



Selected Works of
American Writers · I
TRUMAN CAPOTE

英漢對照

美國作家作品選①

卡波特小說集

湯新楣、顏元叔合譯

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今日世界出版社出版

香港九龍尖沙咀郵箱5217號

(登記證內版僑台誌字0066號)

港澳總代理：張輝記書報社

香港利源東街四號二樓

台灣總代理：新亞圖書股份有限公司

台北市和平西路一段八四號

郵政劃撥帳戶110075號

1978年1月初版

封面設計：蔡浩泉

定價：港幣三元 新台幣三十元

Selected Works of American Writers 1

TRUMAN CAPOTE

MIRIAM by Truman Capote

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MASTER MISERY by Truman Capote

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AMONG THE PATHS TO EDEN by Truman Capote

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First printing

January 1978

THE AUTHOR

Truman Capote is a native of New Orleans where he was born on September 30, 1924. His first novel, *Other Voices, Other Rooms*, was an international literary success, and provided the author with a front-rank position among writers of America's postwar generation, a position he has since sustained with two short story collections, a second novel, *The Grass Harp*, and his very original, greatly praised contributions in the field of reportage, many of which have appeared in *The New Yorker Magazine*. His other works include *In Cold Blood*, a meticulously factual account of a small-town Kansas murder case, *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, and *The Muses Are Heard*. Capote has twice won the O. Henry Memorial Short Story Prize, and in 1959 he received an award from The National Institute of Arts and Letters.

作者小傳

特魯曼·卡波特，新奧爾良人，生於一九二四年九月三十日。第一部小說「別的聲音，別的房间」飲譽國際，成為戰後美國作家羣中的佼佼者。隨後出版了兩部短篇小說集，第二部小說「草琴」；並經常在「紐約客」發表很有創見的報導文章，深受讚揚，使他在文學上的地位維持不墜。其他作品包括「冷血」；「鐵芬妮的早餐」；「夜樹」；「文藝女神們的聲音」等。卡波特曾經兩度成為奧亨利短篇小說紀念獎得獎人，一九五九年更獲美國國立文學藝術學會頒給榮譽。

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Miriam

FOR SEVERAL YEARS, Mrs. H. T. Miller had lived alone in a pleasant apartment (two rooms with kitchenette) in a remodeled brownstone near the East River. She was a widow: Mr. H. T. Miller had left a reasonable amount of insurance. Her interests were narrow, she had no friends to speak of, and she rarely journeyed farther than the corner grocery. The other people in the house never seemed to notice her: her clothes were matter-of-fact, her hair iron-gray, clipped and casually waved; she did not use cosmetics, her features were plain and inconspicuous, and on her last birthday she was sixty-one. Her activities were seldom spontaneous: she kept the two rooms immaculate, smoked an occasional cigarette, prepared her own meals and tended a canary.

Then she met Miriam. It was snowing that night. Mrs. Miller had finished drying the supper dishes and was thumbing through an afternoon paper when she saw an advertisement of a picture playing at a neighborhood theatre. The title sounded good, so she struggled into her beaver coat, laced her galoshes and left the apartment, leaving one light burning in the foyer: she found nothing more disturbing than a sensation of darkness.

美莉安

湯新楣譯

H·T·米勒太太獨住在東河附近一幢翻造的褐沙石公寓房子裏已經幾年了，地方很舒適（有兩間房帶個小廚房）。她是個寡婦：H·T·米勒先生曾留下一筆不算少的保險費。她的興趣不廣，沒有什麼朋友，難得到比街口雜貨舖遠的地方去。公寓房子裏的其他住客似乎從不注意她：她穿的樸素，頭髮灰黑，剪得短，燙得很馬虎：不用化粧品，容貌平平，毫不顯眼，上次過生日時已經六十一歲了。她很少一時興起幹這個那個。兩個房間收拾得一塵不染，偶爾抽一根香煙，自己燒飯，養了一隻金絲雀。

後來她遇見了美莉安。那天晚上下雪。米勒太太擦完了晚飯時用過的碟子，翻閱一份晚報，看到附近一家電影院的放映廣告，片名很吸引人，她便穿上水獺大衣，紮好了套鞋鞋帶，走出家門，只在一進門的地方留了盞燈：她最怕黑。

The snow was fine, falling gently, not yet making an impression on the pavement. The wind from the river cut only at street crossings. Mrs. Miller hurried, her head bowed, oblivious as a mole burrowing a blind path. She stopped at a drugstore and bought a package of peppermints.

