



# 美国科幻 名篇赏析

吴定柏 编注

Selections from The Road to Science Fiction

Edited by James Gunn

(下册)



上海外语教育出版社

Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press

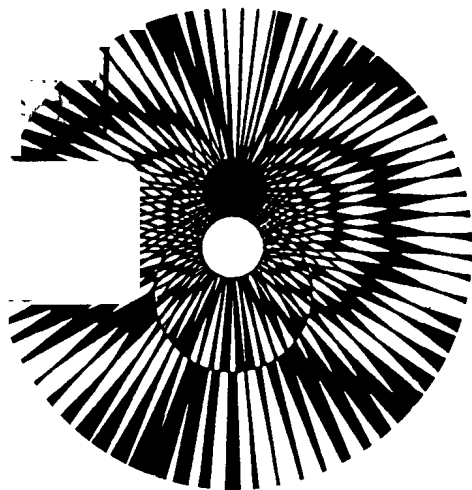


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## PREFACE

I am pleased to see these selected stories from the four volumes of *The Road to Science Fiction* made available to Chinese readers interested in the literature of science fiction and in improving their reading of English. And I am even more pleased to see it edited by Wu Dingbo, a friend who was one of my former students in the Intensive English Institute on the Teaching of Science Fiction and, through great effort and sacrifice, earned a doctorate in English from a U.S. university.

Science fiction has become one of the major categories of fiction in the United States with nearly 2000 different titles published each year, but even twenty years ago it was valued as a subject in secondary schools, as well as colleges and universities. That was because it appealed to both good readers and slow readers—the good readers because it was a literature of ideas that involved them in speculation about the changing world, as well as in the physical sciences and technology and the social and psychological sciences; and the slow readers because it told a good story that kept them reading to find out what would happen next. That was what got me reading science fiction when I was young, and it still works for most of us: good stories built around stimulating ideas.

I put together the four volumes of *The Road to Science Fiction* at the invitation of Barry Lippman, an editor at Mentor Books who had come across my *Alternate Worlds: An Illustrated History of Science Fiction* and asked me if I would like to do a book for Mentor. We finally settled on a

historical anthology of science fiction, because that is what I needed for my science-fiction class. I had tried teaching a mixture of stories and novels before I decided that short stories were the ideal form of science fiction and I could teach much more by using a lot of short stories than by using a few novels. Moreover, I felt that in order to read contemporary science fiction with understanding and appreciation, readers ought to know what science fiction was and how it had got to be what it was. That is, I wanted to teach science fiction as a category (sometimes called a genre) in which books and stories were in dialogue with each other, not as great books (or great stories). But there was no good historical anthology to show science fiction's development.

Mentor Books gave me a contract to produce *The Road to Science Fiction: From Gilgamesh to Wells* (represented in Book One of this collection by "Rappaccini's Daughter" and "Mellonta Tauta"). When it was well received, I persuaded Mentor to allow me to produce *The Road to Science Fiction #2: From Wells to Heinlein* (represented in Book One by "A Martian Odyssey," "Twilight," "Nightfall," and "Requiem") and *The Road to Science Fiction #3: From Heinlein to Here* (represented in Book One by "That Only a Mother," "The Cold Equations," and "The Jigsaw Man," and in Book Two by "Reason," "The Million-Year Picnic," "Pilgrimage to Earth," "Masks," "Harrison Bergeron," "The streets of Ashkelon," "When It Changed," and "The Engine at Heartspring's Center"). Before the third volume was completed, I saw that there were many stories and authors I couldn't include, and I wanted to add a volume, but Mentor made me wait for another three years (to see how the earlier volumes were selling) before they published *The Road to Science Fiction #4: From Here to Forever* (represented in Book Two by "The Planners").

