

英语文学注释读物

Nathaniel Hawthorne

A Wonder-Book

奇异的故事



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英語文學注釋讀物

A Wonder-Book

(Selected Tales)

By Nathaniel Hawthorne

奇異的故事

霍桑 著

羣力 注釋

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内 容 提 要

本书的三篇故事选自霍桑的“奇异的故事”(A Wonder-Book), 原是用简明英语写出, 作为青少年读物的。霍桑是美国著名小说家, 以“红字”(The Scarlet Letter)一书为他的代表作。这里的三篇都是就希腊神话加以复述, 寓有深刻的教育意义, 久为世界各国人民传诵。

我们把原文中比较难解的单词、短词和复杂句子, 作了简单的注释, 提供给初学英语者作为课外或自修读物。

奇 异 的 故 事

霍 桑 著 群 力 注 释

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THE GORGON'S¹ HEAD

*Perseus*² was the son of *Danaë*,³ who was the daughter of a king. And when *Perseus* was a very little boy, some wicked people put his mother and himself into a chest, and *set them afloat upon the sea*.⁴ The wind blew freshly, and drove the chest away from the shore, and *the uneasy billows tossed it up and down*,⁵ while *Danaë* clasped her child closely to her bosom, and dreaded that some big wave would dash its *foamy crest*⁶ over them both. The chest *sailed on*,⁷ however, and *neither sank nor was upset*,⁸ until, when night was coming it floated so near an island that it *got entangled in*⁹ a fisherman's net, and was drawn out high and dry upon the sand. The island was called *Seriphus*,¹⁰ and it was reigned over by King *Polydectes*,¹¹ who *happened to*¹² be the fisherman's brother.

This fisherman, I am glad to tell you, was an exceedingly *humane*¹³ and upright man. He showed great kindness to *Danaë* and her little boy, and continued to *befriend*¹⁴ them, until *Perseus* had grown to be a hand-

1. Gorgon ['go:ɡən] 希腊神话中的女怪物，共有三姊妹 — *Atheus*, *Euryale* 和 *Medusa*，其中只有 *Medusa* (意即王后)是可以杀死的。2. ['pə:sju:s] 希腊神话中主神 *Zeus* 和 *Danaë* 的儿子。3. ['dænei:] 希腊神话中 *Acrisius* 王的女儿。有一个乱示对 *Acrisius* 预告说，他将为他的孙子所杀害，后来，*Danaë* 生了 *Perseus*，他就把她母子俩放在一只大箱子里，钉上盖子，投之于海，任她们浮海而去。4. 把她们投到海面上去漂浮。upon the sea: 在海面上。5. 汹涌澎湃的巨浪把这个箱子上下颠簸。6. 浪峰，浪头。7. 向前漂浮。8. 既不沉没，也没有倾覆。9. 给...缠住；被牵入。10. [si:'raifəs] 爱琴海中一个小岛名。11. [pɒli'dekti:z] 国王名。12. 碰巧。13. [hju:'mein] 仁慈的。14. [bi'frend] 帮助；照顾。

some youth, very strong and active, and *skillful in the use of arms*.¹ Long before this time, King Polydectes had seen the two strangers — the mother and her child — who had come to his dominions in a floating chest. As he was not good and kind, like his brother the fisherman, but extremely wicked, he resolved to send Perseus on a *dangerous enterprise*,² in which he would probably be killed, and then to do some great *mischiefs* to³ Danaë herself. So this bad-hearted king spent a *long while*⁴ in considering what was the most dangerous thing that a young man could possibly undertake to perform. At last, having *hit upon*⁵ an enterprise that promised to *turn out*⁶ as fatally as he desired, he *sent for*⁷ the youthful Perseus.

The young man came to the palace, and found the king *sitting upon his throne*.⁸

"Perseus," said King Polydectes, smiling *craftily*⁹ upon him, "you are grown up a fine young man. You and your good mother have received a great deal of kindness from myself, *as well as*¹⁰ from my worthy brother the fisherman, and I suppose you would not be sorry to repay some of it."