A long line stretched in front of the box office; she took her place at the end. There would be (a tired voice groaned) a short wait for all seats. Mrs. Miller rummaged in her leather handbag till she collected exactly the correct change for admission. The line seemed to be taking its own time and, looking around for some distraction, she suddenly became conscious of a little girl standing under the edge of the marquee.

Her hair was the longest and strangest Mrs. Miller had ever seen: absolutely silver-white, like an albino's. It flowed waist-length in smooth, loose lines. She was thin and fragilely constructed. There was a simple, special elegance in the way she stood with her thumbs in the pockets of a tailored plum-velvet coat.

Mrs. Miller felt oddly excited, and when the little girl glanced toward her, she smiled warmly. The little girl walked over and said, "Would you care to do me a favor?"

"I'd be glad to, if I can," said Mrs. Miller.

"Oh, it's quite easy. I merely want you to buy a ticket for me; they won't let me in otherwise. Here, I have the money." And gracefully she handed Mrs. Miller two dimes and a nickel.

They went over to the theatre together. An usherette directed them to a lounge; in twenty minutes the picture would be over.

"I feel just like a genuine criminal," said Mrs. Miller gaily, as she sat down. "I mean that sort of thing's against the law, isn't it? I do hope I haven't done the wrong thing. Your mother knows where you are, dear?"

雪不大，飄舞着落下，在人行道上還沒人走上去會有脚印那麼厚，只有過街時，河上吹來的風令人刺痛，有如刀割。米勒太太加緊脚步，低着頭快走，像鼯鼠挖地道一樣，只知向前，不顧左右，她在雜貨店停下，買了一包薄荷糖。

售票處前排着長龍；她站在最後，得要有一陣子等。（有個疲倦的聲音呻吟起來）米勒太太在真皮手袋裏翻找，終於找出和票價剛好相符的零錢。那些排長龍的人似乎都不慌不忙，她覺得無聊，便東張西望，突然發覺遮簷邊下站着一個小女孩。

米勒太太從沒見過那麼長那麼怪的頭髮：純銀白色，像個白化病者的頭髮，散披着垂到腰。她長得又瘦又嬌弱。她站在那兒，大拇指插在定製的紫黑色絨上衣的袋裏，有一股單純，特別的帥勁兒。

米勒太太覺得心裏古怪地激動，那小女孩朝她望來的時候，她很親熱地回笑。小女孩走過來說，「你願意幫我一個忙嗎？」

「很樂意，只要我能辦得到。」

「哦，那是很容易的事。我只要你替我買張票；不然他們不讓我進去。這兒是票錢。」她以優美的動作遞給米勒太太兩枚一角輔幣一枚五分鏰幣。

她們一同走進戲院。一名女領位員指點出她們的包廂座位；再過二十分鐘片子就要演完了。

「我覺得自己是個真正的罪犯，」米勒太太坐下去的時候，輕快地說：「我的意思說，那種事是犯法的，是不是？我真希望沒做錯事。你母親知道你在 那兒嗎，乖孩

I mean she does, doesn't she?"

The little girl said nothing. She unbuttoned her coat and folded it across her lap. Her dress underneath was prim and dark blue. A gold chain dangled about her neck, and her fingers, sensitive and musical-looking, toyed with it. Examining her more attentively, Mrs. Miller decided the truly distinctive feature was not her hair, but her eyes; they were hazel, steady, lacking any child-like quality whatsoever and, because of their size, seemed to consume her small face.

Mrs. Miller offered a peppermint. "What's your name, dear?"

"Miriam," she said, as though, in some curious way, it were information already familiar.

"Why, isn't that funny—my name's Miriam, too. And it's not a terribly common name either. Now, don't tell me your last name's Miller!"

"Just Miriam."

"But isn't that funny?"

"Moderately," said Miriam, and rolled the peppermint on her tongue.

Mrs. Miller flushed and shifted uncomfortably. "You have such a large vocabulary for such a little girl."

"Do I?"

"Well, yes," said Mrs. Miller, hastily changing the topic to: "Do you like the movies?"

