

“七彩”英汉对照读物系列

短篇幽默小说 精选

◎ 主编 郑红



Selected Humorous
Short Stories



安徽科学技术出版社

“七彩”英汉对照读物系列

短篇幽默小说精选

主编 郑 红

译者 (按姓氏笔画排序)

王全杰 王晓燕 朱胜超 范文

陈 艳 郑 红 郑 燕 杨家勤

黄 昀 管建民

安徽科学技术出版社

图书在版编目(CIP)数据

短篇幽默小说精选/郑红主编. —合肥:安徽科学技术出版社, 2003. 9

(“七彩”英汉对照读物系列)

ISBN 7-5337-2357-0

I. 短… II. 郑… III. 英语-对照读物, 小说-英、汉 IV. H319.4: I

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(2003)第 001975 号

*

安徽科学技术出版社出版

(合肥市跃进路 1 号新闻出版大厦)

邮政编码: 230063

电话号码: (0551) 2825419

新华书店经销 合肥晓星印刷厂印刷

*

开本: 889×1194 1/32 印张: 8.625 字数: 214 千

2003 年 9 月第 1 版 2003 年 9 月第 1 次印刷

印数: 5 000

定价: 12.00 元

(本书如有倒装、缺页等问题, 请向本社发行科调换)

前 言

没有幽默的日子，如同缺少阳光照射的植物，显得苍白黯淡。本书所收录的二十余篇英语幽默短篇小说，既有读者熟悉的大师之作，也有国内读者不太了解的优秀作品，每篇都有其独到之处：有的让人轻松一笑，有的让人在忍俊之余留下些许思考。

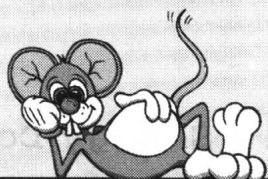
本书以英汉对照的形式编写。译者在翻译的过程中力求做到信、达、雅，让读者在体会英语语言文学的魅力、提高英语阅读能力的同时，能够充分欣赏书中无处不在的幽默。本书适合中学和中学以上英语水平的读者阅读。

编 者

目 录

Tom Edison's Shaggy Dog 汤姆·爱迪生的倒霉狗	2
My Financial Career 我的金融生涯	16
A, B and C—The Human Element in Mathematics A、B、C——数学中的人	24
The Robe of Peace 完美的长袍	34
Number Fifty-six 56 号	42
Mr. Perkins of Portland 波特兰的帕金斯先生	54
The Man Who Married Himself 和自己结婚的男人	68
The Awful Fate of Melpomenus Jones 琼斯的悲惨命运	76
How I Edited an Agricultural Newspaper Once 我是怎样编辑农业报纸的	82
Presidential Election 竞选会长	94
How to Borrow Money 如何借钱	114

The Reading Public	
读者群	126
A Psychological Crusade	
心理历险	142
Hate	
仇恨	150
Proof of the Pudding	
布丁的滋味	154
Curing a Cold	
治感冒的良方	174
The Man Who Talked Too Much	
健谈的人	184
Funny Thing That Happened to George's Father	
乔治父亲的可笑经历	194
How George, Once upon a Time, Got Up Early in the Morning	
乔治偶然早起的恶果	198
My Watch—An Instructive Little Tale	
我的手表——一个有启发意义的小故事	204
Clocks	
钟	210
There's a Man in the Habit of Hitting Me on the Head with an Umbrella	
爱用伞敲我脑袋的家伙	230
The Story of the Great Weep	
“痛哭运动”	236
Valuable Experience	
宝贵的经验	242
Babes in the Jungle	
天真的傻瓜	246
Low Flying Sparrows	
低飞的麻雀	258



Selected Humorous Short Stories



Tom Edison's Shaggy Dog

Two old men sat on a park bench one morning in the sunshine of Tampa, Florida—one trying doggedly to read a book he was plainly enjoying while the other, Harold K. Bullard, told him the story of his life in the full, round, head tones of a public address system. At their feet lay Bullard's Labrador retriever, who further tormented the aged listener by probing his ankles with a large, wet nose.

Bullard, who had been, before he retired, successful in many fields, enjoyed reviewing his important past. But he faced the problem that complicates the lives of cannibals—namely: that a single victim cannot be used over and over. Anyone who had passed the time of a day with him and his dog refused to share a bench with them again.