"*Please Your Majesty*,"¹¹ answered Perseus, "I would willingly *risk my life*¹² to do so."

"Well, then," continued the king, still with a cunning smile on his lips, "I have a little adventure to propose to you; and, as you are a brave and enterprising

1. 精于使用各种武器. 2. 危險的任务. 3. to do mischief to 伤害; 危害. 4. 長時間. 5. 忽然想到. 6. 变成; 产生...的結果. 7. 派人去請. 8. 坐在王位上; 升朝. 9. 狡猾地. 10. 除...外; 加之. 11. 陛下 (对君王表示恭敬的称呼). 12. 冒我生命的危險.

youth, you will doubtless *look upon* it as¹ a great piece of good luck² to have so rare an opportunity of *distinguishing*³ yourself. You must know, my good Perseus, I think of *getting married to*⁴ the beautiful Princess Hippodamia,⁵ and it is customary, on these occasions, to *make* the bride a *present*⁶ of some *far-fetched and elegant curiosity*.⁷ I have been a little perplexed, I must honestly confess, where to obtain anything likely to please a princess of her exquisite taste. But, this morning, I *flatter myself*,⁸ I have thought of precisely the *article*.⁹

“And can I assist Your Majesty in obtaining it?” cried Perseus, eagerly.

“You can, if you are as brave a youth as I believe you to be,” replied King Polydectes, with the utmost graciousness of manner. “The *bridal gift*¹⁰ which I have *set my heart on*¹¹ presenting to the beautiful Hippodamia is the head of the Gorgon *Medusa*¹² with the *snaky locks*;¹³ and I depend on you, my dear Perseus, to bring it to me. So, as I am anxious to *settle affairs with*¹⁴ the princess, the sooner you go in *quest of*¹⁵ the Gorgon, the better¹⁶ I shall be pleased.”

“I will *set out*¹⁷ to-morrow morning,” answered Perseus.

“*Pray do so*,¹⁸ my gallant youth,” rejoined the king. “And, Perseus, in cutting off the Gorgon’s head, be

1. look upon [on]... as 把...認為. 2. a piece of (good) luck 一件幸运的事. 3. 使...出名. 4. 与...結婚. 5. [hipodə'maia] 公主名. 6. make [give] a present 送礼物. 7. 希見珍品. far-fetched ['fa:'fetʃt]: 非自然生長的. 8. 我自以為. 9. 东西, 物件. 10. 新娘的礼物. 11. 渴望, 很想. 12. [mi'dju:zə] 三个 Gorgons 之一, 見第 1 頁註 1. 13. 毒蛇纏成的髮辮. 14. 与...商定事項, 意即与公主商定婚事. 15. 寻求. 16. the sooner... the better... 愈快... 愈好. 17. 动身. 18. =I beg you to do so.

careful to make a clean stroke,¹ so as not to injure its appearance. You must bring it home in the very best condition, in order to suit the exquisite taste of² the beautiful Princess Hippodamia."

Perseus left the palace, but was scarcely out of hearing before³ Polydectes burst into a laugh;⁴ being greatly amused, wicked king that he was, to find how readily⁵ the young man fell into the snare.⁶ The news quickly spread abroad that Perseus had undertaken to cut off the head of Medusa with the snaky locks. Everybody was rejoiced; for most of the inhabitants of the island were as wicked as the king himself, and would have liked nothing better than⁷ to see some enormous mischief happen to Danaë and her son. The only good man in this unfortunate island of Seriphus appears to have been the fisherman. As Perseus walked along, therefore, the people pointed after him, and made mouths,⁸ and winked to one another, and ridiculed him as loudly as they dared.