"I really wouldn't know," said Miriam. "I've never been before."

Women began filling the lounge; the rumble of the newsreel bombs exploded in the distance. Mrs. Miller rose, tucking her purse under her arm. "I guess I'd better be running now if I want to get a seat," she said. "It was nice to have met you."

Miriam nodded ever so slightly.

It snowed all week. Wheels and footsteps moved

子？我的意思是說她知道的，是嗎？」

小女孩不作聲。她脫掉上裝，摺好放在膝上，上裝底下是件式樣古老的深藍色衣衫，脖子上掛着一條金鏈子，她那秀氣、看來會彈琴的手指在把玩它。米勒太太仔細端詳她，斷定這小女孩的特徵不是頭髮，而是眼睛；是淡褐色，目光堅定，一點都沒有小孩子的神氣，那雙眼那麼大，似乎把她的小臉蛋佔滿了。

米勒太太給她一顆薄荷糖。「乖孩子，你叫什麼名字？」

「美莉安，」她說，說得很古怪，彷彿這是應該已經知道的。

「哦，這多巧——我的名字也是美莉安，而那並不是非常普通的名字。現在可別告訴我你也姓米勒！」

「只叫美莉安。」

「可是那不奇怪嗎？」

「確有幾分。」美莉安說，一面在舌頭上把薄荷糖捲來捲去。

米勒太太面紅了，身子不自在地挪動。「你人小，知道的字兒眼卻很多。」

「是嗎？」

「嗯，真的是，」米勒太太說，趕緊轉變話題：「你喜歡看電影嗎？」

「我真不知道，」美莉安說，「我以前沒看過。」

女人們開始入座；遠處傳來新聞片中的炸彈聲。米勒太太站起來，腋下夾着皮包。「我想我該走了，不然就沒位子了，」她說「遇見你很高興。」

美莉安只把頭略微點了點。

整個禮拜一直下雪。車輪和腳步都在街上無聲地前

soundlessly on the street, as if the business of living continued secretly behind a pale but impenetrable curtain. In the falling quiet there was no sky or earth, only snow lifting in the wind, frosting the window glass, chilling the rooms, deadening and hushing the city. At all hours it was necessary to keep a lamp lighted, and Mrs. Miller lost track of the days: Friday was no different from Saturday and on Sunday she went to the grocery: closed, of course.

That evening she scrambled eggs and fixed a bowl of tomato soup. Then, after putting on a flannel robe and cold-creaming her face, she propped herself up in bed with a hot-water bottle under her feet. She was reading the *Times* when the doorbell rang. At first she thought it must be a mistake and whoever it was would go away. But it rang and rang and settled to a persistent buzz. She looked at the clock: a little after eleven; it did not seem possible, she was always asleep by ten.

Climbing out of bed, she trotted barefoot across the living room. "I'm coming, please be patient." The latch was caught; she turned it this way and that way and the bell never paused an instant. "Stop it," she cried. The bolt gave way and she opened the door an inch. "What in heaven's name?"

"Hello," said Miriam.

"Oh . . . why, hello," said Mrs. Miller, stepping hesitantly into the hall. "You're that little girl."

"I thought you'd never answer, but I kept my finger on the button; I knew you were home. Aren't you glad to see me?"

Mrs. Miller did not know what to say. Miriam, she saw, wore the same plum-velvet coat and now she had also a beret to match; her white hair was braided in two shining plaits and looped at the ends with enormous white ribbons.

"Since I've waited so long, you could at least let

進，彷彿人們躲在一道無從突破的淺色帷幕過活。在那白濛濛的一片寂靜中，分不出天地，只有隨風飄飛的雪在窗玻璃上凝結起來，把房屋裏弄得寒冷，弄得整個城市死氣沉沉，沒有聲音。房子裏不分晝夜都有一盞燈亮着，米勒太太過得根本不知道當天是那一天了：禮拜五跟禮拜六根本沒有分別，禮拜日，她到雜貨舖去：不用說是關了。

當天晚上，她做個炒蛋，燒了一碗番茄湯。後來她穿上法蘭絨睡袍，臉上抹了冷霜，靠着枕頭坐在床上，腳底下有個熱水袋。她正在看紐約時報，忽然門鈴響了。起初她以為是人搞錯了，按鈴的人看見無人應門會走開。可是它響個不停，她看看鐘：十一點多了；這似乎不可能，她總是十點就入夢鄉。

