

美国短篇小说选

短篇小说选  
SELECTED  
AMERICAN  
SHORT  
STORIES

欧文 霍桑等  
31名美国作家著

商务印书馆

# SELECTED AMERICAN SHORT STORIES

With Annotations in Chinese

Edited by

Wang Zuo-liang & Liu Cheng-pei

王佐良 刘承沛

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## 内 容 简 介

本书共收美国短篇小说 31 篇,皆以美国为背景,即使写美国人在国外,也要有助于加深读者对美国现实的了解。所选篇目古今都有,而以今为主。作家包括欧文、霍桑、爱伦·坡、马克·吐温以至海明威、辛格、福克纳等 31 位名家,各种主要流派都略备一格,而每篇本身则或是内容有较大意义,或是艺术上有特点,若干篇目则是两者兼具。篇目大致按作品内容所涉及的时代排列。每篇皆加详注并附前言及作者简介,供读者参考。

## 美国短篇小说选

欧文、霍桑等

三十一名美国作家

王佐良 刘承沛 编选

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## 编者序

一个选本总是由许多因素凑成的。这个美国短篇小说选原是在六十年代初期计划的,等到一九七九年重新编选,却发现已有几个编得很好的同类选本出版在前,因此为了避免重复,有几篇名作不得不放弃。篇幅的限制也使我们不得不把另外几篇割爱。从正而来说,我们要求所选小说以美国为背景,即使写美国人在国外,也要有助于加深读者对美国现实的了解。由于此书的出版是面向广大青年读者的,我们也设法多选了几篇题材与青少年有关的。所选篇目古今都有,然而以今为主,各种主要流派都略备一格,而每篇本身则或是内容有较大意义,或是艺术上有特点,若干篇目则是两者兼具。篇目的排列大致根据作品内容所涉及的时代先后,而不只看作者的生卒年月。每篇前言是编者个人的读后感,各篇作者生平(统一由徐序同志编写),力求简要。中国青年出版社1980年出版的汉文本《美国短篇小说选》同本书所收作品完全相同,自学的读者如果需要,可以参考该书。

把这个选本的全部篇目重读一过,我们第一个感想是:美国短篇小说是一个极为丰富的园地。这里有一些物质的原因,例如在美国,登载短篇小说的杂志多,读者多,奖金多,选本多;一般性的杂志如《大西洋月刊》、《纽约人》都以精选短篇小说出名,就连上层知识分子读的季刊如《西旺尼评论》、《党人评论》也登短篇小说。也有历史的、环境的原因,如在美国资本主义发展过程中,大批白人涌向西部去淘金,去拓荒,就在旅途上篝火旁或小镇酒店里的互相闲扯中,产生了所谓边境故事,其中既有幽默,又有夸张和恶作剧,布勒特·哈特和马克·吐温的最初小说就是在那个环境里出

世的。不论是什么原因，至今美国写短篇小说的作家特别多，除了许多以写长篇小说出名的大作家也常写短篇小说之外，还有一批专门擅长写短篇小说的作家，包括好几位女作家，如凯瑟琳·安·波特，薇拉·凯瑟，尤多拉·韦尔蒂——不知怎的，她们虽也各自写了几部长篇，却总不如短篇精采。成为美国文学里重要力量的黑人作家和犹太作家也都在短篇小说上有建树。单拿我们这个集子里所选的来说，前者如赖特、鲍德温，后者如马拉默德、辛格，都是写得很出色的。近年来又风行科学幻想小说，这当中也有文学价值较高的，如雷·布雷德伯里等人就是很有文采的。

大致说来，从十九世纪到现在的欧美文坛上，短篇小说写得出色的主要是三个国家：以莫泊桑传统著称的法国，以契诃夫传统为特色的俄国，然后就是美国，而以美国为最有活力。英国作家莫姆曾说：“没有一个欧洲国家象美国那样刻苦地培养短篇小说，也没有任何别的地方象美国那样专心致志地钻研短篇小说的写作方法、技巧和发展可能性。……不止一次，美国短篇小说深刻地影响了别的国家短篇小说的写作实践。”（《说故事的人》序）。莫姆本人也是写短篇小说的名手，他这里说的是内行话。值得注意的是：他没有特别提到他自己的国家英国的短篇小说。

美国作家从头就有题材可写——他们生活在一个与欧洲不同的，有新的政治、社会观念的国家里，而且资本主义经济在大步发展，疆土也在大块大块地扩充，这当中有苦干，有开拓精神，也有理想与现实的重大矛盾，有残酷的剥削，有对印第安人、黑人、墨西哥人的骇人罪行，小说作家是不愁没有材料的。然而建国之初的若干年内，他们在写作技巧和语言风格上却处在英国文学传统的严重影响之下，摆脱不开。欧文、霍桑、爱伦·坡等人都有新的题材，甚至扩充了短篇小说的领域（如霍桑之运用“寓言”，爱伦·坡之创建侦探小说），但是写法都如英国作家，语言都有较重的书卷气，叙