Eventually these four volumes went out of print and Mentor released the rights. Recently another publisher, White Wolf, has begun a process of

reprinting the books in updated and expanded form and is also publishing two additional volumes: *The Road to Science Fiction* # 5: *The British Way* and *The Road to Science Fiction* # 6: *Around the World*. In the latter book, stories by two Chinese science-fiction writers, Zheng Wenguang and Ye Yonglie, will be included. Meanwhile, all four volumes have been translated into Chinese, supervised by another friend and former student, Guo Jianzhong, and # 5 and # 6 are in preparation; they have also been translated into Polish and German, and single volumes have been translated into Italian and Czech.

And to think: it all started with the need for a textbook in a science-fiction class. It is my hope that these two books will represent only a beginning in science fiction for its Chinese readers. Science fiction is important reading because it is the only fiction that deals with the world as it is: a world that is changing into something different. That is what science fiction is about, the imagining of the impact of change on human beings. And any fiction that involves the process of change is inevitably going to read like science fiction.

We live in a science-fiction world, Isaac Asimov once said, a world very much like the stories he and others were writing in the late 1930s and early 1940s. I know that I don't live in the world into which I was born in 1923; it has changed almost beyond recognition. It will happen to you, too, if it has not already happened. And when it does you will be better prepared to live in that world because, unlike others, you have already lived in many such worlds through the power of science fiction to dramatize the human impact of scientific and technological change, and to imagine a variety of possible futures.

James Gunn  
Lawrence, Kansas  
January 15, 1998

## 编注者的话

科技时代蕴育科学文艺,科学文艺反映科技时代。科幻小说作为科学文艺的一种体裁,是非常现代的文学现象。科幻小说往往以科学技术的某方面内容作为故事的情节或背景,描写科技的变革以及这种变革对人类的影响。科幻小说的大胆推理和思辨能够启迪思维,激励科学精神。它引导读者走进新的科技和思想境界,从而鼓舞人们探索科学和社会所蕴藏的种种可能性。它不仅为人类的美好未来高唱赞歌,也对科技发展的负面影响提出警告。由于作者把科学与幻想有机地结合起来,故而科幻小说想象丰富,情节神秘,人物离奇,主题耐人寻味。

本书收故事九则,选自詹姆斯·冈恩主编的《科幻之路》(The Road to Science Fiction)。冈恩是美国堪萨斯大学英语系教授、科幻作家、评论家。他自1948年发表短篇《似非而是》以来,已经出版了80余篇/部科幻小说,还曾任美国科幻作家协会主席。《科幻之路》共六卷,所收作品都是西方已有好评的名家名作,体现了科幻小说的发展轨迹和题材风格。

本书适合大专学生及具有同等英语水平的读者。每篇都包括作者简介、故事梗概、作品原文、注释和赏析五个部分,供读者学习和欣赏时参考。本书既可作为泛读教材,也可作为普通读物,供不同层次的读者使用。

在本书出版之际,编注者对詹姆斯·冈恩教授的热情支持表示衷心的感谢;同时,也感谢上海外语教育出版社总编王彤福教授,感谢他对科幻小说的重视,感谢他为本书的出版多次与冈恩联系,