So Bullard and his dog set out through the park each day in quest of new faces. They had had good luck this morning, for they had found this stranger right away, clearly a new arrival in Florida, still buttoned up tight in heavy serge, stiff collar and necktie, and with nothing better to do than read.

"Yes," said Bullard, rounding out the first hour of his lecture, "made and lost fortunes in my time."

"So you said," said the stranger, whose name Bullard had neglected to ask. "Easy, boy. No, no, no, boy," he said to the dog, who was growing more aggressive toward his ankles.

"Oh? Already told you that, did I?" said Bullard.

"Twice."

汤姆·爱迪生的倒霉狗

一个阳光明媚的早晨，在佛罗里达州坦帕市，有两个老头坐在公园的凳子上。其中的一个正试图专心致志地看书；而另一个，哈罗德·K. 布拉德却在用他那饱满、圆润、公用地址查询台似的声音叙述他的生平。他们的脚边趴着布拉德的拉布拉多猎狗，它也在用它那潮乎乎的大鼻头磨蹭着这位年迈听众的脚踝，折磨着他。

布拉德退休前曾在很多领域辉煌过，他乐不知疲地回顾着他的光荣史。但是眼下他面临着一个食人生番们也为之困惑的问题，即：同一个受害者不能被反复使用。任何人只要和他以及他的狗呆过一天的话，就再也不会和他共享一条板凳了。

因此，布拉德和他的狗每天在公园里穿梭，寻找新的面孔。今天早晨他运气不错，很快就发现了这个陌生人；他显然才到佛罗里达没多久，穿着扣得紧紧的厚重的哗叽呢，衣领和领带笔挺，除了阅读以外无事可做。

“所以，”他演讲的第一个小时即将结束时，布拉德总结说，“我的一生发达过，也败落过。”

“这话你说过了，”陌生人说——布拉德忘了问他的名字。“放松，小家伙。别，别，别，小家伙，”他对那只狗说道，因为它此刻正对他的脚踝发起更猛烈的攻势。

“哦？我已经说过了，是吗？”布拉德问。

“说过两次了。”

“Two in real estate, one in scrap iron, and one in oil and one in trucking.”

“So you said.”

“I did? Yes, I guess I did. Two in real estate, one in scrap iron, one in oil, and one in trucking. Wouldn’t take back a day of it.”

“No, I suppose not,” said the stranger. “Pardon me, but do you suppose you could move your dog somewhere else? He keeps—”

“Him?” said Bullard, heartily. “Friendliest dog in the world. Don’t need to be afraid of him.”

“I’m not afraid of him. It’s just that he drives me crazy, sniffing at my ankles.”

“Plastic,” said Bullard, chuckling.

“What?”

“Plastic. Must be something plastic on your garters. By golly, I’ll bet it’s those little buttons. Sure as we’re sitting here, those buttons must be plastic. That dog is nuts about plastic. Don’t know why that is, but he’ll sniff it out and find it if there’s a speck around. Must be deficiency in his diet, though, by gosh, he eats better than I do. Once he chewed up a whole plastic humidor. Can you beat it? That’s the business I’d go into now, by glory, if the pill rollers hadn’t told me to let up, to give the old ticker a rest.”

“You could tie the dog to that tree over there,” said the stranger.

“I get so darn’ sore at all the youngsters these days!” said Bullard. “All of ‘em mooning around about no frontiers any more. There never have been so many frontiers as there are today. You know what Horace Greeley would say today?”

“His nose is wet,” said the stranger, and he pulled his ankles away, but the dog humped forward in patient pursuit. “Stop it, boy!”

“His wet nose shows he’s healthy,” said Bullard. “‘Go plastic, young man!’ That’s what Greeley’d say. ‘Go atom, young man!’”