"Ho, ho!" cried they; "Medusa's snakes will sting him soundly!"⁹

Now, there were three Gorgons alive, at that period; and they were the most strange and terrible monsters that had ever been seen since the world was made, or that have been seen in after days, or that are likely to be seen in all time to come.¹⁰ I hardly know what sort of creature or hobgoblin¹¹ to call them. They were three

1. 要做得干淨利落. 一刀了事. 2. 以迎合...高雅的風趣. 3. scarcely... before... 剛...就... 4. 忽然大笑. 5. 毫不猶豫地; 自願地. 6. 墮入陷阱. 7. 再沒比. 8. 做嘴臉. 9. 狠狠地. 10. 在未來. 11. ['hobgoblin] 妖怪.

sisters, and seem to have borne some distant resemblance to women,¹ but were really a very frightful and mischievous species of dragon. It is, indeed, difficult to imagine what *hideous beings*² these three sisters were. Why, *instead of locks of hair*,³ if you can believe me, they had each of them a hundred enormous snakes growing on their heads, all alive, twisting, wriggling, curling, and thrusting out their venomous tongues, with *forked stings*⁴ at the end! The teeth of the Gorgons were terribly long tusks; their hands were made of brass; and *their bodies were all over scales*,⁵ which, if not iron, were something as hard and impenetrable. They had wings, too, and exceedingly splendid ones⁶ I can assure you; for every feather in them was pure, bright, glittering, burnished gold, and they looked very dazzling, no doubt, when the Gorgons were flying about in the sunshine.

But when people happened to *catch a glimpse of*⁷ their glittering brightness, aloft in the air, they seldom stopped to gaze, but ran and hid themselves as speedily as they could. You will think, perhaps, that they were afraid of being stung by the serpents that *served the Gorgons instead of hair*,⁸—or of having their heads bitten off by their ugly tusks,—or of *being torn all to pieces*⁹ by their brazen claws. Well, to be sure, these were some of the dangers, but by *no means*¹⁰ the greatest, nor the most difficult to avoid. For the worst thing about these abominable Gorgons was, that, if once a poor mortal¹¹ fixed his eyes full upon one of their faces, he was certain,

1. 有些象妇人. 2. 怪物. 3. 不是一縷一縷的头髮. 4. 叉狀的毒刺.
5. 遍体是鱗甲. 6. =wings. 7. 瞥見: 偶一看見. 8. 作为怪物头髮代替
物的. 9. 完全撕为碎片. 10. 決不是. 11. 人.

that very instant,¹ to be changed from warm flesh and blood into cold and lifeless stone!

Thus, as you will easily perceive, it was a very dangerous adventure *that*² the wicked King Polydectes had contrived for this innocent young man. Perseus himself, when he had thought over the matter, *could not help seeing*³ that he had very little chance of coming safely through it,⁴ and that he was far more likely to become a stone image than to bring back the head of Medusa with the snaky locks. For, *not to speak of other difficulties*,⁵ there was one which it would have puzzled an older man than Perseus to get over.⁶ Not only must he fight with and slay this golden-winged, iron-scaled, long-tusked, brazen-clawed, snaky-haired monster, but he must do it with his eyes shut, or, at least, *without so much as a glance at the enemy*⁷ with whom he was contending. Else, *while his arm was lifted to strike*,⁸ he would stiffen into stone, and stand with that uplifted arm for centuries, until time, and the wind and weather, *should crumble him quite away*.⁹ This would be a very sad thing to *befall*¹⁰ a young man who wanted to perform a great many brave deeds, and to enjoy a great deal of happiness, in this bright and beautiful world.

So disconsolate did these thoughts make him,¹¹ that Perseus could not bear to tell his mother what he had undertaken to do. He therefore took his shield, girded

1. 在一霎那間。 2. that 是关系代詞，一面代替上面的名詞 adventure，一面連接下句。 3. 不能不看出來。 4. 他能完成任务而又平安無事，这个机会是很少的。 5. 更不必談其他的困难了。 6. 克服。 7. 連对敌人看上一眼也不行。 8. 就在他举臂出击的当兒。 9. 使他粉碎。 10. 落在。 11. 本句語序倒裝，是加强語气的結構，把 so disconsolate 放在句首，是強調說明 Perseus 的神情沮喪。

on his sword, and crossed over from the island to the mainland, where he sat down in a solitary place; and *hardly refrained from shedding tears*.¹

But, while he was in this sorrowful mood, he heard a voice close beside him.

