

BWPC—PH 英语学习丛书

当代  
短篇  
小说  
选

# MODERN SHORT STORIES

(附中译文)



A. 马丁 R. 希尔 著 葛德玮

译

世界图书出版公司

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A. Martin & R. Hill 著  
葛德玮 葛小玮 译

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## 内 容 简 介

本书是英国 Prentice Hall 出版公司出版的《当代英国文学入门丛书》中的一种。书中包括 9 篇短篇小说,均为现代文学的代表作,按内容分为 7 个单元,每个单元有理解、词汇、语言特点及一些扩展练习。单元最后有作者介绍。为便于自学者更好地理解,书后给出了小说的中译文,供学习者参考。

### Modern Short Stories

A. Nartin & R. Hill

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# Introduction

## 1. To The Student

This book is for those who either want to read some English short stories or have to read some for school, university or exams. You don't need to have studied literature before. The aim of the book is to help you understand and enjoy reading short stories, and so to give you tools and methods for appreciating stories you read in the future.

You can use the book with or without a teacher. If you are studying alone, you will need to check your answers in the Key at the end of the book. As the study of literature sometimes requires a purely personal response, however, not all the exercises have a single correct answer. In these cases it would be useful to discuss your ideas with a teacher, and it would certainly be interesting to discuss your ideas with a friend or another student.

The books in this series adopt a double approach: literary and linguistic. Each chapter contains a Language section divided into Language Practice and Vocabulary, in addition to the section on Close Reading. The Language section is always based on the literature in that chapter, and in almost all cases leads back into it. The result is that the two approaches 'feed' each other: the linguistic study helping you to appreciate the literature, and the literature helping you to appreciate (and use) the language.

After the Language section in each chapter there is a section called Extension, which gives you the chance to discuss or write about themes raised by the stories. A final section, Beyond the Text, offers you another piece of literature which compares or contrasts with what you have read in the chapter, showing other treatments of the same theme.

You can work on the chapters in any order you like, but we suggest that you begin at least with Chapter 1. This is because the two short stories in Chapter 1 deal with the art of story-telling, and because you are introduced to some of the basic features of plot. Other useful ideas to enable you to talk confidently about stories are introduced in Chapter 2 (metaphor and simile) and Chapter 3 (narrator and point of view).

Finally, in order to make the best of this book, you should (indeed must) have (1) a good monolingual English dictionary, (2) a good



bilingual dictionary, and (3) a handbook of English grammar and usage. You may also (4) want to know more about the historical and cultural background to the stories you read here. The following is a basic list of suggestions to cover these necessities:

(1) *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* or *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*.

(2) This will depend on what is available, but buy a large, modern dictionary if possible. Ask the advice of someone who knows both languages well. A good dictionary is a marvellous intellectual tool which will serve you for many years. It should (a) translate a large number of words, (b) give all the possible meanings for these words, and (c) reflect past as well as modern usage. Avoid mini-dictionaries, therefore, which have their place in the tourist's suitcase but are useless for the study of literature.

(3) Jake Allsop, *Cassell's Students' English Grammar* (Cassell)  
A J Thomson & A V Martinet, *A Practical English Grammar* (Oxford)  
Raymond Murphy, *English Grammar in Use* (Cambridge)  
Michael Swan, *Practical English Usage* (Oxford).

(4) Harry Blamires, *Twentieth Century English Literature* (Macmillan)  
Boris Ford (editor), *The Pelican Guide to English Literature*, Volumes 7 and 8 (Penguin).

At the back of the book you will find a Glossary. In this section are listed the most essential vocabulary items for each story, together with words and phrases which are not usually included in a standard dictionary, such as slang and dialect. These words are listed in the order they appear in the text, rather than in alphabetical order.

## 2. To The Teacher

Little needs to be added except to note that, although the book is written with private study in mind, practically every exercise in the book will work in the classroom with little or no adaptation. Many of the individual exercises can be transformed by the addition of simple instructions: 'discuss' (in pairs or groups), 'report your conclusions', etc. As the use of literature in the language class is still something of a novelty, however (albeit a rediscovered one), it's worth pointing out that the application of communicative teaching techniques to the study of literature can, with a bit of imagination and flexibility, produce excellent results. Time spent on thinking up suitable ways to introduce games, dramatisation, surveys, quizzes, puzzles, debates, role-plays and projects — all of which (provided they are relevant) will motivate the student further — will almost always pay handsome

returns. But in setting up any group activity (especially a discussion), it is essential to give the student a specific goal — a decision to be reached, in a specific time. The approach of 'discuss Question Four', followed inevitably by 'discuss Question Five' is not likely to be much of a success in any context.