述部分的句子都显得冗长,没有代表美国精神的独特风格。马克·吐温之可贵,在于他打破了这个局面,用西部地区群众的、幽默的、充满美国俚语的口语体、特殊的说故事方式闯出一条新路。《卡拉维拉斯县著名的跳蛙》虽只短短三四千字,却有着文学史上的重要意义,原因就在这里。后来海明威说:“全部美国文学来自一本马克·吐温写的叫做《哈克贝利·费恩历险记》的书……一切美国作品都来源于它”(《非洲的绿色群山》,1935年纽约版,第22页);我们也可以说,真正美国式的短篇小说来自《卡拉维拉斯县著名的跳蛙》。海明威自己,也有文学史上的功绩。当亨利·詹姆斯的模仿者写人物心理越来越细腻,句子也越来越罗唆的时候,海明威用一种极为简洁的、故意不带任何情感色彩的硬汉子口语专写歹徒之间的火并,写拳赛、斗牛、打猎,总之是写含有危险后果的行动,来作为一种对抗和纠正,结果在整个西方世界里造成了影响,一大批作家写起海明威式的小说来,而同时,象是针对他的反智慧倾向,又另有一些美国短篇小说家致力于写知识分子;正如有所谓校园长篇小说,也有校园短篇小说,我们这个选本里奥茨的《天路历程》就是最近的一个例子。在技巧上,各种倾向——从意识流到拼贴画——此起彼伏,然而在多数重要作家,最基本的写法仍然是故事线加气氛。只不过他们有了一个新的认识:固然是什么样的内容要求什么样的表达方式,但是表达方式也是内容的组成部分——至少在成功的作品是这样。

这些内容与技巧有机结合的成功作品使我们看到了比通常更深刻的美国现实。梅尔维尔的《闺女的地狱》用怎样富于感染力的笔调写出了十九世纪中叶美国妇女在资本主义工业化过程里所遭受的深重苦难;毕尔斯的《空中骑士》用诗一般的描写,通过一家父子的生死决斗表达了美国内战是怎样一种新时代消灭旧时代的战争。有什么能比马尔兹的《兽国黄昏》更清楚地表达出二十世纪

三十年代经济大萧条下失业者的凄惨境遇？鲍德温的《桑尼的布鲁士》写一个爱好音乐的黑人青年终于逃不出坐牢和受歧视的命运，又是怎样有力的名符其实的“抗议小说”——尽管作者本人认为这个名称已经过时。而福克纳——这个南方大作家——又是怎样通过写一个少年和一头大熊的对峙和互相尊重而深刻揭示了一部分美国人对于勇敢、自立等道德品质的看法以及美国资产阶级怎样精心地在他们的年青一代身上培养对他们有用的品质。……当然，这三十一篇小说不可能表达美国的全部现实，但是在它们各自所表达的小范围内——一个侧面，一个小问题——它们却都有不同程度的深刻，越是作家的思想认识透彻、艺术手段高超就越深刻。这就是为什么要深入了解一个民族，不能只注意他们那些五光十色的报纸、杂志、广播、电视，而必须还要读他们的文学作品；正是在文学作品里，可以寻到比表面现象要深刻得多的东西：这个民族真正的思想、感情，甚至灵魂。

美国短篇小说的将来如何？我们读完了这三十一篇小说，把书掩上之后，不免会有这样的问题。显然，会出现各式各样的新风格、新流派、“新浪潮”的变化，但是也许有两样东西是不变的：一是美国文学对于美国现实的注视、发掘、剖析、批判，以至抗议，这个强大的传统会继续下去；二是美国文学至今不衰的活力，会使美国短篇小说依然生气勃勃。无论在主题的选择和发掘上，或者在技巧的发扬和试验上，美国短篇小说作家会继续作出他们的努力和贡献。美国短篇小说的将来是美国人民的将来的一部分，而美国人民是大有希望的。

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# 《瑞普·凡·温克尔》

华盛顿·欧文

## （前 言）

欧文写了许多大部头书，然而有永恒的魅力的是这个小故事。不少人接触美国文学是从接触它开始的，而它也不负众望，一下就把读者吸引进了一个新鲜、神奇的新天地。

这魅力是民间传说的魅力。一个人在大山深处看一群神仙在游戏，禁不住偷喝了他们的仙酒，醉倒后一觉醒来，已经过了二十年——这类传说在许多国家都有，只不过细节有些不同，所表现的生活习惯有些不同。欧文在这里做的，是把这个传说搬到美洲新大陆，而把睡觉的时间放在进行独立战争的年代里，因此瑞普睡时还是英王的臣民，醒来却不知不觉地成了美利坚合众国的公民。

