international fame within his lifetime, and America's foremost literary critic of his generation; but it is as a short-story writer that he has enjoyed enormous and enduring popularity, being described as the creator of the horror story, the master of the science fiction story, and the inventor of detective fiction. *Tales of Mystery and Imagination* contains a collection of Edgar Allan Poe's short stories which reveals something of the variety of Poe's gifts as a short-story writer.

Edgar Poe was born in Richmond, Virginia in 1809, of actor-parents. His father left the family while Edgar was still a baby, and his mother died soon after. Edgar was taken in by Mrs John Allan, the childless wife of a wealthy businessman. The Allans went to London in 1815, and Edgar was sent to boarding school in England. In 1820, the family returned to the United States where, upon the death of his uncle in 1824, Allan became a very wealthy man.

John Allan's relationship with his foster son deteriorated. He sent Edgar to university, but refused to pay the debts Edgar incurred, and Edgar ran away and joined the army in 1827. When Mrs Allan died in 1829 Edgar was reconciled with his foster father, but they soon quarrelled again over money. When John Allan died in 1834 there was no mention of Edgar in his will.

Edgar Allan Poe published his first book of poems in 1827, and his second in 1829. He left the army in 1831, and he went to live with his paternal grandmother, his aunt and her daughter, and his own older brother. He began writing short stories and his first five were published in 1832. He became editor of the *Southern Literary Messenger* in 1835, after the death of both his grandmother and brother, and brought his aunt and her daughter Virginia to live with him. He married Virginia in 1836 when she was still only fourteen.

## 前 言

埃德加·爱伦·坡有生之年既是一位享有国际声誉的诗人，也是他那个年代最重要的美国文学批评家；然而，他那巨大而不朽的声望却是因他的短篇小说而铸就，他被誉为恐怖小说的先驱、科幻小说大师、侦探小说始祖。《述异集》中所收的埃德加·爱伦·坡的短篇故事数篇，充分展示出坡写作短篇小说的多方面的天赋。

埃德加·坡 1809 年生于弗吉尼亚州里士满，父母都是演员。当埃德加还是个婴儿时，父亲就离家出走，不久母亲也撒手人寰。埃德加被一位富商的太太、无儿无女的约翰·爱伦夫人所收养。1815 年爱伦一家去了伦敦，埃德加被送到英格兰的寄宿制学校念书。1820 年，举家又迁回美国，1824 年他叔父死后，爱伦变得非常富有。

约翰·爱伦跟养子的关系不久开始恶化。他把埃德加送进大学，却拒付他的债务，埃德加逃离家庭并于 1827 年参军。1829 年爱伦夫人故去，埃德加与养父和解，但不久又为了钱财而闹翻。1834 年约翰·爱伦逝世，遗嘱里只字不提埃德加。

1827 年，埃德加·爱伦·坡出版了他的第一本诗集，1829 年又出了第二本。1831 年，他离开军队，与祖母、姑姑、姑姑的女儿以及他自己的哥哥生活在一起。他开始写短篇小说，前五篇于 1832 年问世。1835 年，他成了《南方文学使者》的编辑，祖母和哥哥相继过世以后，他伴着姑姑和她的女儿弗吉尼亚一起过日子。1836 年，弗吉尼亚才十四岁，他便娶她为妻。

Poe lost his job because of heavy drinking, and he moved to New York and later to Philadelphia, writing short stories and reviews all the time, and making just enough money to survive.

In 1842, Virginia was diagnosed as having tuberculosis, and for the next five years Poe took to drinking again, though living in fear of his drunken fits of temper. At this time he wrote "The Black Cat", his most horrific story, in which he distorted his own character to extremes. In 1844 he wrote "The Raven", the poem which brought him international fame. Virginia died in 1847, and Poe himself died in poverty in 1849.

Poe's short stories display a rich diversity, from the comic "X-ing a Paragraph" (1849), to the Antarctic adventure story "Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym" (1838); and from the nightmare "The Black Cat" to the intellectual control of "The Murders of the Rue Morgue". However, Poe's heroes or narrators are always himself — he has little interest in his subsidiary characters — and the themes he deals with arise from his tragic life: fear of death, anger, isolation of the individual, revenge, and the struggle to control both circumstances and emotions.