The *while reading* questions that occur during the short stories can be done in pairs, groups, or as class brainstorming. They are there to:

- a) give the students achievable portions of texts to read
- b) encourage the students to engage in the mechanics of the plot
- c) aid, rather than test, comprehension by highlighting the questions that a practised reader would be asking him/herself.

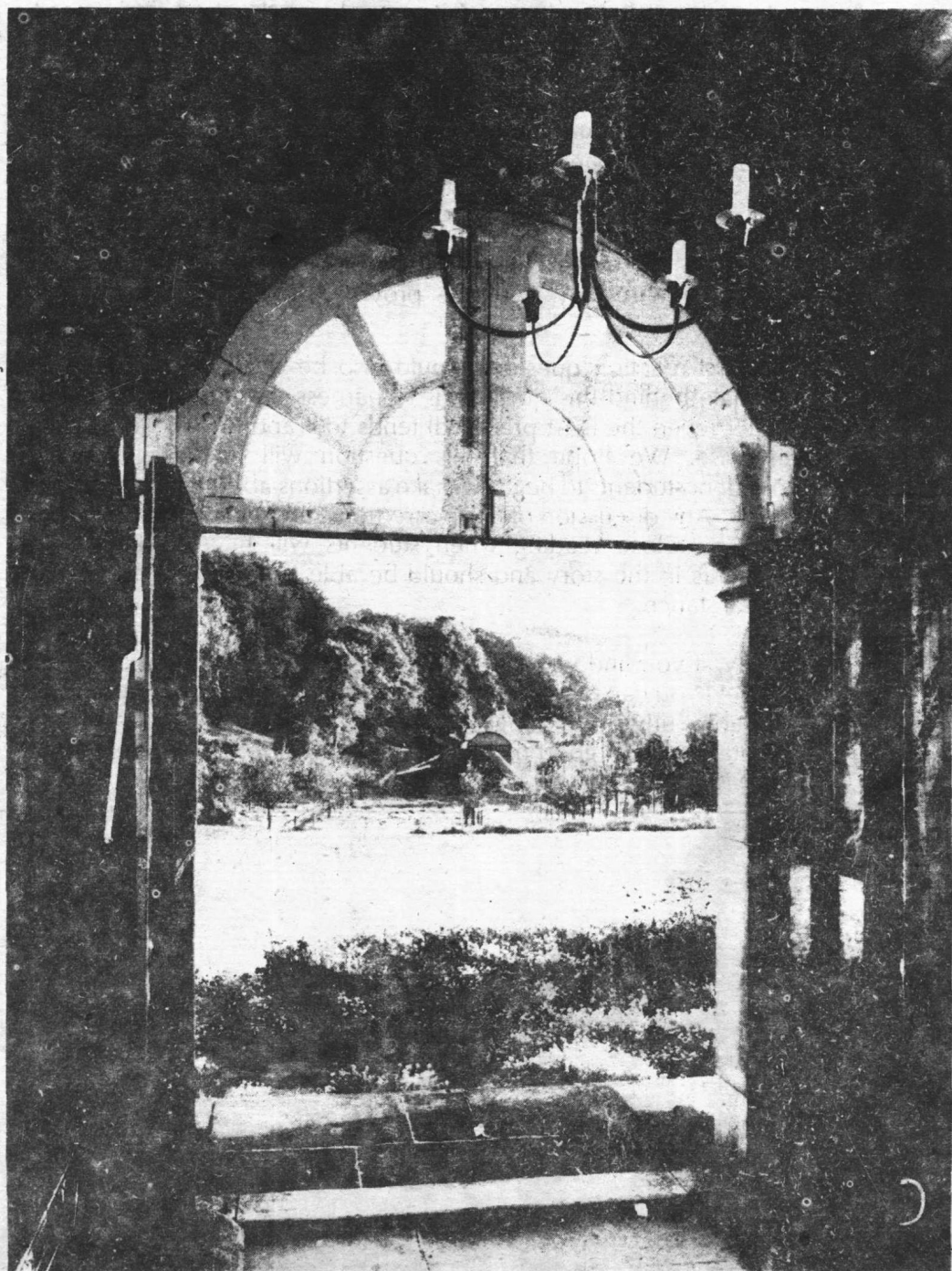
These questions should therefore be dealt with fairly rapidly, and the students should carry on reading the story at the first sign of the class discussion or pair/group work flagging. A more leisurely and deeper analysis of the story is always provided for in the Close reading section.