这样做是有见地的。本来，美洲大陆上的古传说应该是印第安人的传说，白人来此只是入侵者。生活在十九世纪初年的欧文，环视他周围的美国社会，发现他那新国家是活跃的，却又是浅薄的，特别是那工商业兴盛的纽约州，更是需要有一点文化传统，于是他向他所倾慕的欧洲借了一点东西——德国的古传说，加上英国航海家亨德里克·赫德森和他那《半月号》上水手的冒险事迹——来增加一点古老的神奇感，一点资本家和商人不重视不欢迎的浪漫气息。

这样做，也给了他讽刺美国政治人物的机会。他使读者看出这些新人物带来了一种尖刻和暴躁，过去那种优游自在的乡村生活消失了。然而作者所着重的是对照：拿这些人同善良纯朴的瑞普对照，拿他们所造成的新的社会风气同瑞普所代表的古老的牧

歌情调相对照。

而在瑞普身上，欧文创造了一个十分成功的人物。他不是概念的化身，而是有血有肉的。说他是二流子也冤枉了他，因为他为了帮助邻居又是什么活也肯干的。他倒是当今美国社会里一种典型人物的祖先——那种总是被别人推来推去而自己感到无可奈何的小人物典型。在这一点上他同二十世纪的华尔脱·密蒂（见本书第十九篇）是相通的。

只不过瑞普还处在一个比较纯朴的时代，他所在的环境还保留着新大陆自然景物的完整和纯净，作者还能用幽默、风趣的口气来讲他的遭遇，还能用他的彩笔来恣情渲染赫德森河和卡茨基尔山的景色，而这样一来他就使得瑞普更可亲，瑞普的故事也更新鲜。

## 作者简介

华盛顿·欧文（Washington Irving, 1783—1859），出身于纽约富商家庭，从小爱好文学，曾到英、法、德、意、西班牙等国游历并搜集民间故事和传说。他是第一个以文笔典雅引起英国文坛注意的美国作家，作品很多，最著名的有《见闻札记》（*The Sketch Book*, 1820），这是一本散文和民间故事集，《瑞普·凡·温克尔》（*Rip Van Winkle*）是其中的一则故事。

# Rip Van Winkle

Washington Irving

WHOEVER has made a voyage up the Hudson must remember the Kaatskill mountains. They are a dismembered branch of the great Appalachian family, and are seen away to the west of the river, swelling up to a noble height, and lording it over the surrounding country. Every change of season, every change of weather, indeed, every hour of the day, produces some change in the magical hues and shapes of these mountains, and they are regarded by all the good wives, far and near, as perfect barometers. When the weather is fair and settled, they are clothed in blue and purple, and print their bold outlines on the clear evening sky; but sometimes, when the rest of the landscape is cloudless, they will gather a hood of gray vapours about their summits, which, in the last rays of the setting sun, will glow and light up like a crown of glory.

At the foot of these fairy mountains, the voyager may have descried the light smoke curling up from a village, whose shingle-roofs gleam among the trees, just where the blue tints of the upland melt away into the fresh green of the nearer landscape. It is a little village, of great antiquity, having been founded by some of the Dutch colonists, in the early times of the province, just about the beginning of the government of the good Peter Stuyvesant (may he rest in peace!), and there were some of the houses of the original settlers standing within a few years, built of small yellow bricks brought from Holland, having latticed windows and gable fronts, surmounted with weathercocks.

In that same village and in one of these very houses (which, to tell the precise truth, was sadly time-worn and weather-beaten), there lived many years since, while the country was yet a province of Great Britain, a simple good-natured fellow, of the name of Rip Van Winkle. He was a descendant of the Van Winkles who figured so gallantly in the chivalrous days of Peter Stuyvesant, and accompanied him to the siege of Fort Christina. He inherited, however, but little of the martial

character of his ancestors. I have observed that he was a simple good-natured man; he was, moreover, a kind neighbour, and an obedient hen-pecked husband. Indeed, to the latter circumstance might be owing that meekness of spirit which gained him such universal popularity; for those men are most apt to be obsequious and conciliating abroad, who are under the discipline of shrews at home. Their tempers, doubtless, are rendered pliant and malleable in the fiery furnace of domestic tribulation, and a curtain lecture is worth all the sermons in the world for teaching the virtues of patience and long-suffering. A termagant wife may, therefore, in some respects, be considered a tolerable blessing; and if so, Rip Van Winkle was thrice blessed.