"Metzengerstein" (1832) was one of Poe's first stories and it contains the themes of fear and struggle for control which were explored further in later stories. Intended as a parody of the popular German writer of horror stories, E. T. W. Hoffman, the story is more effective than many of Hoffman's, because of the intensity of Poe's personal feelings. The orphaned Frederick, fond of wine and "shameful behaviour", was a picture of Poe himself, while the old hunter Berlifitzing became an image of John Allan. The strange relationship between Frederick and the wild red horse, which can be seen as the reincarnation of Berlifitzing, results in the destruction of them both, and Frederick is unable to escape his fate: "The horseman struggled with all his strength to control the animal. His face was a picture of pain; but no sound came from his lips,

因为酗酒,坡失去了工作,他移居纽约,后又去了费城,一直靠写短篇小说和评论维持生计。

1842年,弗吉尼亚被诊断患了肺结核,以后的五年中坡又酗起了酒,虽然他也为醉酒后的坏脾气提心吊胆。这段时间里他写就了最恐怖的小说《黑猫》,故事中他扭曲的性格达到极至。1844年,他写成《大乌鸦》,一本让他蜚声国际的诗集。弗吉尼亚死于1847年,坡自己1849年死于贫困。

坡的短篇小说内容丰富多样,从喜剧《通篇都是X》(1849年)到南极探险故事《阿·戈·皮姆故事集》(1838年);从噩梦般的《黑猫》到凭借智慧破案的《莫格街谋杀案》,应有尽有。但是,坡笔下的男主人公或故事叙述人总是他自己——对配角他没什么兴趣——所描写的主题都取材于他悲惨的生活:对死亡的畏惧、愤怒、孤独、复仇以及对境遇和情感的奋力控制等。

《梅岑格施泰因》(1832年)是坡最早的短篇之一,所含也是在后来的小说中进一步探究的恐怖以及奋力控制的主题。本欲拙劣地模仿德国畅销恐怖小说家E.T.W.霍夫曼,不料写成后却比霍夫曼的许多小说更有影响,原因是坡有着强烈的个人感受。无父无母的弗雷德里克嗜酒如命以及“寡廉鲜耻的行为”,其实是坡自己的真实写照,而老猎人伯利菲岑则成了约翰·爱伦的肖像。书中的野红马可视为伯利菲岑的化身,弗雷德里克和野红马之间奇特的关系,导致双双走向毁灭,弗雷德里克无法逃脱他的命运:“那骑手正拚足全力想控制住坐骑。他的脸简直是个痛苦的画面;但因极度恐惧而自我撕咬的双唇却始终没吭出一声。”

which were bitten through in his terrible fear."

"William Wilson" (1839) explores the struggle of the individual to control his conscience. William Wilson, set apart from others by his battle with his conscience, cannot escape from his inevitable self-destruction.

Roderick Usher in "The Fall of the House of Usher" (1839) has been called "the most perfect pen-portrait of Poe himself". Usher lives isolated from human society, fearful of his own death and that of his sister, and suffering from "a sharpness of the senses". He lives with his beloved sister Lady Madeline who is dying. (It is interesting that Poe always called his wife "sis".) Usher suffers enormous distress when his sister apparently dies, and yet refuses to save her from the entombment she suffers when she recovers consciousness.

In "The Red Death" (1842), Prince Prospero's attempt to escape from death is doomed to failure: "And Darkness and Decay and the Red Death held power over all."

Other stories which describe the same struggle to escape death end in triumph. "The Whirlpool" (1841), is an example of Poe's adventure stories. The factual details of the tides and the whirlpool contrast with the old man's terror. The old man's observation and awareness during his descent into the whirlpool enable him to escape from its depths: "... an idea came into my head — an idea that made my limbs tremble again and my heart beat heavily once more. It was not a new fear that I felt, but the birth of a more exciting hope."

"The Pit and the Pendulum" describes the victim's desperate attempts to escape death. In the end, the torturers appear to win: "I struggled no more, but the suffering of my soul found relief in one long, loud and terrible shout of despair." But at the last moment, the victim is saved by outside forces.

The narrator of "The Cask of Amontillado" (1846), a fantasy of revenge, remains in control of his planned revenge throughout the story. Having lived as a victim of Fortunato for a long period, the narrator uses his knowledge of Fortunato's character to trap him into a carefully prepared

《威廉·威尔森》(1839年)探究的是个人与自我良知的抗争。同良心搏斗的威廉·威尔森羁傲不驯,苟与人同,终究不能逃脱自毁的命运。

《厄舍府的坍塌》(1839年)中的罗德里克·厄舍,被称作“最完美的坡的自画像”。厄舍与世隔绝,孤立无援,生怕自己会死去,也怕妹妹死去,饱受“敏感”之苦。他同亲爱的妹妹马德琳小姐生活在一起,而妹妹又是个将死的人。(有趣的是,坡常把妻子称为“妹妹”。)厄舍的妹妹假死过去时,他饱尝了巨大的悲痛,而当她恢复知觉后,他又拒绝将她从遭罪的坟墓中解救出来。

在《红死病》(1842年)中,普罗斯佩罗王子逃脱死亡的企图注定要失败:“黑暗、腐朽和红死病征服了一切。”