"Perseus," said the voice, "why are you sad?"

He lifted his head from his hands, in which he had hidden it, and, behold! *all alone as Perseus had supposed himself to be*,² there was a stranger in the solitary place. It was a brisk, intelligent, and remarkably *shrewd-looking*³ young man, with a cloak over his shoulders, an *odd sort*⁴ of cap on his head, a strangely twisted staff in his hand, and a short and very crooked sword hanging by his side. He was exceedingly light and active in his figure, like a person *much accustomed to gymnastic exercises*,⁵ and well able to leap or run. *Above all*,⁶ the stranger had such a cheerful, knowing, and helpful aspect (though it was certainly a little mischievous, *into the bargain*⁷), that Perseus *could not help feeling*⁸ his spirits grow livelier as he gazed at him. Besides, being really a courageous youth, he felt greatly ashamed that anybody should have found him *with tears in his eyes*,⁹ like a timid little schoolboy, when, *after all*,¹⁰ there might be *no occasion for*¹¹ despair. So Perseus wiped his eyes, and answered the stranger pretty briskly, *putting on as brave a look as he could*.¹²

"I am not so very sad," said he, "only thoughtful about an adventure that I have undertaken."

1. 竟至不免流下淚來。 2. Perseus 原以為只有他孤獨一人在那裡。 3. 貌似精明的。 4. 奇異樣式。 5. 很熟練于健身運動。 6. 最主要的。 7. =as well; in addition. 作“加之”、“而且”解，常用於句末。 8. 不能不；不禁。 9. 眼中含淚。 10. 畢竟。 11. 沒有...的理由。 12. 尽可能裝出極其勇敢的模樣。

“Oho!” answered the stranger. “Well, tell me all about it, and possibly I may be of service to¹ you. I have helped a good many young men through adventures that looked difficult enough beforehand. Perhaps you may have heard of me. I have more names than one; but the name of *Quicksilver*² suits me as well as any other. Tell me what your trouble is, and we will talk the matter over,³ and see what can be done.”

The stranger's words and manner put Perseus into quite a different mood from his former one.⁴ He resolved to tell Quicksilver all his difficulties, since he could not easily be worse off than he already was,⁵ and, very possibly, his new friend might give him some advice that would turn out well in the end.⁶ So he let the stranger know, in few words,⁷ precisely what the case was, — how that King Polydectes wanted the head of Medusa with the snaky locks as a bridal gift for the beautiful Princess Hippodamia, and how that he had undertaken to get it for him, but was afraid of being turned into stone.

“And that would be a great pity,”⁸ said Quicksilver, with his mischievous smile. “You would make⁹ a very handsome marble statue, it is true,¹⁰ and it would be a considerable number of centuries before you crumbled away; but, on the whole,¹¹ one would rather be a young man for a few years, than¹² a stone image for a great many.”

1. 对...有帮助. 2. ['kwiksɪlvə] 水銀 (人名). 3. talk over 討論; 商談. 4. 与适才的情緒完全不同. 5. 因为他現在所处的境况已經够坏了, 不会(因而)更坏的. 6. 最后証明是金玉良言. 7. 三言兩語. 8. 不幸的事情. 9. =become. 10. 这是确定的. 11. 总的說来. 12. would rather...than... 宁願...而不願.

"Oh, *far rather!*"¹ exclaimed Perseus, with the tears again standing in his eyes. "And, besides, *what would my dear mother do, if her beloved son were turned into a stone?*"²

"Well, well, let us hope that the affair *will not turn out so very badly,*"³ replied Quicksilver, in an encouraging tone. "*I am the very person to help you, if anybody can.*"⁴ My sister and myself will *do our utmost*⁵ to bring you safe through the adventure, *ugly as it now looks.*"⁶

"Your sister?" repeated Perseus.