“两次搞房地产，一次搞废铁，一次搞石油，一次搞运输。”

“这个也说过了。”

“也说过了？是的，我想是的。两次搞房地产，一次搞废铁，一次搞石油，一次搞运输。我一天也没有后悔过。”

“是的，我想是的，”陌生人说，“对不起，您可以让您的狗挪个地方吗？它一直——”

“它？”布拉德热忱地说，“它可是世界上最友善的狗。不必害怕它。”

“我不怕它。只是它快逼得我发疯了，老是对着我的脚踝闻了又闻。”

“塑料，”布拉德咯咯地笑着说。

“什么？”

“塑料。你的袜带上一定有塑料。哎呀，我敢肯定是那些小纽扣。就像我肯定我们坐在这儿一样，我肯定那些小纽扣是塑料的。不知为什么，那只狗对塑料特别敏感，只要周围有塑料的蛛丝马迹，它就一定会闻到并把它找出来。它的食物里一定缺乏什么，但是，它吃得比我还好。有一次，它吞掉了一整只塑料雪茄烟盒，你能比得上它吗？上帝呀，要不是医生不让我干了，要让我的心脏休息休息，我现在可能正从事塑料业呢。”

“你可以把狗拴在那边的树上，”陌生人说。

“我对如今的年轻人真感到痛心！”布拉德说。“他们只知道到处闲逛，不求上进，还说没有用武之地。实际上，他们比所有的前辈都有更多的天地可以大展宏图。你知道如果赫拉斯·格瑞利还活着，他会怎么说？”

“它的鼻子是湿的，”陌生人说，并且把脚踝挪开了，但是这只狗铁了心，弓着背继续往前拱。“停下，小家伙！”

“它的鼻子湿说明它健康，”布拉德说，“‘搞塑料去，年轻人！’那就是格瑞利会说的话。‘搞原子去，年轻人！’”

The dog had definitely located the plastic buttons on the stranger's garters and was cocking his head one way and another, thinking out ways of bringing his teeth to bear on those delicacies.

"Scat!" said the stranger.

"Go electronic, young man!" said Bullard. "Don't talk to me about no opportunity any more. Opportunity's knocking down every door in the country, trying to get in. When I was young, a man had to go out and find opportunity and drag it home by the ears. Nowadays—"

"Sorry," said the stranger, evenly. He slammed his book shut, stood and jerked his ankle away from the dog. "I've got to be on my way. So good day, sir."

He stalked across the park, found another bench, sat down with a sigh and began to read. His respiration had just returned to normal, when he felt the wet sponge of the dog's nose on his ankles again.

"Oh—it's you!" said Bullard, sitting down beside him. "He was tracking you. He was on the scent of something, and I just let him have his head. What'd I tell you about plastic?" He looked about contentedly. "Don't blame you for moving on. It was stuffy back there. No shade to speak of and not a sign of a breeze."

"Would the dog go away if I bought him a humidior?" said the stranger.

"Pretty good joke, pretty good joke," said Bullard, amiable. Suddenly he clapped the stranger on his knee. "Say, you aren't in plastics, are you? Here I've been blowing off about plastics, and for all I know that's your line."

"My line?" said the stranger crisply, laying down his book. "Sorry—I've never had a line. I've been a drifter since the age of nine, since Edison set up his laboratory next to my home, and showed me the intelligence analyser."

"Edison?" said Bullard. "Thomas Edison, the inventor?"

"If you want to call him that, go ahead," said the stranger.

"If I *want* to call him that?"—Bullard guffawed—"I guess I just will! Father of the light bulb and I don't know what all."

"If you want to think he invented the light bulb, go ahead. No harm in it." The stranger resumed his reading.

这只狗显然已经锁定了陌生人袜带上塑料纽扣的位置，它晃着脑袋，想着如何对那些美味下口。

“走开！”陌生人说。

“搞原子去，年轻人！”布拉德说，“别再跟我说什么没有机会。机会正挨家挨户地敲门，想要进屋呢。我年轻的时候，不得不外出寻找机会，揪着它的耳朵将它带回家。可如今——”

“抱歉，”陌生人平和地说道。他把书嘭地合上，站起身来，将脚从狗嘴边拽回。“我得走了。再见，先生。”

他大步穿越公园，找了另一张椅子，叹口气后坐下并开始阅读。他刚恢复平静，就感觉到那海绵一样的狗鼻子又凑到了他的脚踝边。

“噢——是你！”布拉德说着坐在了旁边，“它跟着你呢。它闻到了什么气味，我就让它一路找来了。我刚才跟你谈论塑料来着？”他满足地环顾四周，“难怪你移到这儿来了。那儿太闷热了。不要说阴凉了，一丝风都没有。”