The First reaction question should also be dealt with quickly. The rationale behind this question is to harness that moment when any reader (even the least practised) tends to want to make a subjective response. We hope that this question will encourage the less confident students to begin to make assertions about their reactions to stories. Any discussion of these assertions, however, should be left till after the Close reading when students will have looked at key moments in the story and should be able to take a more informed critical stance.

Finally, if you find yourself disagreeing violently with the answers in the Key, you can of course treat them as further discussion points. It is probably unwise to suggest that all the literary questions are debatable, but a good many certainly are, at least to the extent that there is more to be said.

Robert Hill  
Alex Martin

# 1 Short Stories and Tall Tales



# THE OPEN WINDOW

## 'Saki' (H H Munro)

### Before you read

- 1 These are some common expressions used when talking about short stories. Match them with the definitions below.

a) suspense	b) surprise	c) plot	d) character(s)
e) setting	f) climax	g) theme	h) style

- i) the manner of writing used in the story. —
  - ii) the feeling in the reader caused by something unexpected happening. — *suspense*
  - iii) the place and time at which the events of a story take place. — *setting*
  - iv) the set of connected events on which a story is based. — *plot*
  - v) what the story is *about*, rather than what happens in the story. —
  - vi) a tense feeling in the reader, caused by wondering what may happen. — *surprise*
  - vii) the most intense part of a story, generally towards the end. — *climax*
  - viii) a person (or people) in a story. —
- 2 Use the expressions in the box in question 1 to fill in the gaps in these sentences. In each case decide if the sentence makes a positive or negative comment.
- i) The story is too simple to be interesting: the \_\_\_\_\_ are too neatly divided into good and bad.
  - ii) I found the \_\_\_\_\_ too complicated: at times it was difficult to understand what was going on.
  - iii) \_\_\_\_\_ is maintained throughout this thrilling story: you don't find out the identity of the murderer until the last page, and when you do, it comes as a complete \_\_\_\_\_.
  - iv) Very little actually happens in this story – it is an ordinary day in the life of an ordinary person – but the writer's \_\_\_\_\_ makes it fascinating reading.



## 5 Fairy Tales



What might this 'tragedy' be? Try to think of two or three possibilities.

'You may wonder why we keep that window wide open on an October afternoon,' said the niece, indicating a large French window that opened on to a lawn. 35

'It is quite warm for the time of the year,' said Framton; 'but has that window got anything to do with the tragedy?'

'Out through that window, three years ago to a day, her husband and her two young brothers went off for their day's shooting. They never came back. In crossing the moor to their favourite snipe-shooting ground they were all three engulfed in a treacherous piece of bog. It had been that dreadful wet summer, you know, and places that were safe in other years gave way suddenly without warning. Their bodies were never recovered. That was the dreadful part of it.' Here the child's voice lost its self-possessed note and became falteringly human. 'Poor aunt always thinks that they will come back some day; they and the little brown spaniel that was lost with them, and walk in at that window just as they used to do. That is why the window is kept open every evening till it is quite dusk. Poor dear aunt, she has often told me how they went out, her husband with his white waterproof coat over his arm, and Ronnie, her youngest brother, singing, "Bertie, why do you bound?" as he always did to tease her, because she said it got on her nerves. Do you know, sometimes on still, quiet evenings like this, I almost get a creepy feeling that they will all walk in through that window —'

She broke off with a little shudder. It was a relief to Framton when the aunt bustled into the room with a whirl of apologies for being late in making her appearance. 55

'I hope Vera has been amusing you?' she said.

'She has been very interesting,' said Framton.

'I hope you don't mind the open window,' said Mrs. Sappleton briskly; 'my husband and brothers will be home directly from shooting, and they always come in this way. They've been out for snipe in the marshes to-day, so they'll make a fine mess over my poor carpets. So like you men-folk, isn't it?' 60

She rattled on cheerfully about the shooting and the scarcity of birds, and the prospects for duck in the winter. To Framton it was all purely horrible. He made a desperate but only partially successful effort to turn the talk on to a less ghastly topic; he was conscious that his hostess was giving him only a fragment of her attention, and her eyes were constantly straying past him to the open window and the lawn beyond. It was certainly an unfortunate coincidence that he should have paid his visit on this tragic anniversary. 65

'The doctors agree in ordering me complete rest, an absence of mental excitement, and avoidance of anything in the nature of violent physical exercise,' announced Framton, who laboured under the tolerably widespread delusion that total strangers and chance acquaintances are hungry for the least detail of one's ailments and infirmities, their cause 75

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and cure. 'On the matter of diet they are not so much in agreement,' he continued.