其余同样描写奋力逃脱死亡的几个短篇均以胜利作为结局。《旋涡》(1841年),是坡的冒险小说的范例。其中对潮汐涨落以及旋涡的描写真实而细腻,同老人的恐惧心理形成鲜明的对照。老人在被旋涡拖下的过程中,是那份明察与知觉帮他逃脱了掉进深渊的厄运:“……突然,一个念头闪过脑际——一个再次使我四肢颤抖、心怦怦乱跳的念头。不是新的恐惧,而是令人激动的生还的希望。”

《陷坑和钟摆》描写的是受害人在绝望中逃脱死亡的努力。最终,虐待狂们眼看就要大获全胜:“我不再挣扎,但我灵魂所遭受的苦难,在一声长长的、尖利的、恐怖绝望的叫声中得到缓解。”不过,在最后的时刻,受害人还是被外面的军队拯救了出来。

《一桶白葡萄酒》(1846年)说的是一枕复仇的梦想。故事里叙述人自始至终都把握着自己的复仇计划。长期以来,他一直生活在福尔图纳托的欺压之下,叙述人利用他对福尔图纳托性格的了解,诱使其走进他精心准备的圈套而无法逃脱。强烈

situation from which he cannot escape. The narrator's intense desire for revenge does not weaken until his final act: "For a brief moment I hesitated, I trembled; but I remained firm . . . My heart grew sick; it was the dampness, of course."

The stories Poe wrote about Dupin, the first fictional detective hero, arose from his interest in the attempts of the intellect to cope with situations of horror: Poe invented a story in which the intellect of the hero is adequate to deal with the problems he faces. In contrast with the character of Roderick Usher, the character of Dupin is pure intellect.

"The Murders in the Rue Morgue" (1841), the world's first detective story, set the pattern for this form of fiction: the brilliant and eccentric amateur detective; the admiring friend and narrator; the unintelligent police; the impossible puzzle solved through the intellectual brilliance of the detective; the detective's explanation of the crime and his solution of it.

In "The Murders in the Rue Morgue", Poe bases his detection on the idea that "... this mystery should be easy to solve because it is extremely unusual". In "The Stolen Letter", Poe uses the opposite idea: "Some things are too plain for us to see." "The Stolen Letter" is an expression of Poe's interest in puzzles; the story does not involve a violent crime, but other ingredients of the detective story are present.

This interest in puzzles is shown most clearly in "The Gold-Bug" (1843), one of Poe's most popular stories, which is written with unusual exuberance and optimism. Although not a detective story, Poe uses the clever amateur who solves the puzzle by means of his intellect, the narrator-friend, and the explanation of the mystery after the treasure is found.

The settings of Poe's stories vary — Paris, Norway, South Carolina — but they are not used to create reality; it is the inward reality of the main character which remains the core of each story. Poe's fantastical plots, the logical development of ideas, and the effect of circumstances upon an individual are common to these tales. The feeling of horror and evil is communicated with intensity and melodrama.

的复仇愿望从没有丝毫减弱,直到他最后的行动:“我踌躇片刻,浑身发抖;但我坚定不移……我感到一阵恶心;当然是因为潮湿的缘故。”

由其对智谋破获恐怖案件的兴趣使然,围绕他首次虚构的侦探人物迪潘,坡写下了一连串的故事:其中有一篇描述到主人公的智力足以应付他所面临的难题。迪潘智力过人,与罗德里克·厄舍的个性形成鲜明的对照。

《莫格街的谋杀案》(1841年)——有史以来的第一部侦探小说,为这类小说打造了模式:那才情洋溢但性格古怪的业余侦探;那为之倾倒的友朋和故事叙述人;愚钝的警察;通过侦探非凡的才智破获的死案谜案;探员对案情的分析以及破获方案等。

在《莫格街的谋杀案》中,坡的侦察基于“……这个谜很容易解开,因为其特征超越了常规”这个思路。而在《窃信案》中,坡运用的则是截然相反的思路:“有些事过于普通,我们反而看不明白。”《窃信案》表明了坡对棘手案件的兴趣;故事虽没有涉及暴力犯罪,但侦探故事的其他因素却涵盖其中。

这种探索谜案的兴致在《金甲虫》(1843年)中被表现得淋漓尽致,这是坡最受欢迎的短篇故事之一,被他以非凡的勃勃生气和乐观主义精神一挥而就。尽管不是侦探小说,坡却塑造了一个智破谜案的聪明的业余侦探,和一位讲述故事的朋友,并在财宝被找到之后对种种的神秘作出了解析。

坡短篇小说的写作背景各不相同——有巴黎,有挪威,还有美国的南卡罗来纳州——但写的都不是真人真事;而主要人物的真情实感却贯穿在各篇之中。异想天开的情节、逻辑展开的判断思维,以及环境对个体的影响,在坡的这些故事中都大同小异。恐怖和邪恶的感觉被渲染到极致,耸人听闻,跃然纸上。

In all these tales Poe creates the atmosphere he intends by careful and detailed descriptions of material outward circumstances. In "The Gold-Bug", Poe describes the search for the treasure: "Our path led across to the mainland and on to the high ground to the north-west. We walked for about two hours and the sun was just setting when we arrived at a high shelf of land, surrounded by forest and wild, broken country." Poe's descriptions of the murder victims in "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" are scientific: "There were clear marks of fingers upon the throat. The face was pale blue in colour."