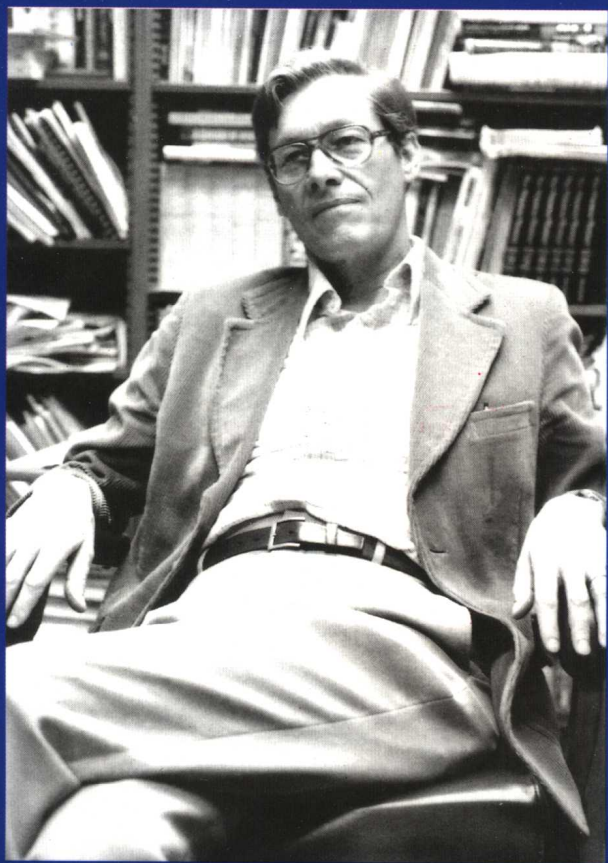
感谢他为本书作出整体设计。

编注者虽然研究美国科幻小说十余年,但水平有限,错误在所难免。欢迎读者批评指正。

吴定柏

1998 年春于上海外国语大学





《科幻之路》(The Road to Science Fiction)主编詹姆斯·冈恩(James Gunn)系美国堪萨斯大学英语系教授,科幻作家、评论家。他自1948年发表短篇《似非而是》以来,已经出版了80余篇/部科幻小说,还曾任美国科幻作家协会主席。《科幻之路》共六卷,所收作品都是西方已有好评的名家名作,体现了科幻小说的发展轨迹和题材风格。本书所收9篇即选自《科幻之路》。

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设计者

# 1.

*Isaac Asimov*

REASON

推理

## [作者简介]

**Isaac Asimov(1920 — 1992)**

艾萨克·阿西莫夫 1920 年 1 月 2 日生于俄罗斯彼特罗维奇的一个犹太家庭,1923 年随父母移居纽约市,随后取得美国国籍。由于天资聪明,记忆力惊人,他刚 16 岁就进入了哥伦比亚大学,攻读化学专业。1939 年获学士学位,两年后获硕士学位。二战期间他在海军服役,战后重返校园,获得博士学位,并留校作博士后研究。1949 年他受聘在波士顿大学医学院生化科任讲师,1955 年晋升为副教授。自 1958 年起,他离开教学和科研岗位,专心致志从事科幻小说和科普读物写作。鉴于他在这方面的优异成就,虽然他早已离任,波士顿大学仍于 1979 年晋升他为教授。

阿西莫夫与科幻的结缘始于 1929 年。当时,仅有 9 岁的他在父亲经营的糖果店里发现了寄售的科幻杂志,便喜不自禁。父亲同意他翻阅这些杂志,但叮嘱他决不可弄脏它们。自此他成了一名执著的科幻迷,积极参加科幻迷俱乐部活动。1938 年他携带习作拜会《惊奇》(Astounding)主编坎贝尔,受到鼓励,次年便发表了科幻处女作。以后他又频频推出一系列科幻作品。渊博的科学知

识和丰富的想象力使他很快成为美国四十年代科幻四大才子之一。一颗耀眼的科幻新星就此升起。

阿西莫夫一生创作了一百多部科幻作品,这些成就的取得是与他超凡的勤奋分不开的。他的写作热情无可比拟。“我每天6点起床。如果没人打扰,可以从早上7点半写到晚上10点半。”数十年如一日,他天天坐在打字机或文字处理机前创作,除必要的社交活动外,他一天工作8至12小时,连生病住院时也不偷闲。病情稍有好转,他就会在床上编起故事来。他自二次大战退役以后,从不坐飞机,也不爱旅行,更没有什么别的爱好,他一生最大的乐趣就是躲在纽约家中不停地打字。他曾说:“如果医生告诉我,我只剩下6分钟的寿命,我也不会坐在那儿悲哀。我会写得更快些。”

阿西莫夫思路敏捷而且清晰,往往可以同时创作三部作品,真可谓“出口成章”,而且文笔也达到了炉火纯青的境地。1992年4月6日,他终因心肾衰竭而病逝在纽约大学医院里。