'No?' said Mrs. Sappleton, in a voice which only replaced a yawn at the last moment. Then she suddenly brightened into alert attention – but not to what Framton was saying. 80

'Here they are at last!' she cried. 'Just in time for tea, and don't they look as if they were muddy up to the eyes!'

Framton shivered slightly and turned towards the niece with a look intended to convey sympathetic comprehension. The child was staring out through the open window with dazed horror in her eyes. In a chill shock of nameless fear Framton swung round in his seat and looked in the same direction. 85

*How does Framton feel at this moment?  
How is the story going to develop now, do you think?*

In the deepening twilight three figures were walking across the lawn towards the window; they all carried guns under their arms, and one of them was additionally burdened with a white coat hung over his shoulders. A tired brown spaniel kept close at their heels. Noiselessly they neared the house, and then a hoarse young voice chanted out of the dusk: 'I said, Bertie, why do you bound?' 90 95

Framton grabbed wildly at his stick and hat; the hall-door, the gravel-drive, and the front gate were dimly noted stages in his headlong retreat. A cyclist coming along the road had to run into the hedge to avoid imminent collision.

'Here we are, my dear,' said the bearer of the white mackintosh, coming in through the window; 'fairly muddy, but most of it's dry. Who was that who bolted out as we came up?' 100

'A most extraordinary man, a Mr. Nuttel,' said Mrs. Sappleton; 'could only talk about his illnesses, and dashed off without a word of good-bye or apology when you arrived. One would think he had seen a ghost.' 105

'I expect it was the spaniel,' said the niece calmly; 'he told me he had a horror of dogs. He was once hunted into a cemetery somewhere on the banks of the Ganges by a pack of pariah dogs, and had to spend the night in a newly dug grave with the creatures snarling and grinning and foaming just above him. Enough to make any one lose their nerve.' 110

Romance at short notice was her speciality.

*See Glossary section at the back of the book for vocabulary.*

## First reaction

- 4 a) Do you find this story amusing, or not? Why?
- b) Are the events of the story credible, or not? Does this matter very much?

## Close reading

### Analysing the plot

- 5 Analyse the plot of this story. For this story, and for other stories, the following scheme may be helpful for your analysis.

#### The setting

WHO are the main characters?

WHERE does the story take place?

WHEN does the story take place?

WHAT is the situation?

Has anything happened before the story begins?

THEN, WHAT happens?

What starts the events of the story moving?

WHAT happens as a result of that?

WHAT happens finally? What is the resolution?

#### The setting

WHO are the main characters?

The important characters are in the first few lines.

a) N

b) N

c) \_\_\_\_\_

WHERE does the story take place?

Which of these is correct?

a) in town

b) in a quiet place in the country

WHEN does the story take place?

Is there any indication that this is a story set in a historical period, or even in the future? Or do we assume that it takes place at the same time as the author wrote the story? Do you think it is particularly important for the effect of this story?

WHAT is the situation?

Has anything happened before the story begins?

Framton Nuttel is recovering from

\_\_\_\_\_

His sister has \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

WHAT happens next?

Look at lines 29-32.

Mrs. Sappleton's niece \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



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WHAT happens as a result of that?

Look at lines 55-72.  
Who appears on the scene? What does she say? What is the resulting effect on Framton?

When Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

she \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

so Framton \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

WHAT happens finally?

Look at lines 83-end.

Mrs. Sappleton sees \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

and Framton thinks \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

so he \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**6** Vera is a 'very self-possessed young lady' and a specialist in 'romance at short notice'. She is also very clever.

- a)** Why does she ask the question 'Then you know practically nothing about my aunt?' (line 23)?
- b)** When Mrs. Sappleton's husband and her brothers come back, what does she do to convince Framton even more that they are ghosts?

**7** Use the scheme you used in question 5 to analyse briefly the story that Vera tells Framton.

Notice that there is no resolution to Vera's story, 'the story within the story'. Part of the amusing effect of Saki's story is that the resolution that one expects from Vera's story – the return of these men as ghosts – is transferred, for comic effect, into the main story.