她下了床，光腳穿過客廳。「我就來了，請稍微等一等。」帶鏈門門卡住了，她這樣轉那樣轉，門鈴始終不停。「別再按鈴了，」她大聲喊。門門一下子拔開，她把門開了一吋。「老天爺，什麼事？」

「哈囉，」美莉安說。

「什麼；哦，哈囉，」米勒太太說，猶豫地走出門口「你就是那個小女孩。」

「我以為你不會應門，所以手指一直在按鈴；我知道你在家。你見到我，高不高興？」

米勒太太不知道說什麼好。她看見美莉安穿的還是那件紫黑色上裝，不過頭上多了一頂顏色相同的小圓呢帽。她那白頭髮梳成了兩道白得發亮的辮子，辮梢用好大的絲帶紮在一起。

「我等了那麼久，你至少可以讓我進去一下，」

me in," she said.

"It's awfully late. . . ."

Miriam regarded her blankly. "What difference does that make? Let me in. It's cold out here and I have on a silk dress." Then, with a gentle gesture, she urged Mrs. Miller aside and passed into the apartment.

She dropped her coat and beret on a chair. She was indeed wearing a silk dress. White silk. White silk in February. The skirt was beautifully pleated and the sleeves long; it made a faint rustle as she strolled about the room. "I like your place," she said. "I like the rug, blue's my favorite color." She touched a paper rose in a vase on the coffee table. "Imitation," she commented wanly. "How sad. Aren't imitations sad?" She seated herself on the sofa, daintily spreading her skirt.

"What do you want?" asked Mrs. Miller.

"Sit down," said Miriam. "It makes me nervous to see people stand."

Mrs. Miller sank to a hassock. "What do you want?" she repeated.

"You know, I don't think you're glad I came."

For a second time Mrs. Miller was without an answer; her hand motioned vaguely. Miriam giggled and pressed back on a mound of chintz pillows. Mrs. Miller observed that the girl was less pale than she remembered; her cheeks were flushed.

"How did you know where I lived?"

Miriam frowned. "That's no question at all. What's your name? What's mine?"

"But I'm not listed in the phone book."

"Oh, let's talk about something else."

Mrs. Miller said. "Your mother must be insane to let a child like you wander around at all hours of the night—and in such ridiculous clothes. She must be out of her mind."

Miriam got up and moved to a corner where a

她說。

「現在很晚了……」

美莉安茫然望着她。「那又有什麼關係？讓我進去。這外面很冷，我只穿了件綢衫。」然後她做個嫵雅的手勢勸米勒太太讓開，進了屋去。

她脫了上裝，摘了帽，放在一張椅子上。她穿的確是一件綢衫，白綢的。二月裏穿白綢，衫裙帶褶很好看，長袖；她在房間裏走的時候沙沙作响。「我喜歡你這地方，」她說。「我喜歡這張地毯，藍是我最喜歡的顏色。」她摸摸咖啡桌上花瓶裏的一朵紙玫瑰。「假的，」她黯然說，「多悲哀，假的東西不都是令人悲哀嗎？」她坐在沙發上，很優雅地把裙子攤開。

「你來幹什麼？」米勒太太問。

「坐下，」美莉安說。「我看見人站着，就心不安。」

米勒太太坐在軟墩子上。「你來幹什麼？」她再問。

「你知道，我想你不喜歡我來。」

米勒太太第二次無話可說；她的手微微顫動。美莉安嗤嗤笑，身子緊靠在一堆花綢枕頭上。米勒太太注意到那孩子臉色不像她所想像的那樣蒼白了；兩頰泛紅。

「你怎麼知道我住在這裏？」

美莉安眉頭一皺。「一點都不難。你的名字什麼？我的叫什麼？」

「可是電話簿上沒有我的姓名。」

「哦，咱們談點別的吧。」

米勒太太說：「你母親真是瘋了，竟讓你這麼個小孩子，夜裏無論多晚都到處亂跑——而且穿着單薄得荒唐的衣裳。她真糊塗。」

美莉安站起來，走到從天花板用鏈子吊懸着一個有罩