阿西莫夫的科幻创作成就,集中地体现在被称作“人类未来史”的机器人、基地、银河帝国三大系列小说中。机器人系列包括《钢窟》(1954)、《赤裸的太阳》(1957)、《机器人全集》(1982)、《曙光里的机器人》(1983)和《机器人与帝国》(1985);基地系列包括《基地》(1951)、《基地与帝国》(1952)、《第二基地》(1953)、《基地边缘》(1982)、《基地与地球》(1986)和《基地序曲》(1987)等;银河帝国系列有《天空中的卵石》(1950)、《星星似尘土》(1951)、《太空流星雨》(1952)。上述系列以外的单部作品如《奇妙的航行》(1968)、《神仙们自己》(1972)、《复仇女神》(1989)等也堪称大器之作。还须提及的是,他和他的夫人珍妮特合作推出的“机器人诺比的编年史”儿童科幻系列,以其富于童真和幽默的生动故事,赢得了少年儿童读者的喜爱。阿西莫夫曾五次荣获雨果奖,三次荣获星云奖,不愧为当代科幻大师。

## [故事梗概]

鲍威尔和多诺万在5号太阳站工作。一星期前，他们组装了QT—1机器人库蒂。由于星际法令禁止在有人居住的星球上存在智能机器人，而太阳站的工作又离不开机器人，地球就向太阳站提供一个个零配件，由太阳站的值班人员把它们组装成机器人，投入工作。这次组装的QT型是人类迄今研制的最高级机器人，而库蒂又是QT型号的第一个。它装有特殊的大脑，印制在他身上的正电子线路都是精心设计的，严格排除了一切可能导致愤恨的因素。然而，使他们两人吃惊的是，库蒂对自身的存在表示好奇，甚至怀疑自己是被他们组装起来的。于是他们耐心地让他一边观望太空，一边进行解释。他们两人来自拥有几十亿人口的地球。为了从太阳获取能量送往地球，他们才在太阳站工作。由于高温、强烈的太阳辐射和电子风暴的袭击严重威胁太阳站工作人员的生命安全，所以科研人员研制智能机器人，以取代人的劳动。这就是库蒂诞生的原因。可是库蒂不信，他要自己悟出个道理来。

不久，库蒂运用推理否定了人制造机器人的说法。他认为人是低级生物，由软而无力的血肉材料构成，经不起温度、湿度、气压、辐射的影响，而且依赖三明治之类有机物质的低效氧化作用获取能量，还要天天睡觉。机器人则比人优越。金属之躯不吃不睡，不受环境变化的影响，还直接吸收电能。既然没有一个生命体会创造比自身更优越的另一个生命体，因此库蒂断定自己不是人造的，而是主创造的。他就是主派来的先知。在他的影响之下，太阳站所有低级机器人都信奉主，都尊库蒂为先知，对他唯命是从，俯首帖耳。

鲍威尔和多诺万怒火中烧，却又无可奈何。挥舞拳头只会自讨苦吃。想切断机器人体内线路却又无法靠近库蒂。相反库蒂却不费吹灰之力把他们软禁在办公室。为了说服库蒂，他们当着他的面组装了简单的MC型机器人。可是他还是不信，说那些精密

零部件是主创造的。他们对他实在哭笑不得。当然，他们真正担心的是即将来临的电子风暴，因为它正向地球光束的中心袭来。如果发生碰撞，光束偏离焦点，地球就要遭殃。可是他们失去了自由，除了睡觉，只能听天由命。然而，奇迹出现了。电子风暴过后，他们发现库蒂成功地将光束移位，使它始终对准地球接收站。这说明他完全能够独立管理太阳站。机器人取代人在太空工作的时刻已经来到，然而地球方面还是派了马勒和伊万斯来替换鲍威尔和多诺万。

## [原文]

### Reason

*Gregory Powell spaced his words for emphasis,*<sup>1</sup> "One week ago, Donovan and I put you together." His brows furrowed doubtfully and he pulled the end of his brown mustache.