“要是我给这狗买一只雪茄烟盒它会不会走开？”陌生人问。

“真会说笑，真会说笑！”布拉德亲切地说道。他突然拍了一下陌生人的膝盖：“我说，你会不会是搞塑料这一行的？尽管我知道你是干这一行的，我还是在这儿吹了一通关于塑料的事。”

“我干这行？”陌生人放下书本，干脆地说，“抱歉——我从未干过任何行业。我从九岁起，自从爱迪生在我家隔壁建了实验室并给我看了他的智力分析仪后，我就一直流浪。”

“爱迪生？”布拉德问，“托马斯·爱迪生，那个发明家？”

“如果你想那么称呼他的话，请便，”陌生人说。

“如果我想那么称呼他？”——布拉德哈哈大笑——“我恐怕的确想！电灯泡之父，还有别的那些我不知道的头衔。”

“如果你愿意认为他发明了电灯泡，随便，反正也没有什么害处。”陌生人继续看他的书。

"Say, what is this?" said Bullard, suspiciously. "You pulling my leg? What's this about an intelligence analyzer? I never heard of that."

"Of course you haven't," said the stranger. "Mr Edison and I promised to keep it a secret. I've never told anyone. Mr Edison broke his promise and told Henry Ford, but Ford made him promise not to tell anybody else—for the good of humanity."

Bullard was entranced. "Uh, this intelligence analyzer," he said, "it analyzed intelligence, did it?"

"It was an electric butter churn," said the stranger.

"Seriously now," Bullard coaxed.

"Maybe it *would* be better to talk it over with someone," said the stranger. "It's a terrible thing to keep bottled up inside me, year in and year out. But how can I be sure that it won't go any further?"

"My word as a gentleman," Bullard assured him.

"I don't suppose I could find a stronger guarantee than that, could I?" said the stranger, judiciously.

"There is no stronger guarantee," said Bullard, proudly. "Cross my heart and hope to die!"

"Very well." The stranger leaned back and closed his eyes, seeming to travel backwards through time. He was silent for a full minute, during which Bullard watched with respect.

"It was back in the fall of eighteen seventy-nine," said the stranger at last, softly. "Back in the village of Menlo Park, New Jersey. I was a boy of nine. A young man we all thought was a wizard had set up a laboratory next door to my home, and there were flashes and crashes inside, and all sorts of scary goings-on. The neighborhood children were warned to keep away, not to make any noise that would bother the wizard.

"I didn't get to know Edison right off, but his dog Sparky and I got to be steady pals. A dog a whole lot like yours, Sparky was, and we used to wrestle all over the neighborhood. Yes, sir, your dog is the image of Sparky."

“嘿，这是什么意思？”布拉德疑惑地说，“你是在要我吗？那个智力分析仪是什么玩意儿？我从未听说过那个。”

“你当然没听过，”陌生人答道，“爱迪生先生和我约定了要保密的。我从未告诉过任何人。爱迪生先生不守诺言，将秘密泄露给亨利·福特，但福特先生却要他答应别再泄密给其他人——为了人类的利益。”

布拉德听入了迷。“唔，这个智力分析仪，”他问，“是分析智力的，对吗？”

“它是一个电动黄油搅拌器，”陌生人答。

“正经点，”布拉德想引他进入正题。

“也许和人说说这事会更好些，”陌生人说，“对我来说，一年到头严守这个秘密是件可怕的事。但我怎么才能确定这个秘密不会让更多的人知道呢？”

“我以一个君子的名义向你保证。”布拉德向他保证。

“我想我找不出比这更强有力的保证了，不是吗？”陌生人审慎地说。

“再也没有比这更好的保证了，”布拉德自豪地说，“我在胸口画十字向你保证：如有虚言，不得好死！”

“很好。”陌生人身子向后一倾，闭上眼睛，似乎在穿梭时光、回到过去。他沉默了整整一分钟；布拉德在一旁尊敬地观看着他。

“那是 1879 年的秋天，”陌生人终于开口了，声音柔和地说道，“在新泽西州门罗帕区的村庄里。我那时才九岁。有一个年轻人，我们都认为他是个巫师，他在我家隔壁建立了一个实验室，里面有时闪光有时爆炸，都是些吓人的事情。当地的小孩都被警告不准靠近那里，别发声音吵了那个巫师。”

“我并不是马上就认识爱迪生的，但他的那只叫做斯帕基的狗和我倒混熟了。那只狗和你的这只一模一样，我们常常在家门口到处玩耍。是的，先生，你的狗和斯帕基简直是一个模子里刻出来的。”

“Is that so?” said Bullard, flattered.