Certain it is that he was a great favourite among all the good wives of the village, who, as usual with the amiable sex, took his part in all family squabbles; and never failed, whenever they talked those matters over in their evening gossipings, to lay all the blame on Dame Van Winkle. The children of the village, too, would shout with joy whenever he approached. He assisted at their sports, made their playthings, taught them to fly kites and shoot marbles, and told them long stories of ghosts, witches, and Indians. Whenever he went dodging about the village, he was surrounded by a troop of them, hanging on his skirts, clambering on his back, and playing a thousand tricks on him with impunity; and not a dog would bark at him throughout the neighbourhood.

The great error in Rip's composition was an insuperable aversion to all kinds of profitable labour. It could not be from the want of assiduity or perseverance; for he would sit on a wet rock, with a rod as long and heavy as a Tartar's lance, and fish all day without a murmur, even though he should not be encouraged by a single nibble. He would carry a fowling-piece on his shoulder for hours together, trudging through woods and swamps, and up hill and down dale, to shoot a few squirrels or wild pigeons. He would never refuse to assist a neighbour even in the roughest toil, and was a foremost man at all country frolics for husking Indian corn, or building stone fences; the women of the village, too, used to employ him to run their errands, and to do such little odd jobs as their less obliging husbands would not do for

them. In a word, Rip was ready to attend to anybody's business but his own; but as to doing family duty, and keeping his farm in order, he found it impossible.

In fact, he declared it was of no use to work on his farm; it was the most pestilent little piece of ground in the whole country; everything about it went wrong, and would go wrong, in spite of him. His fences were continually falling to pieces; his cow would either go astray, or get among the cabbages; weeds were sure to grow quicker in his fields than anywhere else; the rain always made a point of setting in just as he had some out-door work to do; so that though his patrimonial estate had dwindled away under his management, acre by acre, until there was little more left than a mere patch of Indian corn and potatoes, yet it was the worst conditioned farm in the neighbourhood.

His children, too, were as ragged and wild as if they belonged to nobody. His son Rip, an urchin begotten in his own likeness, promised to inherit the habits, with the old clothes of his father. He was generally seen trooping like a colt at his mother's heels, equipped in a pair of his father's cast-off galligaskins, which he had much ado to hold up with one hand, as a fine lady does her train in bad weather.

Rip Van Winkle, however, was one of those happy mortals, of foolish, well-oiled dispositions, who take the world easy, eat white bread or brown, whichever can be got with least thought or trouble, and would rather starve on a penny than work for a pound. If left to himself, he would have whistled life away in perfect contentment; but his wife kept continually dinning in his ears about his idleness, his carelessness, and the ruin he was bringing on his family. Morning, noon, and night, her tongue was incessantly going, and everything he said or did was sure to produce a torrent of household eloquence. Rip had but one way of replying to all lectures of the kind, and that, by frequent use, had grown into a habit. He shrugged his shoulders, shook his head, cast up his eyes, but said nothing. This, however, always provoked a fresh volley from his wife; so that he was fain to draw off his forces, and take to the outside of the house — the only side which, in truth, belongs to a hen-pecked husband.

Rip's sole domestic adherent was his dog Wolf, who was as much



hen-pecked as his master; for Dame Van Winkle regarded them as companions in idleness, and even looked upon Wolf with an evil eye, as the cause of his master's going so often astray. True it is, in all points of spirit befitting an honourable dog, he was as courageous an animal as ever scoured the woods — but what courage can withstand the ever-during and all-besetting terrors of a woman's tongue? The moment Wolf entered the house, his crest fell, his tail drooped to the ground, or curled between his legs, he sneaked about with a gallows air, casting many a side-long glance at Dame Van Winkle, and at the least flourish of a broomstick or ladle, he would fly to the door with yelping precipitation.

Times grew worse and worse with Rip Van Winkle as years of matrimony rolled on; a tart temper never mellows with age, and a sharp tongue is the only edged tool that grows keener with constant use. For a long while he used to console himself, when driven from home, by frequenting a kind of perpetual club of the sages, philosophers, and other idle personages of the village; which held its sessions on a bench before a small inn, designated by a rubicund portrait of his Majesty George the Third. Here they used to sit in the shade through a long lazy summer's day, talking listlessly over village gossip, or telling endless sleepy stories about nothing. But it would have been worth any statesman's money to have heard the profound discussions that sometimes took place, when by chance an old newspaper fell into their hands from some passing traveller. How solemnly they would listen to the contents, as drawled out by Derrick Van Bummel, the schoolmaster, a dapper learned little man, who was not to be daunted by the most gigantic word in the dictionary; and how sagely they would deliberate upon public events some months after they had taken place.

The opinions of this junto were completely controlled by Nicholas Vedder, a patriarch of the village, and landlord of the inn, at the door of which he took his seat from morning till night, just moving sufficiently to avoid the sun and keep in the shade of a large tree; so that the neighbours could tell the hour by his movements as accurately as by a sundial. It is true he was rarely heard to speak, but smoked his pipe