"Yes, my sister," said the stranger. "She is very wise, I promise you; and as for myself, I generally *have all my wits about me,*"⁷ such as they are. If you show yourself bold and cautious, and follow our advice, *you need not fear being a stone image yet awhile.*"⁸ But, first of all, you must polish your shield, till you can see your face in it as distinctly as in a mirror."

This seemed to Perseus rather an odd beginning of the adventure; for he thought it of far more consequence that the shield should be strong enough to defend him from the Gorgon's brazen claws, than that it should be bright enough to show him the *reflection*⁹ of his face. However, concluding that Quicksilver knew better than himself, he *immediately set to work,*¹⁰ and scrubbed the shield with so much diligence and good-will, that it very quickly shone like the *moon at harvest-time.*¹¹ Quicksilver looked

1. 太願意了! 2. 我那親愛的媽媽, 如果她的心愛的孩子真的變成了石像, 她又該怎麼樣(悲傷)呢? 3. 最後結局不致這樣壞。 4. 如果有人能夠幫助你, 那麼我就是這樣一個人。 5. 盡力。 6. 儘管這件事情, 現在看來前途很慘淡。 7. 我的感覺敏銳, 行動迅速。 8. 你現在也不必為變成石象這件事擔心。 9. 映影。 10. 立即認真地著手起來了。 set to 積極從事; 認真開始。 11. =harvest moon 中秋夜的明月。

at it with a smile, and *nodded his approbation*.¹ Then, taking off his own short and crooked sword, he *girded it about Perseus*,² instead of the one which he had before worn.

“No sword *but*³ mine will answer your purpose,”⁴ observed he; “the blade has a most excellent temper,⁵ and will cut through iron and brass as easily as through the slenderest twig.⁶ And now we will set out. The next thing is to find the Three Gray Women, who will tell us where to find the *Nymphs*.”⁷

“The Three Gray Women!” cried Perseus, to whom this seemed only a new difficulty in the path of his adventure; “pray who may the Three Gray Women be? I never heard of them before.”

“They are three very strange old ladies,” said Quick-silver, laughing. “*They have but one eye among them, and only one tooth*.”⁸ Moreover, you must find them out by starlight, or *in the dusk of the evening*,⁹ for they never show themselves by the light either of the sun or moon.”

“But,” said Perseus, “why should I waste my time with these Three Gray Women? Would it not be better to set out at once *in search of*¹⁰ the terrible Gorgons?”

“No, no,” answered his friend. “There are other things to be done, before you can find your way to the Gorgons. There is *nothing* for it *but to hunt up*¹¹ these old ladies; and when we meet with them, you may be sure that

1. 点头表示贊許。 2. 佩劍在 Perseus 身上。 3. no...but...只有。 4. 合用；符合你的需要。 5. 功力極深。 temper 在表述鋼鐵性能時，作“韌度”、“硬度”、“鋒利”解。 6. 斬切鋼鐵，好似摧枯拉朽一般（直譯：割斷鋼鐵，好比割斷最細嫩的樹枝一樣容易）。 7. [nimfs] 希臘神話中，住在河流、森林、山丘等處的女神。 8. 她們总共只有一只眼睛，一个牙齒。 but=only。 9. 在黃昏時候。 10. 尋找。 11. nothing but to hunt up 只有去尋找。 hunt up 作“尋找（隱藏或難能找到的人物）”解。

the Gorgons are *not a great way off*.¹ Come, let us be stirring!"

Perseus, by this time, felt so much confidence in his companion's sagacity, that he *made no more objections*,² and professed himself ready to begin the adventure immediately. They accordingly set out, and walked at a pretty brisk pace; so brisk, indeed, that Perseus found it rather difficult *to keep up with*³ his nimble friend Quicksilver. To say the truth, he had a singular idea that Quicksilver was furnished with *a pair of winged shoes*,⁴ which, of course, helped him along marvelously. And then, too, when Perseus *looked sideways at him, out of the corner of his eye*,⁵ he seemed to see wings on the side of his head; although, if he *turned a full gaze*,⁶ there were no such things to be perceived, but only an odd kind of cap. But, at all events, the twisted staff was evidently a great convenience to Quicksilver, and enabled him to proceed so fast, that Perseus, though a remarkably active young man, began to be *out of breath*.⁷

"Here!" cried Quicksilver, at last, — for he knew well enough, rogue that he was, how hard Perseus found it to keep pace with him, — "take you the staff, for you need it a great deal more than I. Are there no better walkers than yourself in the ~~island of Serpents~~?"