This kind of detail can be seen in even the most fantastical of Poe's tales. In "The Pit and the Pendulum" the size and appearance of the narrator's prison, and both the pit and the pendulum, are described in detail. In "The Red Death", Poe's vivid descriptions include the rooms of the castle and the midnight visitor.

"The Fall of the House of Usher", considered by many to be Poe's finest story, is a fine example of how Poe builds up an atmosphere of terror by using detailed description. The narrator approaches the house with foreboding: "the decayed trees, and the grey walls, and the silent lake — . . . the air itself was grey." The great crack "which ran from the roof of the house in front, right down to the level of the ground" is an example of the kind of detail which Poe uses to focus the attention on a symbol which grows in significance as the story develops. The atmosphere is intensified by the strangeness of the illnesses of Roderick and his sister, and by Roderick's belief in the power of the stones of his house.

This collection of stories does not include any of Poe's humorous writing — for example, "X-ing a Paragraph", written shortly before his death — which reveals a light-hearted side to his character. But Poe's popularity is based upon his tales of mystery and imagination, such as those in this book, where rationality and logic are linked with horror and violence, and the themes of death, fear and anger are so vividly described and explored.

在所有这些故事中，坡通过对外部环境缜密细致的描绘，营造出他所需要的气氛。在《金甲虫》里，坡是这样描述寻宝的：“我们沿着那条小径，穿过陆地，走向西北的高地。大约走了两个小时，太阳刚刚下山，我们来到一块高地，这儿长满了矮树丛，四周是一片荒芜破落的乡村。”坡在《莫格街的谋杀案》中描写被害人也具有科学性：“喉部有明显的指甲抓痕。面色白里泛青。”

这样的细节，即便在坡笔下最荒诞的故事里也可见一斑。在《陷坑和钟摆》中，讲述者被囚禁的牢房的大小和形状，以及那陷坑和钟摆，都有详尽的描述。在《红死病》中，坡生动地描写了城堡里的房间以及半夜访客。

《厄舍府的坍塌》被很多人视为坡写得最好的小说，是坡借用细腻的描绘营造恐怖气氛的经典之作。讲述者刚走近那府邸就有一种预感：“腐朽的树木、灰白的外墙，还有湖里的一潭死水——……连空气本身也呈现一派灰色。”那条“房子正面从屋顶一直豁裂至地面”的巨大裂缝，堪称此类细部描写的典范。藉此，坡将读者的视线引向那随情节发展而日见其义的象征物上。而在描写罗德里克及其妹妹罹患怪症以及罗德里克迷信自家府邸石头阴气重重时，这种恐怖的气氛被推到了极致。

这本故事集没有收进坡的幽默作品——如他临死前不久写成的《通篇都是 X》——揭示了他性格中无忧无虑的一面。不过，坡的成名基于他的那些神秘而又富于幻想的小说，比如本书里的故事，其中理性和逻辑同恐怖和暴力紧密相连，死亡、恐怖、愤怒的主题均得以生动地刻画和探究。

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## *William Wilson*

In this story I shall call myself William Wilson. I am ashamed to tell you my real name which is known, scorned and hated all over the world. Because of my evil life, I no longer enjoy the love and honour of my fellow-men; and I have no ordinary human hopes or expectations.

I shall not describe the later years of my life, which were full of misery and unforgivable crime. I suffered at one time a sudden increase in wickedness. All goodness seemed to drop from me, in an instant, like a wrap. Men usually grow evil by degrees, but I passed at once from simple dishonesty to blackest crime. I want to describe the chance, the one event, that caused this terrible thing. The shadow of death is over me now, and it has softened my spirit. I need the sympathy and perhaps the pity of my fellow-men. I want them to look for something in my story that might lessen the shame of my guilt. I hope they will agree that no one has ever before been tempted as I have. It is certain that no one has ever given way as I have. At this moment I am dying from the effects of a wild and fearful experience.

My family has always produced men of strong imagination, often of violent temper. And I have some of the worst faults of the family character. As I grew up these faults developed and caused serious anxiety to my friends and great harm to myself. My parents could do little to change my ways, because they themselves had the same weaknesses. Since boyhood, therefore, I have been able to do very much as I liked.

My earliest memories of school life are connected with a large old house in an English village. I was a pupil at this school for five years after my tenth birthday. It was at that time and in that place that I experienced the first uncertain