It was quiet in the officers' room of Solar Station 5—except for the soft purring of the mighty *beam director*<sup>2</sup> somewhere far below.

Robot QT-1 sat immovable. The burnished plates of his body gleamed in the luxites, and the glowing red of *the photoelectric cells that were his eyes*<sup>3</sup> were fixed steadily upon the Earthman at the other side of the table.

Powell repressed *a sudden attack of nerves*.<sup>4</sup> These robots possessed peculiar brains. The *positronic paths*<sup>5</sup> impressed upon them were calculated in advance, and all possible permutations that might lead to anger or hate were rigidly excluded. And yet—the QT models were the first of their kind, and this was the first of QT's. Anything could happen.

Finally the robot spoke. His voice carried the cold timbre inseparable from a metallic diaphragm. "Do you realize the seriousness of such a statement, Powell?"

"Something made you, Cutie," pointed out Powell. "You admit yourself that your memory seems *to spring full-grown*<sup>6</sup> from an absolute blankness of a week ago. I'm giving you the explanation. Donovan and I put you together from the parts shipped us."

Cutie gazed upon his long, supple fingers in an oddly human attitude of mystification. "It strikes me that there should be a more satisfactory explanation than that. *For you to make me seems improbable.*"<sup>7</sup>

The Earthman laughed quite suddenly. "*In Earth's name, why?*"<sup>8</sup>

"Call it intuition. That's all it is so far. But I intend to reason it out, though. A chain of valid reasoning can end only with the determination of truth, and *I'll stick till I get there.*"<sup>9</sup>

Powell stood up and seated himself at the table's edge next the robot. He felt a sudden strong sympathy for this strange machine. It was not at all like the ordinary robot, attending to his specialized task at the station with the intensity of a deeply ingrooved positronic path.

He placed a hand upon Cutie's steel shoulder and the metal was cold and hard to the touch.

"Cutie," he said, "I'm going to try to explain something to you. You're the first robot who's ever exhibited curiosity as to his own existence—and I think the first that's really intelligent enough to understand the world outside. Here, come with me."

The robot rose erect smoothly and his thickly sponge-rubber-soled feet made no noise as he followed Powell. The Earthman touched a button, and a square section of the wall flicked aside. The thick, clear glass revealed space—star speckled.

"I've seen that in the observation ports in the engine room," said



Cutie.

"I know," said Powell. "What do you think it is?"

"Exactly what it seems—a black material just beyond this glass that is spotted with little gleaming dots. I know that our director sends out beams to some of these dots, always to the same one—and also that these dots shift and that the beams shift with them. That is all."

"Good! Now I want you to listen carefully. The blackness is emptiness—vast emptiness stretching out infinitely. The little gleaming dots are huge masses of energy-filled matter. They are globes, some of them millions of miles in diameter—and for comparison, this station is only one mile across. They seem so tiny because they are incredibly far off.

"The dots to which our energy beams are directed are nearer and much smaller. They are cold and hard, and human beings like myself live upon their surfaces—many billions of them. It is from one of these worlds that Donovan and I come. Our beams feed these worlds energy drawn from one of those huge incandescent globes that happens to be near us. We call that globe the sun and it is on the other side of the station where you can't see it."

Cutie remained motionless before the port, like a steel statue. His head did not turn as he spoke. "*Which particular dot of light do you claim to come from*<sup>10</sup>?"

Powell searched. "There it is. The very bright one in the corner. We call it Earth." He grinned. "Good old Earth. There are five billions of us there, Cutie—and in about two weeks I'll be back there with them."

And then, surprisingly enough, Cutie hummed abstractly. There was no tune to it, but it possessed a curious twanging quality *as of plucked strings*.<sup>11</sup> It ceased as suddenly as it had begun. "But where do I come in, Powell? You haven't explained my existence."