"I could walk pretty well," said Perseus, glancing slyly at his companion's feet. "I ~~have~~ only a pair of winged shoes."

1. 相离不远. 2. 不再反对. 3. 并肩而行, 赶上. 4. 一双有翅膀的鞋.
5. 侧目斜视. 6. 正视. 7. 喘不过气来.

“We must *see about*¹ getting you a pair,” answered Quicksilver.

But the staff helped Perseus along so bravely, that he no longer felt the slightest weariness. *In fact*,² the stick seemed to be alive in his hand, and to lend some of its life to Perseus. He and Quicksilver now walked onward *at their ease*,³ talking very sociably together; and Quicksilver told so many pleasant stories about his former adventures, and how well his wits had served him on various occasions, that Perseus began to think him a very wonderful person. He evidently *knew the world*,⁴ and nobody is so charming to a young man as a friend who has that kind of knowledge. Perseus listened the more eagerly, *in the hope of*⁵ *brightening his own wits*⁶ by what he heard.

At last, he happened to recollect that Quicksilver had spoken of a sister, who was to lend her assistance in the adventure which they were now *bound upon*.⁷

“Where is she?” he inquired. “Shall we not meet her soon?”

“*All at the proper time*,⁸” said his companion. “But this sister of mine, you must understand, is quite a different sort of *character*⁹ from myself. She is very grave and prudent, seldom smiles, never laughs, and *makes it a rule*¹⁰ *not to utter a word*¹¹ unless she has something particularly *profound*¹² to say. Neither will she listen to any but the wisest conversation.”

1. 注意; 留心; 設法. 2. 事实上. 3. 从容不迫. 4. 熟諳世情. 5. 希望.
6. 增加他的智慧. 7. 担任; 約束. 8. 到了(适当)时候. 一切就会知道.
9. 角色; 人物. 10. 以此作为規則; 習以为常. 11. 不作一声. 12. 重要.

“*Dear me!*”¹ ejaculated Perseus; “I shall be afraid to say a syllable.”

“She is a very accomplished person, I assure you,” continued Quicksilver, “and *has* all the arts and sciences *at her fingers’ ends*.² In short, she is so immoderately wise, that many people call her *wisdom personified*.³ But, to tell you the truth, she has hardly vivacity enough *for my taste*;⁴ and I think you would scarcely find her so pleasant a traveling companion as myself. She has her *good points*,⁵ nevertheless; and you will *find the benefit of them*,⁶ in your encounter with the Gorgons.”

By this time it had grown quite dusk. They were now come to a very wild and desert place, *overgrown with shaggy bushes*,⁷ and so silent and solitary that nobody seemed ever to have dwelt or *journeyed*⁸ there. All was waste and desolate, in the gray twilight, which grew every moment more obscure. Perseus looked about him, rather disconsolately, and asked Quicksilver whether they had a great deal further to go.

“*Hist!*”⁹ *hist!*” whispered his companion. “*Make no noise!*”¹⁰ *This is just the time and place*¹¹ to meet the Three Gray Women. Be careful that they do not see you before you see them; for, though they have but a single eye among the three, it is as *sharp-sighted*¹² as half a dozen common eyes.”

“But what must I do,” asked Perseus “when we meet them?”

1. 哎呀。 2. has...at her fingers' ends 精通。 3. 智慧的化身。 4. 符合我的意思; 使我爱好的。 5. 优点; 长处。 6. 发觉这些优点有用。 7. 长满荆棘。 8. 走过。 9. 嘘! [莫作声]。 10. 不要作声。 11. 就在此时此地。 12. 目光锐利。