“Gospel,” replied the stranger. “Well, one day Sparky and I were wrestling around, and we wrestled right up to the door of Edison’s laboratory. The next thing I knew, Sparky had pushed me in through the door, and bam! I was sitting on the laboratory floor, looking up at Mr Edison himself.”

“Bet he was sore,” said Bullard, delighted.

“You can bet I was scared,” said the stranger. “I thought I was face to face with Satan himself. Edison had wires hooked to his ears and running down to a little black box in his lap! I started to scoot, but he caught me by the collar and made me sit down.

“‘Boy,’ said Edison, ‘it’s always darkest before the dawn. I want you to remember that.’

“Yes, sir,” I said.

“‘For over a year, my boy,’ Edison said to me, ‘I’ve been trying to find a filament that will last in an incandescent lamp. Hair, string, splinters—nothing works. So while I was trying to think of something else to try, I started tinkering about with another idea of mine, just letting off steam. I put this together,’ he said, showing me the little black box. ‘I thought maybe intelligence was just a certain kind of electricity, so I made this intelligence analyzer here. It works! You’re the first one to know about it, my boy. But I don’t know why you shouldn’t be. It will be your generation that will grow up in the glorious new era when people will be as easily graded as oranges.’”

“I don’t believe it!” said Bullard.

“May I be struck by lightning this very instant!” said the stranger. “And it did work, too. Edison had tried out the analyzer on the men in his shop, without telling them what he was up to. The smarter a man was, by gosh, the farther the needle on the indicator in the little black box swung to the right. I let him try it on me, and the needle just lay where it was and trembled. But dumb as I was, then is when I made my one and only contribution to the world. As I say, I haven’t lifted a finger since.”

“Whatdja do?” said Bullard, eagerly.

“I said, ‘Mr Edison, sir, let’s try it on the dog.’ And I wish you could have seen the show that dog put on when I said it! Old Sparky barked and howled and scratched to get out. When he saw

“真的吗？”布拉德有点飘飘然。

“千真万确，”陌生人答道，“一天，我和斯帕基正在打闹，正巧闹到爱迪生的实验室门口。我记得斯帕基将我推进门，嘭！我一屁股坐在实验室的地板上，抬头看到了爱迪生本人。”

“他一定万分恼火，”布拉德幸灾乐祸。

“你能想到，我当时怕极了，”陌生人说。“我当时想，我是在和撒旦面对面呢！爱迪生的耳朵上挂着电线，一直拖到他膝盖上的小黑匣子上！我拔腿想跑，但他一把揪住我的领子，把我摁坐下。

“‘孩子，’爱迪生说，‘黎明前的时光是最黑暗的，我要你记住。’

“‘是的，先生，’我说。

“‘一年多以来，我的孩子，’爱迪生对我说道，‘我一直在寻找一种能让白炽灯持续发光的灯丝。头发，细绳，碎片——都不管用。所以我一直在想着试一试别的什么东西，于是我开始琢磨另一个发明，来发泄一下焦躁的情绪。我把这些放在一起，’他说着，把那个小黑盒给我看。‘我想也许智力是某种电流，所以我做了这个智力分析仪。它居然起作用了！你是第一个知道这事的人，孩子。但我也没觉得有什么不妥。你们将是新纪元里成长的一代；在这个新纪元里，人可以像橘子那样轻易地被划分等级。’”

“我不信！”布拉德说。

“若有半句谎言，天打雷劈！”陌生人赌咒，“它也确实管用。爱迪生在他的实验室里的人身上试验了测智仪，没告诉他们接下来会怎样。老天，一个人越聪明，小黑匣子上的指针就越向右偏。我让他在我身上也试一下，指针就是原地不动，颤抖着。尽管我愚笨，但接下来我还是做了我对这个世界的惟一贡献。就像我说的，我从此后再没干过任何事，手指头都没抬一下。”

“你做了什么？”布拉德急切地问。

“我说，‘爱迪生先生，我们在狗身上也试一下吧。’我真希望你能亲眼看一下我说完这话后那条狗的表现！老斯帕基又叫、又嚎、